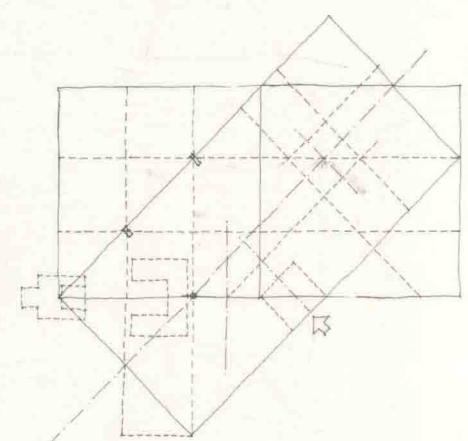
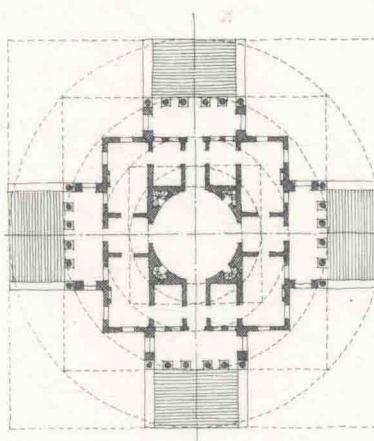
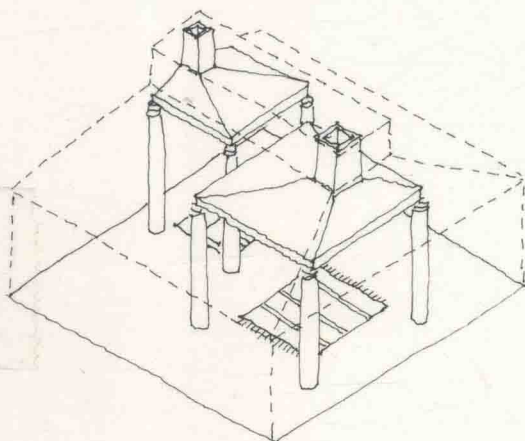
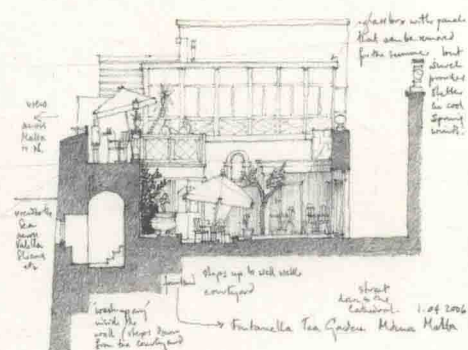
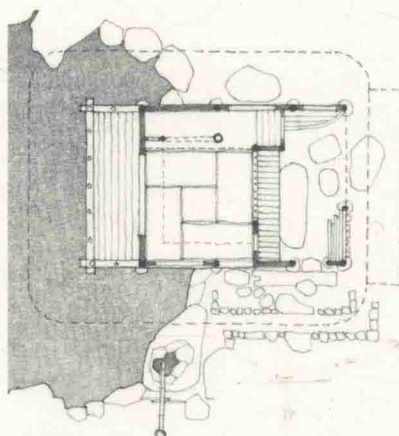
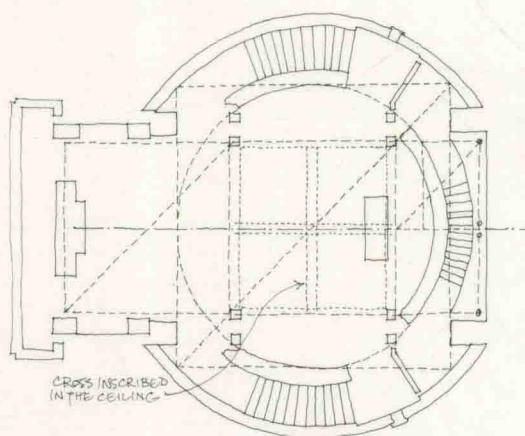


analysing **ARCHITECTURE**

FOURTH EDITION



SIMON UNWIN

ROUTLEDGE

Analysing ARCHITECTURE

FOURTH EDITION, REVISED AND ENLARGED

SIMON UNWIN

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Analysing ARCHITECTURE

FOURTH EDITION, REVISED AND ENLARGED

The most lucid and readable introduction to architecture I have read.

Professor Roger Stonehouse, Manchester School of Architecture

What is striking about the book is the thoughtfulness and consideration which is present in each phrase, each sentence, each plan, each section and each view, all contributing to an overarching quality which makes the book particularly applicable and appropriate to students in their efforts to make sense of the complex and diverse aspects of architecture... Unwin writes with an architect's sensibility and draws with an accomplished architect's hand.

Susan Rice, Rice and Ewald Architects, *Architectural Science Review*

Now in its fourth edition, *Analysing Architecture* has become internationally established as the best introduction to architecture. Aimed primarily at those wishing to become professional architects, it also offers those in disciplines related to architecture (from archaeology to stage design, garden design to installation art) a clear and accessible insight into the workings of this rich and fascinating subject. With copious illustrations from his own notebooks, the author dissects examples from around the world and all periods of history to explain underlying strategies in architectural design and show how drawing may be used as a medium for analysis.

This new edition of *Analysing Architecture* is revised and expanded. Notably, the chapter on 'Basic Elements of Architecture' has been enlarged to discuss the 'powers' various architectural elements offer the architect. Three new chapters have been added to the section on 'Themes in Spatial Organisation', covering 'Occupying the In-between', 'Inhabited Wall' and 'Refuge and Prospect'. Two new examples – a Mud House in Kerala, India, and the Mongyo-tei (a tea house) in Kyoto, Japan – have been added to the case studies at the end of the book. The select bibliography has been expanded and the index overhauled.

Works of architecture are instruments for managing, orchestrating, modifying our relationship with the world around us. They frame just about everything we do. Architecture is complex, subtle, frustrating... but ultimately extremely rewarding. It can be a difficult discipline to get to grips with; nothing in school quite prepares anyone for the particular demands of an architecture course. But this book will help.

Analysing Architecture is the foundation volume of a series of books by Simon Unwin exploring the workings of architecture. Other books in the series include *Twenty Buildings Every Architect Should Understand* and *Exercises in Architecture*.

Simon Unwin is Emeritus Professor of Architecture at the University of Dundee, Scotland. He has lived in Great Britain and Australia, and taught or lectured on his work in China, Israel, India, Sweden, Turkey and the United States. *Analysing Architecture's* international relevance is indicated by its translation into Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Persian, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish and its adoption for architecture courses around the world. Simon Unwin continues to teach at The Welsh School of Architecture in Cardiff, UK.

Some more reviews of *Analysing ARCHITECTURE* (previous editions):

Simply the best! I have just gone through the first three chapters of this book and find myself compelled to write this review. I can simply say it is the best and a MUST to everyone in the field of architecture. Students, teachers, and practitioners alike will all find inspirations from this book.

Depsis, Amazon.com website

Unwin chooses to look at the underlying elements of architecture rather than, as is more usual, at the famous names, styles, movements and chronology of the genre. This rejection of the conventional art-historical approach can lead to interesting conclusions... it is all presented cogently and convincingly through the medium of Unwin's own drawings.

Hugh Pearman, *The Sunday Times*

In clear, precise diagrams and thoughtful text, author Simon Unwin offers an engaging methodology for the study of architecture and aesthetic systems. Time-tested buildings from classical temples to traditional Japanese homes and early modernist masterpieces, are explored in this wide ranging, but focused study. Unwin demonstrates that while architectural styles change over time, the underlying principles that organize quality designs remain remarkably consistent. This book is a must for all architectural students interested in acquiring the visual skills needed to understand a wide variety of design methodologies.

Diane78 (New York), Amazon.com website

The text has been carefully written to avoid the use of jargon and it introduces architectural ideas in a straightforward fashion. This, I suspect, will give it a well-deserved market beyond that of architects and architectural students.

Barry Russell, *Environments BY DESIGN*

From the camp sites of primitive man to the sophisticated structures of the late twentieth century, architecture as an essential function of human activity is explained clearly, and illustrated with the author's own excellent drawings. Highly recommended as a well-organized and readable introduction.

medals@win-95.com, Amazon.com website

This book establishes a systematic method in analyzing architecture. It explains how architectural elements are combined together to form designs that could relate an appropriate sense of 'place' specific to the programme as well as the environment surrounding it. The book is well illustrated with diagrams and examples. An extremely useful introductory guide for those who want to learn more about the basics of architecture.

nikana99@hotmail.com, Amazon.com website

*This book needs to be praised and appreciated... and provides an excellent overview of the subject. There are beautiful and clear line drawings throughout... and very substantial text that's TRYING TO TEACH YOU SOMETHING. A very sensitive and thorough treatment of a difficult and challenging subject, I highly recommend this and its companion piece *An Architectural Notebook*. Both are tremendous studio books, and will always have valuable insights to offer when you take them off the shelf.*

Curt Dilger, Amazon.com website

This is an excellent book, recommended to anyone seriously interested in architecture. Its starting point is Unwin's ability to draw well – to think through his hands, as it were. This is fundamental to architectural skill and Unwin has used it to 'talk back to himself' and describe the architecture around him. He uses this skill to romp through a huge number and variety of buildings and architectural situations in order to describe architectural strategies. Unwin has at the heart of his book a definition and understanding of architecture that we thoroughly endorse: to be dealt with in terms of its conceptual organisation and intellectual structure. But he adds to this potentially dry definition an emotive overlay or parallel: architecture as the identification of place ('Place is to architecture as meaning is to language'). Thus he takes on the issue of why we value architecture.

architecturelink.org.uk/GMoreSerious2.html

Analysing Architecture should become an essential part of all architectural education and an informative guide to the powerful analytical tool of architectural drawing.

Howard Ray Lawrence, Pennsylvania State University

Excellent in every way – a core book, along with An Architecture Notebook.

Terry Robson, Teaching Fellow, University of Bath, UK

I think this is an excellent book and I will continue to recommend it to my students.

Professor Donald Hanlon, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, US

Probably the best introductory book on architecture.

Andrew Higgott, Lecturer in Architecture, University of East London, UK

Many of the architecture world's most promising students began their studies with this very book. Analysing Architecture by Simon Unwin is one of the finest introductions in print to architecture and its technique. While a book like this may not be an obvious choice for a fan of architecture, there is no better way of learning the ins and outs of architectural development than from a book like this. Even if you don't ever see yourself drawing up blueprints or hiring contractors (unless you're designing the master shed office!), this book can extend an understanding of architecture that only a studied professional could eclipse.

thecoolist.com/architecture-books-10-must-read-books-for-the-amateur-archophile/ (January 2013)

As a professor who teaches first year architecture students, Simon Unwin's Analysing Architecture is required reading – a primary textbook for our students. Beautifully illustrated with drawings from the author's own notebooks, it also manages to balance legibility with depth: this is a superbly lucid primer on the fundamental principles of architecture. I recommend this book wholeheartedly, for readers both new to architecture, and experienced architects as well. A joy to read, a thing of beauty.

G.B. Piranesi, Amazon.com website

One would have no hesitation in recommending this book to new students: it introduces many ideas and references central to the study of architecture. The case studies are particularly informative. A student would find this a useful aid to identifying the many important issues seriously engaged with in Architecture.

Lorraine Farrelly, Architectural Design

Books by Simon Unwin

An Architecture Notebook: Wall
Doorway
Twenty Buildings Every Architect Should Understand
Exercises in Architecture – Learning to Think as an Architect

ebooks (available for iPad from the iBookstore)

Skara Brae
The Entrance Notebook
Villa Le Lac
The Time Notebook

Simon Unwin's website is at

simonunwin.com

(some of Simon Unwin's personal notebooks, used in researching and preparing this and his other books, are available for free download from this site)

Facebook facebook.com/analysingarchitecture

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routledge.com/textbooks/9780415489287/

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Analysing ARCHITECTURE

The search is what everyone would undertake if he were not stuck in the everydayness of his own life. To be aware of the possibility of the search is to be on to something. Not to be on to something is to be in despair.

Walker Percy – *The Moviegoer*, quoted in Lawrence Weschler – *Seeing is Forgetting the Name of the Thing One Sees: a Life of Contemporary Artist Robert Irwin*, 1982, p. 1

But why think about that when all the golden land's ahead of you and all kinds of unforeseen events wait lurking to surprise you and make you glad you're alive to see?

Jack Kerouac – *On the Road*, 1957, p. 122

PREFACE TO THE FOURTH EDITION

In his book *The Examined Life** the psychotherapist Stephen Grosz tells the story of a man who, each time he is left alone, even for a short time, agonises about how his house in France might be altered and extended to make it absolutely perfect. Grosz tells us of...

‘... his incessant tweaking, his reconfiguring. He thinks about redecorating, remodelling – adding rooms, doors, windows. “What would the view be like if I change the shape of this room, turn the house on its foundation, or move it to the top of a neighbouring hill?”... He is continually thinking about the house: visualising a different colour of paint in this room, a larger doorway in that room. He sketches floor plans, views of the interior. Today, during a meeting, he sketched a view of the hallway, from the front door towards the kitchen.’

When we start the story we know that the man is one of Grosz’s psychiatric patients. But it is not until the very last line that Grosz reveals to us, as clinching evidence of the man’s mental problems, that the man does not have a house in France!... So what does Grosz’s story tell us about architects, who are forever agonising about houses (and other buildings) that do not exist?!

Grosz’s premise as a psychiatrist is that we all tell stories to make sense of our lives. Most might presume that our stories are expressed primarily in words. As architects, however, we make sense of life in a different medium. We do so in space and built form, ‘telling stories’ non-verbally through the design of places and buildings. The plan/section of a building, for example, is a proposition (a ‘story’) intended to make sense of the life to be lived in it.

What is more, architects – those who practise professionally – face a further challenge: the ‘stories’ they compose involve the lives of others. Other people are not merely an audience for the ‘stories’ architects tell, they are involved characters. The power of architecture is strongest and its poetry most affecting when people

are considered as, hopefully beneficiary, ingredients (participants), rather than mere spectators of its products.

Products of architecture, because they are all-encompassing – i.e. they do not exist discretely in a frame (even though they might appear to do so when photographed) – have the potential to benefit people emotionally and psychologically as well as physically. But they can spoil lives too. A house can provide comfort and security; but a simple wall may exclude and alienate, depriving people of access to something they need (water, family, a view, freedom...). Architecture is a powerful instrument, and has been through all human time.

This book is about the ‘language’ used to ‘tell’ spatial ‘stories’ – the language of architecture. Learning how this non-verbal language of architecture works is the primary challenge for a student architect. People who wish to, are generally content to spend years perfecting their mastery of a foreign tongue; but students of architecture perhaps tend to think its language should come more easily than it does. Like verbal language the non-verbal language of architecture requires application and practice, commitment and dedication, and analytical study of how it has been used by others.

This book challenges two widely held misconceptions. The first is widespread in public appreciation (or *non*-appreciation) of architecture: it is that architecture is primarily concerned with the outward appearance of buildings; that it is some form of cosmetic treatment for buildings. This restricted view – that architecture is primarily about appearances – is refuted by the different aspects of architecture covered in the following chapters; most of which deal with works of architecture in a fuller sense, as instruments for managing/manipulating/orchestrating relationships with the world (with topography, climate, our gods, each other, time...) rather than merely as sculptural objects.

The second misconception is more particular to schools of architecture: it is that ‘sketching’ is primarily about design development, visual thinking, problem solving and representation of the outward appearances of buildings. These are certainly some of the

* Grosz, Stephen – *The Examined Life: How We Lose and Find Ourselves*, 2013.

things sketching is used for; but this book is founded on a belief that sketching (perhaps 'drawing' sounds more serious) plays a more profound role in learning how architecture works and how to do it. It is through drawing that we not only explore the possibilities of new design but also acquire the fundamental language (the 'meta-language') of architecture. Drawing is the best way to analyse and understand what other architects have done. It is the best medium through which to explore the potential, the possibilities of architecture... to acquire and exploit its powers.

Architects (particularly in the United Kingdom) have a tough time, not only from royalty but also from politicians and in the media. This book is intended to help student architects begin to develop fluency in the language of their chosen creative profession. But hopefully it will also help others to see how generally important architecture is to our lives, accommodating and conditioning, protecting and organising, just about everything we do.

Features of this fourth edition

Each new edition offers the opportunity to clarify and expand. In this fourth edition of *Analysing Architecture* the chapter on 'Basic Elements of Architecture' has been expanded to emphasise the point (crucial to the book as a whole) that architectural elements are instruments with powers; i.e. you can do things with them. An architect worries not only about how an element (a wall, floor, doorway...) might look and be constructed but also about what it is intended *to do* in a proposed spatial organisation.

Three extra chapters have been added to the section Themes in Spatial Organisation: on 'Occupying the In-Between'; 'Inhabited Wall'; and 'Refuge and Prospect' – the second being developed from a similar chapter written a dozen or so years ago and included in *An Architecture Notebook: Wall* (2000).

A short additional Postscript has been inserted. And the ten Case Studies included in the third edition have here been extended to twelve with the addition of analyses of a small mud house in Kerala, India and of a tea house (the Mongyo-tei) in Kyoto, Japan. For those who want them, more case studies are provided in a separate book – *Twenty Buildings Every Architect Should Understand* (2010). The case studies provided there are more detailed than is possible within the confines of the present volume.

Finally, the Select Bibliography and References section has been expanded and the Index overhauled.

Simon Unwin, September 2013

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

There was a spin-doctor character* in a BBC political comedy called 'The Thick of It' (2007) who once said firmly into the face of an underling, 'Don't ever, EVER call me a bully!... I'm SO much worse!' Well, I've heard people call architecture a 'visual art' and it makes me want to reply, 'Don't ever, EVER call architecture a visual art! It's SO much more!'

Architecture is the most wonderfully rich art form. Perhaps too rich. Perhaps it is the jealousy of other art forms that has led to it being 'brought down a peg or two' and consigned to being considered (as suggested in my 'Preface to the Second Edition') as merely a visual or sculptural art, or a media sensation. Perhaps architecture is richer than even architects can cope with. Certainly, to describe (and worse, to conceive) architecture as merely a visual or sculptural art form is seriously to diminish its role in framing just about everything we do in setting the spatial matrix of life. Architecture has the potential to establish and influence relationships, elicit emotional responses, even to affect how we behave and who we think we are. Architects who are able to inform their work with more than a small fraction of architecture's full potential are few.

In all human culture, even for people who live in open landscapes, architecture is as ubiquitous as (perhaps even more so than) language. (Just think of the huge variety of architectural forms covered by the word 'window', infinitely more subtle in their variations than can be encompassed even by 'oriel', 'bay', 'leaded', 'picture', 'stained glass', 'plate-glass', 'small-paned', 'Diocletian', 'Venetian'...) Architecture is the practical, poetic and philosophical art by which we organise and give form to space; it is the medium by which we make sense of our world spatially and physically. Through history and now, it has often involved building complex and expensive structures, but equally it might involve no more than drawing a circle on a beach, sweeping an area of ground clear of scrub for a ceremony; or even as little (or much) as identifying distinctive landscape features with mythical beings and events. It may be difficult to comprehend but architecture nevertheless deals with the inescapable settings of our lives, and deserves the effort required (particularly of those who wish to do it professionally) to understand how it works and how its powers can be used.

* The character was Malcolm Tucker, played by Peter Capaldi. 'The Thick of It' was devised and directed by Armando Iannucci, and written by Jesse Armstrong, Simon Blackwell and Tony Roche.

In its third edition, this book is approaching three hundred pages in length, but still it is possible to deal with architecture's richness as an art in little more than an introductory way. (This is partly because of space, but also because I am still learning.) Additional examples, especially from the most recent past, have been included and new case studies added. There is a new website associated with the book, discussing how to use a notebook to study architecture: routledge.com/textbooks/9780415489287/. (The bibliography of recommended supplementary reading has also been extended, and the index revised.) But the purpose of the book remains: to understand the workings of the common language of architecture that has been developed since we human beings (and animals for that matter) began to make places by which to situate ourselves, our activities and belongings within the world in which we find ourselves. To do this it is necessary to include examples from ancient as well as contemporary times, primitive as well as sophisticated situations, and from as wide a geographical spread as possible. (The translation of previous editions into Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Persian and Spanish, as well the use of *Analysing Architecture* in architecture courses around the world, seems to justify and validate this approach.)

Perhaps most significantly, this new edition of *Analysing Architecture* offers a discussion of the ways in which studying the work of others cultivates, informs and stimulates the capacity for design. This is an aspect of the development of an ability to do architecture that is clearly evident in architects (great and mediocre) through the centuries but which is sometimes acknowledged only reluctantly by student architects inclined to believe that their own originality and greatness will prosper best by insulating their creative genius from 'corruption' by the ideas and accomplishments of others; and anyway, they do not want to be accused of copying. But it was not 'copying' when Le Corbusier, probably the most inventive of twentieth-century architects, drew on his extensive travels through Greece, Italy and Turkey to develop architectural ideas informed by his analysis of monasteries, ancient villas and troglodyte houses. It is not 'copying' either when Zaha Hadid seeks to subvert orthodoxy by distorting the regular orthogonal geometries by which buildings have been ordered since time immemorial. Both evolutionary development and contradictory revolution depend on understanding what has gone before.

Simon Unwin, September 2008

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

Since it was published in 1997, *Analysing Architecture* has established itself as one of the set texts for student architects. I am gratified that the book has been found to be useful, and thank all those who have written with supportive comments.

Preparation of this second edition has involved both expansion and clarification. I have expanded most of the chapters by including a few additional examples, and in some cases written additional sections dealing with new themes. I have divided the previously over-long chapter on 'Geometry in Architecture' into two separate chapters on 'Geometries of Being' and 'Ideal Geometry'. I have also added some more case studies at the end of the book, broadening the range of examples covered. In various places I have added quotations from novels, mostly descriptions of places, as reminders that the core of architecture is about producing practical and poetic settings for life.

I have revised the whole of the text, clarifying arguments and ideas where I have felt necessary. Mostly these revisions have been in the form of minor adjustments, the insertion of a better word or an explanatory sentence here and there. The places where I have felt the need for more substantial clarification have been in the chapters on 'Architecture as Identification of Place' and 'Temples and Cottages'.

The aim of the second edition remains the same as in the first, to offer the beginnings of a framework for the analytical understanding of the workings of architecture. In this edition however, in response to some observations by readers, I have laid greater stress on the suggestion that the acquisition of an analytical understanding of the workings of architecture is not meant as an academic exercise that is sufficient to itself, but should be seen as a foundation and stimulus for the creative activity of design. This book is fundamentally about ideas, and ideas are the 'stock in trade' of architects. It deals with architecture as an activity, as a matter of conception before perception. It is for people who are engaged in the challenge of *doing* architecture, not just looking at it. The aim is to try to understand how architecture works and what it can do; to identify what William Richard Lethaby called its 'powers' (see the quotation on page 8).

The method adopted is teleological, in that it analyses products of architecture to expose the intellectual processes underlying them. This book does not promote a particular process for design. Rather it seeks to expose the 'metalanguage' of architecture, the workings of which are apparent in examples from across the world and from all times. The task is one of description, not of prescription. *Analysing Architecture* is not about how architecture should be

done but about how it has been done, and is intended as a stimulus to thinking about how it might be done. This 'might' originates as much from contradiction as from emulation or imitation. One can find direction by contrariness, as children often demonstrate. It is a noble aim to try the opposite of what has been tried by others, even though the results might turn out to be desolate.

Part of the original purpose of this book was as a reminder that architectural design is about a great deal more than visual appearance. I used to complain about what I saw as the diminishment of architecture to criteria that focus on style and visual impact. Like Le Corbusier in *Towards a New Architecture*, I would complain about 'eyes which do not see'. I was overawed by the realisation that architecture is fundamentally about place; that place-making, or even just place-choosing, comes well before (and can be more consequential than) the sculptured appearance of buildings. I was also fascinated by the idea of architecture as a philosophical discipline that works not in words but through the organisation of the physical world. The mind tries to make sense of the world through philosophy, usually expressed in words; but it also makes sense of the world physically through architecture. Architecture, in that it sets the matrix within which lives are lived, is philosophical at a fundamental, though non-verbal, level.

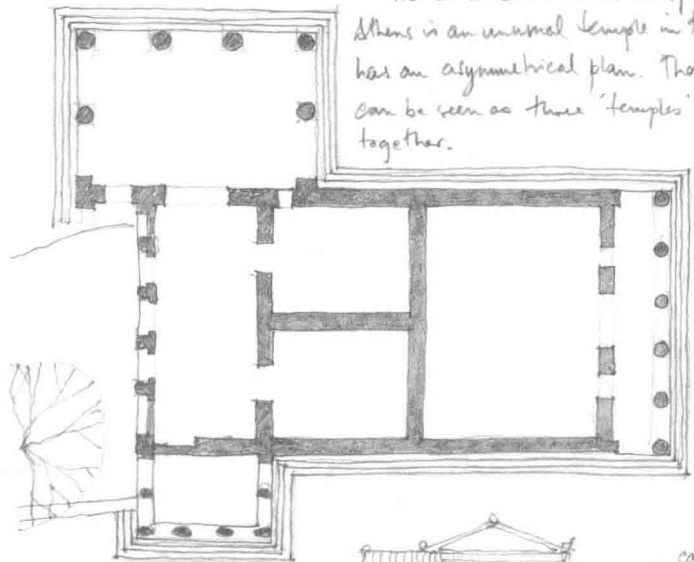
I am still driven by these interests, though now I have become reconciled to the power of image, to the inescapable fact that most architecture is promoted through photographs in architectural magazines, and that visual appearance is the basis on which many in architecture (critics as well as architects themselves) make their living. Superficiality rules, to a large extent. This may always be so but it nevertheless remains important for architects to understand the underlying workings of what they do, as a basis for striving towards the highest levels of intellectual and poetic aspiration. That is what this book is about.

Simon Unwin, January 2003

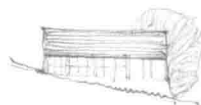
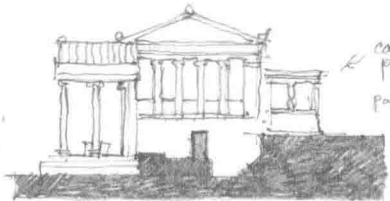
TEMPLES AND COTTAGES

⑦

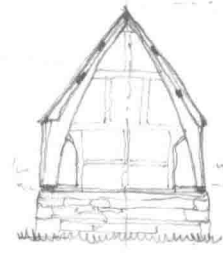
The Erechtheion on the Acropolis in Athens is an unusual temple in that it has an asymmetrical plan. Though it can be seen as three 'temples' stuck together.



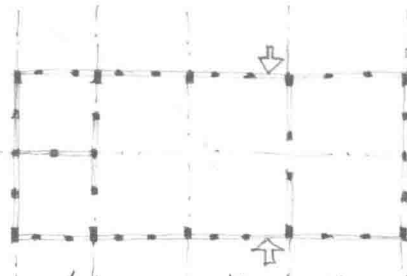
It is also unusual, as a temple, in that it responds to changing ground levels.



Side



X-section.



Ty Draw

(Llanarmon Mynydd Mawr, Denb.)

Whereas an old Welsh Cruck-frame house may be as ordered as a 'temple'. It may even stand clear of the ground on a plat form.

INTRODUCTION

Modern builders need a classification of architectural factors irrespective of time and country, a classification by essential variation... In architecture more than anywhere we are the slaves of names and categories, and so long as the whole field of past architectural experiment is presented to us accidentally only under historical schedules, designing architecture is likely to be conceived as scholarship rather than as the adaptation of its accumulated powers to immediate needs...

W.R. Lethaby – *Architecture*, 1911, pp. 8–9

Our profession is an old language and it has a grammar. And about this people don't know anything. So how is it they can do a building if they do not know the grammar? In the primary school you have a thing like an 'A'. Perhaps then you have 'apple'. A long time later you try to write a love letter. I think you have learned the language ten or eleven years until this moment. For me it's the same. It's very important that you give yourself time to learn this profession from the beginning.

Peter Märkli, quoted by Beatrice Galilee, in *IconEye: Icon Magazine Online*, May 2008
iconeye.com/read-previous-issues/icon-059-%7C-may-2008/peter-markli

INTRODUCTION

Architecture is an adventure that is best explored through the challenge of doing it. But as in any creative discipline, the adventure of architecture can be informed by looking at what others have done and, through analysing their work, trying to understand the ways they have met the challenges. Look in the notebooks of any great architect and you will see a magpie acquiring ideas from wherever they may be found, playing with them and taking possession of them.

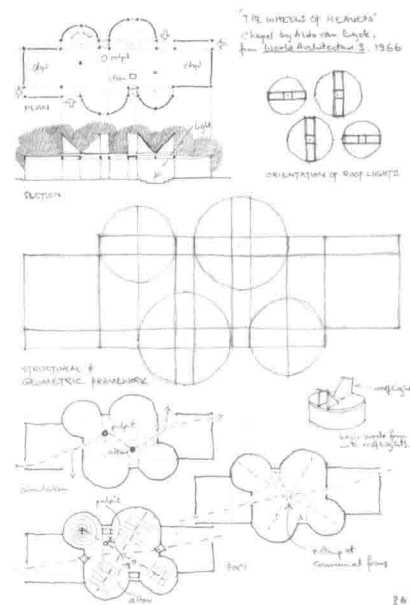
For some years I have used a notebook to analyse works of architecture. I find this exercise useful as an architect and it helps focus my teaching. My simple premise is that one's capacity for doing architecture can be developed by studying how it has been done by others. In this way one becomes aware of what Lethaby (opposite) called 'the accumulated powers' of architecture and, by looking at how other architects have used them, see how they might be exploited and developed in one's own design.

The form of this book

The following chapters illustrate some of the themes that have emerged in my notebooks. They offer observations on architecture, its elements, their powers, the conditions that affect it and attitudes that might be adopted in doing it.

After a more detailed discussion of 'How Analysis Helps Design', the second chapter offers a working definition of architecture, as 'Identification of Place'. This is put forward as the primary concern and burden of architecture as an activity. Realisation that the fundamental motivation of architecture is to identify places where things happen has been the key that has allowed me access into the related areas explored in this book. By the means of architecture we make places; places mediate between content and context. As a theme this underpins everything that follows.

Subsequent chapters illustrate 'Basic...' and 'Modifying Elements of Architecture', considerations that may be taken into account when doing it, and some common strategies for organising space. Each chapter deals with a specific theme; some deal with a number of sub-themes under a more general heading. The themes and sub-themes are like analytical filters or frames of reference. Each focuses on a particular aspect of the complexity of architecture: 'Elements Doing More Than One Thing'; 'Using Things That Are There'; 'Primitive Place Types'; 'Architecture as Making Frames'; 'Temples and Cortages'; 'Geometries of Being'; 'Ideal Geometry'. After that there are seven chapters exploring some of the fundamental strategies in organising space: relations between 'Space and Structure';



A notebook, in which you can analyse the work of other architects, is an essential accoutrement to learning how to do architecture.