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Intersections of Architecture, Poetry, and Wellbeing, at the Brion Cemetery:
Catharsis, Self-awareness, and Reframing

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ABSTRACT

‘If the architecture is any good, a person who looks and listens will feel its good effects without noticing’¹ claims Carlo Scarpa. This thesis explores wellbeing by demonstrating the role architecture can play in evoking a broad range of emotions to support wellbeing, as evidenced through a close study of three close readings of spaces at the Brion Cemetery: The Propylaea, the Water Pavilion, and the Arcosolium.

The methodology follows a phenomenological theoretical framework, applying three phenomenological paths as defined by David Seamon: first-person, existential, and hermeneutical. The close study includes personal visits on-site, personal observations and use of photography for the first-person approach; architectural students’ observations and interviews, and an interview with Scarpa’s close collaborator ,Guido Pietropoli-for the existential approach; the readings and interpretations of the guestbook found on-site at the Brion Cemetery as well as of the archival original material by Scarpa (drawings, texts, letters, notes, and cigarette packs) – for the hermeneutical approach.

The structure of the thesis is as follows: The *first chapter* introduces the thesis, with its aims, structure, content, and a glossary of terms. Three defining moments are described as prompts to shifts in the understanding of the phenomena at hand. This chapter presents the basis of how the research is conducted and the main pillars it relies upon. The *second chapter* introduces the general literature review, with a review that examines the interdisciplinary intersections of the three fields of architecture, poetry, and wellbeing, as well as a review on Scarpa and the Brion Cemetery. Overall, the chapter investigates the gap which is found at the intersections of architecture, poetry, and wellbeing and argues for the expansion of these intersections. The *third chapter* describes the methodology, with a detailed description of all methods used and steps followed. All the steps are presented, as well as the primary materials collection and analysis process. The following three chapters are the core chapters of analysis and evidence psychological reactions, possible at the Brion Cemetery. More specifically they evidence:

a. The *fourth chapter* discusses the theme of emotional identification and emotional release – also known as *catharsis*- specifically, at the intersecting circles, of the Propylaea. The chapter

¹ Francesco Dal Co and Giuseppe Mazzariol, *Carlo Scarpa: The Complete Works* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), p. 286.

sustains that the presence of emotions and the experiences of emotional release and identification are intimately connected with the poetry present at the Brion Cemetery.

b. The *fifth chapter* examines the theme of *self-awareness*, at the Water Pavilion. The chapter argues that the Water Pavilion allows a sense of presence and of intense self-awareness. This, in turn, can be a powerful mechanism towards wellbeing. It is the gift that the architect as a poet makes, Guido Pietropoli observes so that the person may encounter themselves.²

c. The *sixth chapter* discusses the theme of *reframing* at the Arcosolium. The chapter argues that the Cemetery and specifically the Arcosolium offers a possibility of shifting preconceived notions, and reflecting upon universal and life-changing experiences, such as death and love. The chapter connects them to a sense of wellbeing and sustains that poetry allows such mechanisms to be at play.

The close study of three tangible spatial readings evidences the range of emotions evoked by architectural mechanisms at the Brion Cemetery. Aligning with poetry connections to wellbeing and Poetry Therapy's interpretation of wellbeing, the thesis interprets the Brion Cemetery as enabling emotions, and recommends that spaces for wellbeing should allow similar opportunities to evoke emotions.

The *seventh chapter* presents an analysis by bringing together common threads from each of the case study chapters, and discusses in more depth the findings and the role of poetry in connection to wellbeing at the Brion Cemetery. The dynamic and static elements are analysed as critical characteristics of the Cemetery and indicative of a broad spectrum of experiential reactions. Following that a correlation of the body, natural & architectural elements as common threads in all three tangible moments in space, is presented. Lastly, the three interpretations of wellbeing, catharsis, self-awareness and reframing are further analysed.

The *eighth chapter*, being the conclusion of the research, summarises the findings and proposes future direction for the research.

² Conversation with Guido Pietropoli, 2019.

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CHAPTER 1

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the thesis, its aims, research questions and the structure of the thesis. It starts with a personal description of a personal encounter at the Brion Cemetery, as the catalyst which motivated the research, followed by two later encounters, which shaped the perception of the topic and the direction of the study. The aims of the research which will also be discussed are connected to the research question of the study: how does the poetic experience at the Brion Cemetery support wellbeing?

The thesis will argue that the Brion Cemetery supports wellbeing through poetic experience as a spectrum of experiences, and will examine this argument through three tangible moments in space: the Propylaea, the Meditation Pavilion, the Arcosolium. It follows a phenomenological approach and more specifically David Seamon's first-person, existential, and hermeneutical methods. The concepts of wellbeing that are being explored are catharsis, self-awareness, and reframing.

1.2 ANECDOTES AS PIVOTAL MOMENTS

a. First encounter: catalyst

“You go, and I’ll stay in the car.” These were the words of one of the people in our group who had decided to visit the Brion Cemetery. The person was feeling rather tired and not energised to visit an architectural site after a long, tiring, hot summer day in 2015. However, at the very last minute, they changed their mind and decided to come and take a look. This was my first in-situ visit to the Cemetery, which I previously knew of as an architect and had read about. Although anticipating an encounter with a well-known architectural work, it was unlike anything I had ever experienced before. It engaged us all, step by step, as we wandered in wonder and delight. The level of detail, the vivid materiality, the fascinating frames, paths and the atmospheres created were a continuous surprise: an experience which was both invigorating and calming. What was most intriguing to me was that the person who initially had not wanted to join was now absorbed and exploring the place, to the degree that they were even inviting the rest of us to further notice the details or their unexpected discoveries. Long after, this first encounter and the emotional impact the visit had on me as well as on my travel companions remained imprinted in my mind as a uniquely memorable experience.



Figure 1 Photograph taken while standing outside the Cemetery and looking at it, from one of its corners

b. Second Encounter: Shifts of perception

After the first year of my doctoral studies, during which I was studying Architecture, Poetry, and Wellbeing, in general, I took part in an international conference, where I needed an example which would represent my argument. I chose the Brion Cemetery, because of the highly visceral experiential memory it had left on me. That was bound to become the actual focus and case study for the thesis: an architectural example, rich in stimuli, which I had intuitively characterised as ‘poetic’ in my mind and which felt to me that could hold space for the experiences I was examining. So, during my second year of doctoral studies, I returned to the Brion Cemetery, this time as a researcher, observing a group of architectural students who were visiting Venice for their educational trip. I closely observed them on site, recorded their reactions and, following the visit, held semi-structured interviews with them. The observations and interviews made it clear that the Cemetery did not solely uplift – as it had affected my travel companion in 2015 - but it also presented itself as a kind of challenge. Students described their discomfort not as an unsettling experience, but rather as one that placed them in a state of reflection and a shift of expectations. Although anticipating some degree of sombreness when visiting a cemetery, the students' experiences captured a range of emotions beyond that of the restorative experiences my companion had experienced so vividly in 2015. The students described moments of effort, intense awareness, and contemplation around death. These experiences will be described in Chapters 4, 5 and 6.



Figure 2 Visit with architectural students, at the Propylaea

c. Third Encounter: Intense emotions and realisations

This episode, which will be mentioned again in Chapter 4, describes another catalytic moment in the course of the study. The incident took place on one of my visits to the Cemetery, during the primary materials collection stage. It was a rainy day when I visited it for the third time, and the atmosphere was sober and yet peaceful. There were very few people and I felt that I was almost alone. As I was inside the Propylaea and approached the intersecting circles (created by the intersection of two circles on the wall), I rested my body against the cold but inviting structure and stayed there, taking a momentary break, looking at the Water Pavilion on my right side and then at the Brion couple's sarcophagi (burial spaces) on my left. The silence and the scenery of the landscape created a moment of stimulating peace. Suddenly, without even realising it, I found tears running down my face. It was as if that space was holding a space for me to exist, just as I was, at that moment. In Chapter 4, the specifics of this experience will be explained.



Figure 3 Water at the Brion Cemetery: from rain to tears, at the intersecting circles of the Propylaea

1.3 AIMS

The thesis aims at uncovering evidence in order to support the question and possibility of wellbeing at the Cemetery through evoking a range of emotions. It examines the precise moments in space where psychological reactions have been observed and how these are connected to poetry. To do so, specific definitions of psychological reactions connected to wellbeing are being examined and defined: catharsis, self-awareness, reframing. Each one is connected to one of three tangible examples in space. The study aims at proving that poetry, architecture, and wellbeing are connected and manifest at the Cemetery. The gap the thesis addresses is aligned with an original reading of the Brion Cemetery, which examines its poetic qualities in connection to its potentially therapeutic value, through an interdisciplinary perspective and a thorough examination of concepts of wellbeing.

1.4 CHAPTER STRUCTURE AND CONTENT

The structure of the thesis is as follows: The *first chapter* introduces the thesis, with its aims, structure, content, and a glossary of terms. Three defining moments are described as prompts to shifts in the understanding of the phenomena at hand. This chapter presents the basis of how the research is conducted and the main pillars it relies upon. The *second chapter* introduces the general literature review with a review that examines the interdisciplinary intersections of the three fields of architecture, poetry, and wellbeing, as well as a review on Scarpa and the Brion Cemetery. Overall, the chapter investigates the gap which is found at the intersections of architecture, poetry, and wellbeing and argues for the expansion of these intersections. The *third chapter* describes the methodology, with a detailed description of all methods used and steps followed. All the steps are presented, as well as the primary materials collection and analysis process. The following three chapters are the core chapters of analysis and evidence psychological reactions, possible at the Brion Cemetery. More specifically they evidence:

- a. The *Fourth chapter* discusses the theme of emotional identification and emotional release – also known as *catharsis*- specifically, at the intersecting circles of the Propylaea. The chapter argues that the presence of emotions and the experiences of emotional release and identification are intimately connected with the poetry present at the Brion Cemetery.

b. The *fifth chapter* examines the theme of *self-awareness*, at the Water Pavilion. The chapter argues that the Water Pavilion allows a sense of presence and of intense self-awareness. This, in turn, can be a powerful mechanism towards wellbeing. It is the gift that the architect as the poet makes, Guido Pietropoli argues, so that the person may encounter themselves.³

c. *The sixth chapter* presents the theme of *reframing* at the Arcosolium. The chapter sustains that the Cemetery and specifically the Arcosolium offers a possibility of shifting preconceived notions, and reflecting upon universal and life-changing experiences, such as death and love. The chapter connects them to a sense of wellbeing and argues that poetry allows such mechanisms to be at play.

The close study of three tangible spatial readings evidences the range of emotions evoked by architectural mechanisms at the Brion Cemetery. Aligning with poetry connections to wellbeing and Poetry Therapy's interpretation of wellbeing, the thesis interprets the Brion Cemetery as enabling emotions, and recommends that spaces for wellbeing should allow similar opportunities to evoke emotions.

The seventh chapter presents an analysis by bringing together common threads from each of the case study chapters, and discusses in more depth the findings and the role of poetry in connection to wellbeing at the Brion Cemetery. The dynamic and static elements are analysed as critical characteristics of the Cemetery and indicative of a broad spectrum of experiential reactions. Following that, a correlation of the body, natural & architectural elements as common threads in all three tangible moments in space, is presented. Lastly, the three interpretations of wellbeing, reframing, self-awareness, and catharsis are further analysed.

The *eighth chapter*, being the conclusion of the research, summarises the findings and proposes future direction for the research.

³ Conversation with Guido Pietropoli, 2019.

1.5 GLOSSARY

1. WHO: World Health Organization
2. SWB: Subjective wellbeing
3. PWB: Psychological wellbeing
4. IUAV: ‘Istituto Universitario di Architettura di Venezia’, now changed to ‘Università IUAV di Venezia’
5. FAI: Fondo per l’Ambiente Italiano

CHAPTER 2: INTERDISCIPLINARY EXPLORATIONS OF THE STATE OF ART: ARCHITECTURE, POETRY, WELLBEING

2.1 INTRODUCTION

An initial literature review examines concepts of wellbeing outside and within the built environment, and introduces Poetry Therapy and insights from therapeutic contexts where poetry is considered valuable, as a focus for the therapeutic scope of the study. It connects the three fields of wellbeing, poetry, and architecture by reviewing research regarding poetry in architecture and its connections to wellbeing. The scope of the literature covers arguments made in the 20th and 21st century and mostly within a phenomenological framework. An introduction to Scarpa and the Brion Cemetery concludes the introductory literature review, introducing key literature which will be examined in more detail through the case study chapters.

The literature review highlights that a well-established field of knowledge of the connection between the three fields (architecture, poetry, and wellbeing) does not exist, per se, in the literature and identifies insights and gaps in the intersections of these three fields. This literature review, in connecting these three fields, forms the basis of an original reading of Scarpa’s architectural approach at the Brion Cemetery by examining concepts of wellbeing through the prism of poetry’s potential therapeutic value and Poetry Therapy.

2.2 POETRY AS A FOCUS

2.2.1 Aims & definitions

A brief introduction of poetry as an important and beneficial qualitative vehicle to draw on for architecture is presented by exploring how poetics and poetry have been defined in Western societies. Poetry has been described as ‘writing that formulates a concentrated imaginative awareness of experience in language chosen and arranged to create a specific emotional response through meaning, sound and rhythm’,⁴ whereas ‘poetics,’ on the other hand, is defined as ‘the art of writing poetry’ and ‘the study of linguistic techniques in poetry and literature’.⁵ Etymologically, poetry originates from the ancient Greek word ‘poiesis’ which derives from the word ‘poieo-poio’ which means ‘to make/to create’.⁶

2.2.2 Poetry as a shaper of experiences

What is it about language, and poetry, as a specific part of language, which is valuable for the scope and aim of this research and why should one inquire into the function of language as a shaper? Gaston Bachelard, in his *Poetics of Space*, takes a position on the matter and comments by reflecting on the words of Jean-Bertrand Pontalis: ‘The speaking subject, is the entire subject’.⁷ In *Words and Buildings*, Adrian Forty argues on the importance of language, writing that ‘Critical vocabulary is not about things, it is about encounters with things, and it is above all as a means of structuring those experiences that language is of value’.⁸

⁴ ‘Definition of Poetry’, Merriam-Webster (2013)<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/poetry>[accessed 15 December 2023].

⁵ ‘Poetics | Definition of poetics in English by Oxford Dictionaries’, Oxford Dictionaries (2023)<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/poetics>[15 December 2023].

⁶ Johnny L., Bertolio, ‘Allegory and the Matter of Poetics: Dante as a Case Study in Giovanni Boccaccio’s and Leonardo Bruni’s Perspectives’, *Renaissance, and Reformation*, 44.4 (2022), 173–89, p. 175.

⁷ Gaston Bachelard, *Poetics of Space* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), p. xxviii.

⁸ Adrian Forty, *Words and Buildings : A Vocabulary of Modern Architecture* (London Thames & Hudson, 2000), p. 15.

This research addresses the experience of poetry, examining specific ways in which poetry functions. A focus is placed on the function which lies beyond specific formal requirements which aim at achieving a specific effect. The focus will be on those vehicles and atmospheres that poetry uses, to enable the person who experiences poetry to view, experience and relate to the world in a certain manner. As Aristotle observes:

The difference between the historian and the poet is not that between using verse or prose, Herodotus' work could be versified and would be just as much a kind of history in verse as in prose. No, the difference is this: that the one relates actual events, the other the kinds of things that might occur.⁹

This statement will be repeated throughout the thesis, as it is critical in understanding what is considered poetic architectural experience and how it is different from the prosaic architectural experience. In the following subchapter there will be an analysis of the specific ways that poetry relates to this research, not only regarding the key themes that emerge from the literature review but also as far as the beneficial effects of the poetic experience are concerned.

2.2.3 Poetry and wellbeing

This section, considers the trajectory of poetry's perceived psychological value and reviews literature on how one relates to and experiences poetry in a healing and restorative manner. The main fields that will be examined will entail the use of poetry in a therapeutic context, during the last century. The field of 'Poetry Therapy' will be included, as well as relevant research in the therapeutic context around 'poetics of therapy' which aligns with the overall scope, theoretical frameworks, and objectives of the study.

⁹ Aristotle, 'Poetics', Loeb Classical Library (2023) https://www.loebclassics.com/view/aristotle-poetics/1995/pb_LCL199.3.xml[Accessed 15 December 2023].

2.2.4 Historical roots

Poetry has been considered a way of exploring the human condition for as long as humans have expressed themselves.¹⁰ Apart from being a means of exploration, poetry has also been used as an important vehicle towards healing and the improvement of mental health and wellbeing. According to Nicolas Mazza, in the *Journal of Poetry Therapy*, the ancient Greeks were the first to conceive connections between poetry and healing.¹¹ From ancient Greece and Rome to contemporary psychiatric approaches, there is a ‘therapeutic alliance between medicine and poetry.’¹² There have also been several attempts to bring poetry closer to people and highlight its value in our ordinary lives. As Sherry Reiter sustains, Abraham Maslow is among the pioneers in stressing the importance of creativity for wellbeing.¹³ This was the aim of books which took the form of ‘prescriptions’ corresponding specific poems for specific moods. One early attempt was in 1925 by Robert Haven Schaufliker, with his book *The Poetry Cure: A Pocket Medicine*.¹⁴ In more recent years, poetry viewed as a therapeutic tool has entered everyday culture. William Sieghart publishes the book *The Poetry Pharmacy: Tried-and-True Prescriptions for the Heart, Mind and Soul*.¹⁵ In the years of COVID-19, it assumed an applied role in times of loss, crisis, and uncertainty. Anthony Caleshu, Rory Waterman and Sam Kemp highlight : ‘Politicians, medics, teachers, protesters, all manner of people from around the world and in various circumstances, turned to poetry as a means of coping with the new reality’.¹⁶

¹⁰ Kathryn S. Collins, Rich Furman, and Carol L. Langer, ‘Poetry Therapy as a Tool of Cognitively Based Practice’, *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 33.3 (2006), 180–87, p. 182.

¹¹ Nicolas Mazza, *Poetry Therapy: Theory and Practice* (Florence: Taylor and Francis, 2016), p. 5.

¹² Leah Olson-McBride, ‘A Content Analysis of Poems Most Frequently Utilized by Poetry Therapists’, *Journal of Poetry Therapy*, 25.3 (2012), 137–49, p. 139.

¹³ Sherry Reiter, ‘Words Are My Best Friends: Reclaiming Voice and Soul through Twenty Years of Multi-Modal Poetry and Drama Therapy’, *Journal of Poetry Therapy*, 2022, 1–11, p. 158.

¹⁴ Nicolas Mazza, *Poetry Therapy: Theory and Practice* (Florence: Taylor and Francis, 2016), p. 6.

¹⁵ Kate Kellaway, ‘William Sieghart: “I Want People to Drop Their Fear of Poetry”’, *The Guardian* (2017) <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2017/oct/01/william-sieghart-meet-author-poetry-pharmacy-interview> [accessed 15 December 2023].

¹⁶ Anthony Caleshu, Rory Waterman, and Sam Kemp, ‘Poetry and COVID-19: The Benefit of Poetry and the Poetryandcovidarchive.com Website to Mental Health and Wellbeing’, *Journal of Poetry Therapy*, 2023, 1–21, p.1.

2.2.5 Poetry therapy: objectives & key theories

Poetry Therapy which belongs to the ‘expressive therapies’ category, is defined as ‘a creative art therapy modality that employs poetry and other forms of evocative literature to achieve therapeutic goals and personal growth’.¹⁷ It is a discipline that has been developing in the last 30 years,¹⁸ and it has been described as having ‘regulating, balancing, alleviating, healing and integrating effects’ to the human psyche.¹⁹ This type of approach, which has not only been applied within the medical fields but also in other contexts such as in social work,²⁰ is divided into three main domains:

- (1) The receptive/prescriptive component, involving the introduction of literature into therapy
- (2) The expressive/creative component involving the use of client writing in therapy
- (3) The symbolic/ceremonial component involving the use of metaphors, rituals, and storytelling.²¹

Hynes and Hynes-Berry’s criteria, a comprehensive model for selection of poems according to their content and efficiency suggests that ‘poems considered most appropriate for use include the themes that are powerful, comprehensible, positive, and about universal experiences/emotions’.²² The importance of allowing mental space for reflection as an essential element of the poetic experience has also been pointed out. Dawn Freshwater, in her article *The Poetics of Space: Researching the Concept of Spatiality Through Relationality*, explains the importance of silence and reflection within the therapeutic,

¹⁷ Leah Olson-McBride, ‘A Content Analysis of Poems Most Frequently Utilized by Poetry Therapists’, *Journal of Poetry Therapy*, 25.3 (2012), 137–49, p. 182.

¹⁸ Kathryn S. Collins, Rich Furman, and Carol L. Langer, ‘Poetry Therapy as a Tool of Cognitively Based Practice’, *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 33.3 (2006), 180–87, p. 182.

¹⁹ Silke Heimes, ‘State of Poetry Therapy Research (Review)’, *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 38.1 (2011), 1–8, p.2.

²⁰ Nicholas Mazza, *Poetry Therapy: Theory and Practice* (Florence: Taylor and Francis, 2016), p. 2.

²¹ Kathryn S. Collins, Rich Furman, and Carol L. Langer, ‘Poetry Therapy as a Tool of Cognitively Based Practice’, *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 33.3 (2006), 180–87, p. 182.

²² Leah Olson-McBride, ‘A Content Analysis of Poems Most Frequently Utilized by Poetry Therapists’, *Journal of Poetry Therapy*, 25.3 (2012), 137–49, p. 140.

reflective space as a poetic process which helps shape a ‘potential space’.²³ Poetry Therapy has also been linked to theories of wellbeing, such as the PERMA model, which will be explored in a following section of this chapter.²⁴ Generally speaking, Poetry Therapy employs qualitative methods and anyone, regardless of age, background etc., can be part of it. As this new field, which is closely examining the effects of poetry on the human psyche, and as the value of poetry is developing, being recognised, and employed as a meaningful and feasible vehicle towards healing, the thesis explores how its insights can be related to the architectural discipline and experience.

2.3 POETRY IN ARCHITECTURE AND WELLBEING

2.3.1 Motivations and questions

Pérez-Gómez, referring to the challenges of the 21st century and humanity’s wellbeing, states:

Given our complex world, burdened by environmental degradation and social inequity, the question of architecture’s contribution to humanity’s well-being is not an obvious one, but it seems to have an urgency that it lacked during the earlier, more optimistic phases of modernity.²⁵

However, the considerations around the role of architecture in this regard are not new, nor are the questions around its potential therapeutic/beneficial function. Gary Evans observes: ‘Perhaps the most difficult intellectual challenge facing scholars and policymakers interested in the potential role of the built environment in mental health is the issue of underlying mechanisms or explanatory models’.²⁶ Pallasmaa comments: ‘Today the art of architecture is

²³ Dawn Freshwater, ‘The Poetics of Space: Researching the Concept of Spatiality Through Relationality’, *Psychodynamic Practice*, 11.2 (2015), 177-187, p. 186,

²⁴ Ashley A. Floyd, ‘The Use of Poetry Therapy in Sex Therapy’, *Sexual and Relationship Therapy*, 2019, 1–10, p.108.

²⁵ Alberto Pérez-Gómez, ‘Built Upon Love: Towards Beauty and Justice in Architecture’, *Mosaic: A Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature*, 44 (2011), 43–59, p. 43.

²⁶ Gary Evans, ‘The Built Environment and Mental Health’, *Journal of Urban Health*, 80.4 (2003), 536–55, p. 546.

threatened by three developments: total instrumentalisation (or functionalisation), aestheticisation and commercialisation'.²⁷ A question arises. 'How many buildings strike us today as structures that could just as well have been otherwise: products of accident or caprice? Is this what creativity has come to?' asks Karsten Harries.²⁸ Applying the experiential qualities of poetry towards a new interpretation of spaces which are closer to our psychosomatic needs expands the conversation of what can constitute a "poetic" experience which has beneficial psychological qualities in the built environment.

2.3.2 Wellbeing

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), health is defined as 'a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity'.²⁹ However, the definitions and concepts around what constitutes a mentally healthy person have varied throughout the years and are still being shaped, depending on the point of view which they adopt each time and what they take into consideration. The WHO defines mental health as 'a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to contribute to his or her community'.³⁰

The quest for knowledge around how to live well has always been part of the human experience and efforts, and, according to Donald Schon, during the last 150 years, the sciences and studies on the human psyche have evolved and many approaches and disciplines have been developed. From psychiatrists and psychoanalysts to clinical psychologists and the several psychotherapeutic approaches, the discourse of what

²⁷ Juhani Pallasmaa and Manuel Nunes Ramires Serrano, 'Architecture as a Force of Cultural Resistance' (2017) <https://www.opendemocracy.net/can-europe-make-it/manuel-nunes-ramires-serrano-juhani-pallasmaa/architecture-as-force-of-cultural-r> [accessed 15 December 2023].

²⁸ Karsten Harries, 'Towards a New Poetics of Architecture', *Building Research & Information*, 34.3 (2006), 295–98, p. 295.

²⁹ WHO, 'Constitution of WHO: Principles' (2018), <http://www.who.int/about/mission/en/> [accessed 15 December 2023].

³⁰ WHO, 'Investing in Treatment for Depression and Anxiety Leads to Fourfold Return' (2016), <http://www.who.int/news-room/detail/13-04-2016-investing-in-treatment-for-depression-and-anxiety-leads-to-fourfold-return> [accessed 15 December 2023].

constitutes a healthy psyche has been expanded.³¹ He explains:

Within psychiatry proper, Havens has described four main schools: objective-descriptive psychiatry, psychoanalysis, interpersonal psychiatry, and existential psychiatry. In the larger therapeutic universe, there are also various sorts of group therapy, family therapy, operant conditioning, Rogerian therapy, Gestalt therapy, short-term therapy, and transactional analysis, to name only a few of the more prominent voices. The fragmentation of the field provoked several kinds of response. Psychoanalysts tried to preserve their special status. Psychiatrists who wanted to keep close to medical science were attracted by advances in psychopharmacology. Representatives of different schools of therapy debated and competed more or less openly with one another.³²

More recently, there have been calls for more holistic definitions around what constitutes mental health. Researchers have argued that the definition needs refining and more elements need to be added, such as the integration of negative reactions and experiences, as part of mental health. Silvana Galderisi and others sustain:

Mental health is a dynamic state of internal equilibrium which enables individuals to use their abilities in harmony with universal values of society. Basic cognitive and social skills; ability to recognize, express and modulate one's own emotions, as well as empathize with others; flexibility and ability to cope with adverse life events and function in social roles; and harmonious relationship between body and mind represent important components of mental health which contribute, to varying degrees, to the state of internal equilibrium.³³

They further explain:

³¹ Donald A. Schön, *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action* (London: Temple Smith, 1983), p. 170.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ Silvana Galderisi, Andreas Heinz, Marianne Kastrup, Julian Beezhold, and Norman Sartorius, 'Toward a New Definition of Mental Health', *World Psychiatry*, 14.2 (2015), 231–33, p. 231.

People in good mental health are often sad, unwell, angry, or unhappy, and this is part of a fully lived life for a human being. In spite of this, mental health has been often conceptualized as a purely positive affect, marked by feelings of happiness and sense of mastery over the environment.³⁴

This approach is in line with this thesis's idea that a range of responses and spatial experiences are beneficial towards wellbeing. Theodore Stickley and Dawn Freshwater note that:

There has been a noticeable shift in the way in which therapeutic space is both conceived of and used in recent years. Where once individual sessions were underpinned and, to a certain extent, led by psychological theories of relationships, more recently the focus appears to emphasise the importance of structured assessments and care plan reviews.³⁵

Overall, it is safe to say that what constitutes mental health and wellbeing is not set in stone. For Keyes there are three aspects of mental health: emotional wellbeing, psychological wellbeing, and social wellbeing.³⁶Ryff's model of psychological wellbeing (PWB) is informed by the Greek word of "eudaimonia" (meaning living well) and includes the following categories: purpose in life, autonomy, personal growth, environmental mastery, positive relationships with others, and self-acceptance.³⁷On the other hand, Diener's model of subjective wellbeing (SWB) stems from the Greek word of "hedone" (meaning pleasure).³⁸These two concepts of subjective wellbeing and psychological wellbeing are considered the two main ideas around the topic. Frauke Schultze-Lutteret and others write:

³⁴ Silvana Galderisi, Andreas Heinz, Marianne Kastrup, Julian Beezhold, and Norman Sartorius, 'Toward a New Definition of Mental Health', *World Psychiatry*, 14.2 (2015), 231–33, p. 231.

³⁵ Theodore Stickley and Dawn Freshwater, 'The Concept of Space in the Context of the Therapeutic Relationship', *Mental Health Practice*, 12.6 (2009), 28–30, p. 28.

³⁶ Silvana Galderisi, Andreas Heinz, Marianne Kastrup, Julian Beezhold, and Norman Sartorius, 'Toward a New Definition of Mental Health', *World Psychiatry*, 14.2 (2015), 231–33, p. 231.

³⁷ Frauke Schultze-Lutter, Benno G. Schimmelmann, and Stefanie J. Schmidt, 'Resilience, Risk, Mental Health, and Well-Being: Associations and Conceptual Differences', *European Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, 25.5 (2016), 459–66, p. 464.

³⁸ Ibid.

‘Psychological well-being is the broadest and most all-inclusive term. It includes ‘Subjective well-being’³⁹. Melissa K. Kovich and others observe:

Perhaps the most holistic model is the PERMA model introduced in 2011 by Seligman. This model includes several components of wellbeing. The model includes cognitive happiness, hedonic happiness and eudaimonia. It looks into five elements: (a) Positive Emotion, (b) Engagement, (c) Relationships, (d) Meaning, and (e) Accomplishment .⁴⁰

They explain: ‘Each element contributes to well-being, can be pursued for its own sake and is independently defined and measured’.⁴¹ The field around wellbeing is currently still under development, as definitions are still being created and developed. The literature indicates that there are diverse types of wellbeing and that the understanding around the concept is fragmented and not conclusive. There is no one-fits-all definition, and wellbeing is often used interchangeably, when describing mental health, quality of life or happiness .⁴² This research examines wellbeing which refers to the personal and subjective experience. For the aims of this specific study, the thesis does not address social or economic wellbeing, but focuses on the individual and their psychological and emotional experiences. It does not address clinical conditions, and therefore mental health in the strict sense of the word. It could be said that given the more holistic definition of wellbeing of the PERMA model, it is conceptually closer to it. However, the thesis aligns itself with the premise of Galderisi and others who, as mentioned previously, propose a new definition for mental health arguing for a more holistic one which includes the full range of reactions .⁴³

³⁹ Frauke Schultze-Lutter, Benno G. Schimmelmann, and Stefanie J. Schmidt, ‘Resilience, Risk, Mental Health, and Well-Being: Associations and Conceptual Differences’, *European Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, 25.5 (2016), 459–66, p. 434.

⁴⁰ Melissa K. Kovich, Vicki L. Simpson, Karen J. Foli, Zachary Hass, and Rhonda G. Phillips, ‘Application of the PERMA Model of Well-Being in Undergraduate Students’, *International Journal of Community Well-Being*, 6.1 (2022), 1–20, p. 3.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Hamed Janahi, Shibu Raman, and Gabriela Zapata-Lancaster, ‘Understanding the Impact of the Residential Built Environment Design on Inhabitants’ Wellbeing’ <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/295185386.pdf> [accessed 15 December 2023].

⁴³ Silvana Galderisi, Andreas Heinz, Marianne Kastrup, Julian Beezhold, and Norman Sartorius, ‘Toward a New Definition of Mental Health’, *World Psychiatry*, 14.2 (2015), 231–33, p. 231.

Given the fragmented understanding of what constitutes wellbeing and mental health, instead of drawing on and imposing a predefined definition and/or model, the thesis explores and evidences aspects that are connected to wellbeing and poetic architectural experience brought forth at the Brion Cemetery, which could, in turn, articulate a new perception of wellbeing or add new context to the already established ones.

2.3.3 Phenomenological Psychology

Phenomenological psychology has been developing over the past few decades. Its emergence in the qualitative methods of psychological practice and research has been evolving owing to ‘dissatisfaction with quantitative methods among sections of the psychological community’.⁴⁴ However, phenomenological psychology consists of different approaches and is not a homogenous discipline, and it has also been argued that there is no ‘phenomenological psychotherapy’ which could be, yet, regarded as a therapeutic school.⁴⁵ Those approaches have been found to have similarities but also differences, depending on what aspects and approaches of the phenomenological movement they adopt.⁴⁶ My study examines concepts of wellbeing, particularly under the theoretical and methodological framework of phenomenological psychology which offers a useful ‘focus on human experience as a topic in its own right’ and ‘a concern with meaning and the way in which meaning arises in experience’.⁴⁷ Through this approach, concepts in phenomenology include “embodiment, spatiality, temporality and intersubjectivity”.⁴⁸ Similarly, fundamental existential themes include “our relationship with time, our bodies, our physical environment and other people”.⁴⁹ For example, Mazza comments on the existential-integrative framework introduced by Kirk Schneider:

⁴⁴ Darren Langdrige, *Phenomenological Psychology Theory, Research and Method* (Harlow: Prentice Hall, 2007), p.2.

⁴⁵ Thomas Fuchs, ‘Psychotherapy of the Lived Space: A Phenomenological and Ecological Concept’, *American Journal of Psychotherapy*, 61.4 (2007), 432–43, p. 437.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁴⁷ Darren Langdrige, *Phenomenological Psychology Theory, Research and Method* (Harlow: Prentice Hall, 2007), p.9.

⁴⁸ Thomas Fuchs, ‘Psychotherapy of the Lived Space: A Phenomenological and Ecological Concept’, *American Journal of Psychotherapy*, 61.4 (2007), 432–43, p. 437.

⁴⁹ David Harper and Andrew Thompson, *Qualitative Research Methods in Mental Health and Psychotherapy* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), p. 119.

Existential- integrative psychotherapy advanced by Schneider (2008) is well suited to poetry therapy with phenomenological method that “combines the artistic approach of immersing oneself in and empathizing with a given experience with the scientific approach of systematically organizing and sharing an experience with a professional community”. Of course poetry therapy is still in an infancy stage compared to other theories but its threads to clinical literary and philosophical disciplines continue to grow stronger with increases in qualitative (including poetic inquiry) and quantitative research.⁵⁰

Stickley and Freshwater’s qualitative research within the phenomenological framework has identified concepts such as silence and metaphor as valuable elements which shape the therapeutic space and provide an opportunity for healing and growth. Stickley argues that ‘the lack of silence in Western culture is a contemporary issue’⁵¹ and even though they recognise that people relate in different ways to silence, they conclude that ‘for therapeutic work to take place in an interpersonal relationship, silence is imperative’.⁵² The concept of meaning, which has also been found within this specific framework, is one of the core concepts of phenomenological thinking. Richard Furman, in an analysis of the value of existential theory within the poetry therapy framework, states, while citing Bugental (1978), that: ‘Meaning, and a person’s ability to construct a meaningful life, lies at the heart of existential thought’.⁵³ To conclude, the phenomenological frameworks identified here in psychology have parallels with literature discussing the phenomenological movement in architecture, but also with literature discussing Scarpa and the Brion Cemetery, as will be analysed in a following section of this review.

⁵⁰ Nicholas Mazza, *Poetry Therapy* (New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2017), p. 13.

⁵¹ Theodore Stickley and Dawn Freshwater, ‘The Concept of Space in the Context of the Therapeutic Relationship’, *Mental Health Practice*, 12.6 (2009), 28–30, p. 29.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Rich Furman, ‘Poetry and Narrative as Qualitative Data: Explorations into Existential Theory’, *Indo-Pacific Journal of Phenomenology*, 7.1 (2007), 1–9, p. 4.

2.3.4 Wellbeing and architecture

The understanding that the environment can have a powerful and healing effect on mental health has been present since antiquity, with examples of such approaches in ancient Greece, where art and nature were used within temples for healing.⁵⁴ Paul L. Alt observes:

Sacred healing spaces were the primary healing environments for societies of the ancient world, curing individual and collective maladies. In the 5th Century BCE, for example, the Archaic Greeks created a healing city at Epidaurus (Greece). This healing city incorporated both the Asclepion (spiritual) and Hippocratic (scientific) healing modalities. Likewise in Japan, tea rituals were often used to mend society during the brutal civil wars of the Kamakura Period [1185–1392]. Samurai warriors traumatized by loss particularly benefitted from tea rituals conducted within gardens.⁵⁵

During the last century, a substantial body of research has identified specific elements of the built and natural environment to comprehend how it is possible to create better healthcare environments which promote healing.⁵⁶ ‘People who live in surroundings with more green space have consistently lower incidences of depression and anxiety, asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, diabetes, and coronary heart disease’ observes Sarah Robinson, reflecting on relevant literature.⁵⁷ The idea of natural elements, such as light, affecting healing and psychology, within health buildings, has long been established. Schweitzer and others remark:

Florence Nightingale recognized the negative effects of hospitals by observing differences in survival rates at various facilities. She attributed this difference to the hospitals’ design and construction, particularly regarding crowding, light, and

⁵⁴ Paul L. Alt, ‘Sacred Space and the Healing Journey’, *Annals of Palliative Medicine*, 6.3 (2017), 284–96, p. 284.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 290.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ Sarah Robinson, ‘John Dewey and the Dialogue Between Architecture and Neuroscience’, *Architectural Research Quarterly*, 19.4 (2015), 361–67, p. 364.

ventilation. Biophilic design, for example, is a strand of research which looks specifically into the role of natural elements and plants within indoor spaces.⁵⁸

Studies have also offered data and interpretations of how the environment has the capacity to affect the mental health of people, causing psychological distress and pointing also negatively towards links with even more severe conditions, such as depression.⁵⁹ Elements like poor-quality housing, high-rise housing, crowding, pollutants and noise, insufficient daylight are all examples which have been associated with poor mental health. So far, the effects of the natural environment as well as ambient environmental conditions have been amply documented.⁶⁰

However, literature on this subject has identified a gap regarding our knowledge of how the architectural and built environment affects us. As Evans and Janetta Mitchell observe: ‘We spend upwards of 90% of our lives within buildings, yet we know much more about the effects of ambient environmental conditions on human health than we do about how buildings affect our health’.⁶¹ This gap, which is still present in our modern times, has also been identified by architects, throughout the years. ‘There is a gap between architecture’s consciousness of itself as rigorous discipline and the everyday way in which it affects people’ Gerald Walker observes.⁶² Daniel Stokols suggests: ‘A key challenge is to develop new concepts and research methods that foster greater coordination, rather than polarization, between instrumental and spiritual views of environment and behavior’.⁶³ ‘Indeed, it is only recently that atmosphere, mood and attunement have become part of modern architectural theory and discourse’⁶⁴ argues Pallasmaa, while also observing that concepts like these were

⁵⁸ Marc Schweitzer, Laura Gilpin, and Susan Frampton, ‘Healing Spaces: Elements of Environmental Design That Make an Impact on Health’, *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*, 10.1 (2004), 71–83, p.71.

⁵⁹ Sarah Robinson, ‘John Dewey and the Dialogue Between Architecture and Neuroscience’, *Architectural Research Quarterly*, 19.4 (2015), 361–67, p. 364.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Gary Evans and Janetta McCoy, ‘When Buildings Don’t Work’, *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 18.1 (1998), 85–94, p. 85

⁶² Gerald Walker, ‘Architecture, Method, and the Poetic Image’, *Journal of Architectural Education*, 40.2 (1987), 85–86, p.85

⁶³ Daniel Stokols, ‘Instrumental and Spiritual Views of People-Environment Relations’, *American Psychologist*, 45.5 (1990), 641–46, p. 644

⁶⁴ Juhani Pallasmaa, ‘The Sixth Sense: The Meaning of Atmosphere and Mood’, *Architectural Design*, 86.6 (2016), 126–33, p.129.

previously regarded as naïve or irrelevant, instead of substantial for the architectural experience and quality of spaces.

The importance and urgency of this direction for the architectural profession has been pointed out by architects, such as Pérez-Gómez, who comment on and offer an interpretation with regard to the present state of architectural research: ‘When most fully realised, architecture offers the gift of psychosomatic completeness, true health and well-being for the social body, a space of appearances consonant with its actions and habits’⁶⁵ while also commenting on how it is ‘regrettable’ that the current situation of mainstream architecture is neglecting this aspect.⁶⁶ The importance of the issue, I would say, still remains as urgent as ever, as it might have a more important and lasting effect on people. Robert Gifford explains: ‘The built environment does not usually evoke in us strong, immediate emotions such as rage or ecstasy; it usually has a smaller, but persistent and cumulative influence. The environment, therefore, may have an important impact on us in the long term without receiving much notice on a day-to-day basis’.⁶⁷

During the last century, within the architectural field, there have been several attempts, theories and theoretical frameworks, and explanatory models, to provide us with interpretations towards a better understanding of our psychosomatic relationship to the built environment and architectural experience. Examples of such approaches include the movement of Gestalt, with a focus on visual perception and experiential architecture, also drawing on cognitive science.⁶⁸ There have also been psychoanalytical theories applied to architecture-with a special focus on the inner subjective world of the designer and perceiver and their most ‘intimate feelings, desires, assumptions, hopes and fears’.⁶⁹ In addition to that, the field of environmental psychology was addressed as ‘architectural psychology around the 1950s, with a special focus on how to provide better housing and working conditions,

⁶⁵ Alberto Pérez-Gómez, *Attunement* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2016), p. 7.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ Robert Gifford, *Environmental Psychology: Principles and Practice* (Colville, WA: Optimal Books, 2002), p. 74.

⁶⁸ A. Senatore, ‘New Master’s Course Linking Neuroscience and Architecture Launched in Venice’ <https://www.ongreening.com/en/News/architecture-neuroscience-naad-master-programme-iuav-1321> [15 December 2023].

⁶⁹ Jerome Winer, James William Anderson, and Elizabeth A. Danze, *Psychoanalysis and Architecture* (Catskill, NY: Mental Health Resources, 2006), p. 6.

focusing on elements such as extreme temperatures, humidity, crowding.⁷⁰ In the last decades, there have also been important developments which connect the field of neuroscience with that of architecture. As research in neuroscience and architecture is currently in its early stages, it is expected to offer important insights, in the future, regarding the way we relate to the built and natural environment, mentally and emotionally.⁷¹ The phenomenological movement in architecture drew on the philosophical phenomenological movement, which was developed in the 20th century by continental philosophers in Europe and has been evolving throughout the last century. Even though there has not been one unifying definition of phenomenology⁷² there have been several descriptions. More about phenomenology will be analysed in the methodology chapter (Chapter 3), as it relates to the methodology of the thesis. This research draws on explanations and considerations made by the phenomenological movement and some from the environmental psychology field.

Environmental Psychology is defined as ‘the study of transactions between the individual and their physical settings’⁷³ and has been recognised as a field of psychology since the 1960s.⁷⁴ It evolved from initial theories focused on architectural aspects of the built environment to theories which now advocate a ‘green psychology’ as a response to environmental biophysical problems. Most recently it has adopted the broader term of sustainability, encompassing social and economic concepts as well.⁷⁵

Links between phenomenological frameworks and environmental psychology have been in place since the 1980s⁷⁶ through themes of environmental stress and the concepts and theories around restorative environments. Stress, which has been linked to a deterioration of mental health,⁷⁷ is defined as ‘an imbalance between environmental demands and human

⁷⁰ Linda Steg, Agnes E. van den Berg, and Judith I. M. de Groot, *Environmental Psychology: An Introduction* (West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons, 2012), p.3.

⁷¹ Sarah Robinson, ‘John Dewey and the Dialogue Between Architecture and Neuroscience’, *Architectural Research Quarterly*, 19.4 (2015), 361–67, p. 366.

⁷² M. Reza Shirazi, *Towards an Articulated Phenomenological Interpretation of Architecture* (Oxon: Routledge, 2014), p. 153.

⁷³ Robert Gifford, *Environmental Psychology: Principles and Practice* (Colville, WA: Optimal Books, 2002), p. 2.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p.2.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 73

⁷⁷ Mental Health Foundation, *Stress*. <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/a-to-z/s/stress> [accessed 15 December 2023].

response capabilities'.⁷⁸ Evans and Mitchell observe that 'design may offer opportunities to combat stress by providing rest, recovery, or contemplation'.⁷⁹ They also explain:

Restorative qualities define the potential of design elements to function therapeutically, reducing cognitive fatigue and other sources of stress" (1988:90). One theory which focuses on restorative environments is the "Attention Restoration Theory (ART)" which focuses on "the restoration from attentional fatigue that occurs after prolonged engagement in tasks that are mentally fatiguing".⁸⁰

Evans and McCoy, in an attempt to provide an explanation and a theoretical model around the quality of specific architectural dimensions of the built environment which could be considered restorative to our mental health, highlight 'minimal distraction, stimulus shelter, fascination, solitude' as important elements which could be of great value.⁸¹

Rohde and others⁸² have recently conducted a thorough review on the concept of wellbeing in the building sector and concluded that, by definition, there is confusion over the terminology to begin with, as previously discussed.⁸³ They propose and develop a new model which integrates different domains of wellbeing for indoor environments, arguing that:

By adopting the structure of the Vitruvian Triangle, the three domains correspond to the fundamental laws of good architecture. Good IE exists in the space between comfort (function/ commodity), health (durability/solidity) and well-being (delight/atmosphere).⁸⁴

⁷⁸ Linda Steg, Agnes E. van den Berg, and Judith I. M. de Groot, *Environmental Psychology: An introduction* (West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons Ltd, 2012), p. 28.

⁷⁹ Gary Evans and Janetta McCoy, When Buildings Don't Work, *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 18.1 (1998), 85-94, p. 91.

⁸⁰ Linda Steg, Agnes E. van den Berg, and Judith I. M. de Groot, *Environmental Psychology: An introduction* (West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons Ltd, 2012), p. 59.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

⁸² Lasse Rohde, Tine Steen Larsen, Rasmus Lund Jensen, and Olena Kalyanova Larsen, 'Framing Holistic Indoor Environment: Definitions of Comfort, Health and Well-Being', *Indoor Built and Environment*, 29.8 (2019), 1119, p. 1119.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p.1123.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p.1124.

Madalina Hanc ,Clair McAndrew and Marcella Ucci also provide an overview of the review on wellbeing and buildings, organising the several themes and subthemes.⁸⁵They reviewed conceptual approaches to wellbeing in buildings and categorised them in the following key approaches: psychological, sociological, and economic.⁸⁶ In addition to that, they categorised them in nine themes.⁸⁷Jahani and others, categorised the impacts of the built environment into three main categories: social impact, physiological impact, and psychological impact.⁸⁸Currently, more studies around a ‘human-centered ‘design are at the forefront of research, involving building environmental certifications, such as LEED, BREEAM and WELL (which are specifically tailored to measure health & wellbeing).⁸⁹ Methods of assessing environmental quality have also been used by researchers who have employed computational methods (for example, space syntax) as well as using housing standards⁹⁰.Altomonte and others, reviewing the literature on wellbeing in the built environment, argue for design agendas which do not solely aim at avoiding negative outcomes but focus on positive outcomes.⁹¹

From a phenomenological perspective, David Seamon comments on established concepts of wellbeing by arguing for a more nuanced approach. He states that the two main categories, objective and measurable or subjective and experiential, often fail to recognise that wellbeing might not be readily identifiable or describable and propose a definition of wellbeing which considers phenomenological principles.⁹² He writes:

⁸⁵ Madalina Hanc, Claire McAndrew, and Marcella Ucci, ‘Conceptual Approaches to Wellbeing in Buildings: A Scoping Review’, *Building Research & Information*, 47.6 (2018), 767–83, p. 295.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 773.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ Hamed Janahi, Shibu Raman, and Gabriela Zapata-Lancaster, ‘Understanding the Impact of the Residential Built Environment Design on Inhabitants’ Wellbeing’ (Philadelphia: ARCC-EAAE 2018 International Conference), p.4.

⁸⁹ Elvira Nicolini, ‘Built Environment and Wellbeing—Standards, Multi-Criteria Evaluation Methods, Certifications’, *Sustainability*, 14.8 (2022), 4754, p.1.

⁹⁰ Hamed Janahi, Shibu Raman, and Gabriela Zapata-Lancaster, ‘Understanding the Impact of the Residential Built Environment Design on Inhabitants’ Wellbeing’ (Philadelphia: ARCC-EAAE 2018 International Conference), p.4.

⁹¹ Sergio Altomonte and others, ‘Ten Questions Concerning Well-Being in the Built Environment’, *Building and Environment*, 180 (2020), 106949, p. 9.

⁹² David Seamon, ‘Well-Being and Phenomenology’, in *Routledge Handbook of Well-Being*, ed. by Kathleen T. Galvin (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018), p.105.

‘To be,’ wrote Edward Casey (2009: 14), ‘is to be in place. There is no being without place. [...] I consider what a phenomenological perspective might contribute to research on well-being by examining two central phenomenological principles—first, human-immersion-in-world; and second, lived obliviousness.’⁹³

Summarising the above, similarly to the mental health and psychology fields, definitions and approaches towards wellbeing and beneficial architectural/spatial qualities vary depending on focus and approach. This study advances knowledge in the direction of the efforts that wish to shed light on experiential qualities of space which can be considered to have a beneficial effect on wellbeing and investigates a qualitative perspective which aims at evaluating wellbeing, through an interdisciplinary perspective. The previous section defined what type of wellbeing will be examined. In addition to that, a deeper understanding of the key concepts emerges from the inter-disciplinary investigation.

2.3.5 Poetry in Architecture

The integration of poetry and poetics is not new to architectural theory and discourse. Historically there have been important analyses and interpretations, which will be analysed below. For the purposes of this thesis and this chapter, an important clarification in terms of definitions should be made. In his book *Poetics of Architecture*, Antoniades Antony writes:

There is something mystical about the term poetics. From Plato and Aristotle to Gaston Bachelard and Igor Stravinsky, this was employed to address the aesthetics of genesis, “the qualitative ingredients of space, the making of music”. Etymologically, poetics derives from a Greek verb that simply means “to make”. The making of space, the making of music, the making of architecture . . . the making of poems . . . thus some of the confusion, since many people associate the term with poetry, which is only one of the forms of making-creating through words.⁹⁴

⁹³ David Seamon, ‘A Way of Seeing People and Place’, in *Theoretical Perspectives in Environmental Behaviour Research* (2000), pp. 157–78, p.158.

⁹⁴ Anthony C Antoniades, *Poetics of Architecture* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1992), p.3.

‘Poetry’, on the other hand, is often used to describe the sensation which potentially arises inside this experience, as will be analysed in a subsequent section. In *Poetics of Architecture*, Antoniades categorises interpretations of poetics in the architectural field as three main categories: the arbitrary, traditional, and the contemplative.⁹⁵ He explains:

A totally thoughtless poetics would have been the poetry of the arbitrary, which only a critic could perhaps classify, and even perhaps see merit in. Poetics that evolves out of a given tradition, “the way of doing things as our ancestors used to do,” is the process of “making” that takes for granted the thought processes of our ancestors [...]. In this case we may distinguish two possibilities for this poetics: The mimetic and the dynamic. [...]

There is a third case of poetics which is highly contemplative; rigorous; mentally, spiritually, and scientifically demanding, it aims at the creation of works that address a multitude of human needs and expectations, practical as well as spiritual. The making of architecture is a case par excellence of this category of complex poetics.⁹⁶

This study focuses on the third category, according to this categorization, even though it does discuss the process of making. Lino Bianco (2018) also highlights the work of Shota Bostanashvili writing:

This was the foundation of the studio-workshop Poetics of Architecture which he had set up at the Institute of Architecture which institute was the precursor of the Faculty of Architecture, Urbanism and Design of the Georgian Technical University. This studio workshop initiated metacultural discourse in architecture. The sub-title of this article is inspired by the name of an exhibition of his works with students which exhibition laid out the vocational role of the studio-workshop: “The main task of the studio is to awaken the abilities that lie dormant inside a child. To feel the joy and excitement of seeing things for the first time. This is the only path and this requires ... spiritual ‘exercise.’⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Anthony C Antoniades, *Poetics of Architecture* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1992), p.4.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.3.

⁹⁷ Lino Bianco, ‘From Poetics to Metapoetics: Architecture towards Architecture’, *Balkan Journal of Philosophy*, 10.2 (2018), 103–1, p.103.

Poetics has also been described as a theory that ‘sets itself in discordance to the prosaic, the insensitive and the unimaginative’⁹⁸ while promoting a language of architecture which ‘has identifiable aesthetic values and evocative qualities that affect the perception of architecture’⁹⁹ as Marjan Colletti mentions.

In an edition of *Architectural Design* titled ‘*Poetics in Architecture*’, Leon Van Schaik comments on Bachelard’s work, acknowledging his admiration for Bachelard’s promise of a means to a ‘thicker description of conditions that matter in architecture’¹⁰⁰ but argues that his strictly- and intentionally so- phenomenological analysis is not enough for architects, who need ‘an articulated system of architectural aesthetics’, or ‘a model of the spiral of awareness’.¹⁰¹ With regards to experiential qualities of space, however, the thesis agrees with Scarpa’s argument that ‘one must not think “now I will make an architecture that is poetic”’,¹⁰² a quotation which will be analysed in more detail, in following sections. Furthermore, Norberg- Schultz criticises Rasmussen’s *Experience of Architecture*, because of the fact that he attaches a specific architectural theory to architectural experience, arguing that it does not take into consideration the differences in people’s interpretations of perception and symbolism based on context.¹⁰³ More recently, Van Schaik has authored a book entitled *Practical Poetics in Architecture* in which he observes: ‘So much is written about poetics in architecture, but so little is demonstrated’.¹⁰⁴ According to Van Schaik, the key to practical poetics to inform other practitioners and students on possibilities is to ‘read the situation of a project as a whole’.¹⁰⁵ His approach can be understood as a particularly useful approach for informing poetics as an ‘art of making’ (previously mentioned by Antoniades), through a close examination of specific ways of making and of bringing the architectural idea into realisation. Martin Heidegger makes a phenomenological analysis of the ontological

⁹⁸ Marjan Colletti, *Digital Poetics: An Open Theory of Design-Research in Architecture* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), p.22.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.22.

¹⁰⁰ Leon Van Schaik, ‘Poetics in Architecture’, *Architectural Design*, 72.2 (2002), 4–95, p.5.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p.9.

¹⁰² Nicholas Olsberg and Guidi Guido, *Carlo Scarpa Architect: Intervening with History* (Montréal, Québec: The Canadian Centre for Architecture, 1999), p.25.

¹⁰³ Christopher Tweed, ‘A Phenomenological Framework for Describing Architectural Experience’, *Phenomenology and Culture Conference*, University College Cork, Ireland (2000), p.4.

¹⁰⁴ Leon Van Schaik, *Practical Poetics in Architecture* (London: John Wiley & Sons Ltd, 2005), p.9.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p.15.

connection between our dwelling on earth and poetry, stating that ‘poetry is what really lets us dwell’.¹⁰⁶ However, the author chooses to intentionally leave Heidegger’s phenomenological argument around poetry and dwelling on earth interpretation out of the analysis, for moral reasons, on account of his highly problematic political beliefs and agendas.

More recently, Azarova and Tereshko have commented on the presence of poetry in urban spaces. Lastly, and in line with this study’s approach, Dalibor Vesely writes, with regards to a possibility of a new poetics in architecture in our times: ‘The articulation of content may include contributions from non-architectural areas, such as theatre, painting, literature, or poetry, where we very often find a surprisingly rich understanding of architectural space’.¹⁰⁷

2.3.6 Poetry in architecture and its beneficial experiential role

In architectural discourse, poetry is often associated with experiential qualities leading to psychological and emotional observations. Rainer Maria Rilke observes, as cited by Pallasmaa:

Verses are not, as people think, feelings (those one has early enough) - they are experiences. For the sake of a verse, one must see many cities, men, and things, one must know the animals feel how birds fly, and know the gesture with which the little flowers open in the morning.¹⁰⁸

In the phenomenological context, which is aligned with the scope of the study and focuses on embodied experience, Bachelard, in *The Poetics of Space*, in a phenomenological study of poetic images of the house and in an attempt to approach what he calls ‘felicitous spaces’¹⁰⁹ discusses the novel, dynamic ontology of the poetic image and how it acts on

¹⁰⁶ Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Thought, Language* (New York: HarperCollins Publisher, 2001),p. 214.

¹⁰⁷ Dalibor Vesely, *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation: The Question of Creativity in the Shadow of Production* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2004), p 387.

¹⁰⁸ Architectural Papers, ‘Fusion of the Senses Interview with Juhani Pallasmaa’ <https://www.architecturalpapers.ch/pdf.php?ID=142>[accessed 15 December 2023].

¹⁰⁹ Gaston Bachelard, *Poetics of Space* (Boston: Beacon Press,1994), p. xxxv.

the person.¹¹⁰ Bachelard uses an analysis of poetic texts, which is considered a hermeneutical approach, and is relevant to this study for its focus on the importance that the philosopher places on imagination. In his approach, a direct link to the function of how poetry enables our imagination and lets us experience things in a particular manner is established- which is also very important for this study. Pérez-Gómez and Pallasmaa consistently highlight poetry as a way and as a vehicle which can draw on the experiential beneficial qualities of the poetic art: ‘Art and architecture have to be open-ended and that is why the poetic dimension for me is so essential. Only poetry can empower people in a liberating manner’ states Pallasmaa.¹¹¹ Furthermore, Pérez-Gómez observes: ‘History offers ample evidence for an architecture resulting from a poetic translation of its representations, rather than as a prosaic transcription of an objectified image’.¹¹² The theoretical contributions of these two important thinkers are, I would say, the ones that mostly inform this study’s approach. Another important figure in the architectural phenomenological tradition, Vesely, sustains: ‘In its original sense, poetics refers to a way of making (poiesis) in which the result preserves continuity with the conditions of its origin, in other words, what characterises a way of making as poetic is the situatedness of the results in the communicative space of culture’.¹¹³ He proposes a new kind of poetics by stating:

The aim of the new poetics is not to become a new theory but to formulate a limited set of creative principles, articulate in the fullest viable way the content and structure of the typical situations, and establish the basic orientation of design. The articulation of content may include contributions from non-architectural areas, such as theatre, painting, literature, or poetry, where we very often find a surprisingly rich understanding of architectural space.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ Gaston Bachelard, *Poetics of Space* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), p. xvi.

¹¹¹ Erika Heet, ‘Juhani Pallasmaa on Humane Cities, Monumental Architecture, and the Architect’s Role in Society’ <https://www.dwell.com/article/juhani-pallasmaa-on-humane-cities-monumental-architecture-and-the-architects-role-in-society-dc049438> [accessed 15 December 2023].

¹¹² Alberto Pérez-Gómez, *Attunement* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2016), p. 218.

¹¹³ Dalibor Vesely, *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation: The Question of Creativity in the Shadow of Production* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2004), p.387.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

These remarks are closely aligned with the study's approach that highlights the importance of poetry articulating ways of seeing, which can be considered valuable for architecture. In *Poetics of architecture* Van Schaik concludes that 'architects in the issue all drive to wonder in different ways'.¹¹⁵ Pallasmaa similarly comments on the importance of works of architecture which:

...welcome me with the same freshness and a stimulating sense of expectation and wonder. This is the power of a true artistic tradition that halts time and reintroduces the already known with a seductive new freshness and intimacy .¹¹⁶

With regard to the function of the metaphor as a poetic vehicle, Vesely argues for the recovery of this 'metaphorical structure of space in which poetry is no longer subordinated to science'¹¹⁷, as summarised Simon Richards, whereas Antoniades describes and analyses a metaphor as one of the important channels of creativity in his *Poetics of Architecture*.¹¹⁸ In architecture metaphors representing forms, buildings, and monuments have been present since ancient times.

To start the exploration of a metaphor, a first clarification of its characteristics, within the realm of linguistic expression, is sought. The following definition is intended to be used as a basis of what is meant by the term "metaphor" for the purposes of this chapter. A metaphor, which is considered one of the core vehicles of the poetic expression, etymologically originates from the Greek word "metaphora" meaning 'a transfer, carry over from "meta" meaning "over, across" and "pherein" meaning "to transfer, bear"'.¹¹⁹ According to the *New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetics and Poetry*, metaphor is 'a trope, or figurative expression, in which a word or phrase is shifted from its normal uses to a context where it evokes new meanings'.¹²⁰ This shift, transfer, or liberation from what is already known, and the forging of

¹¹⁵ Leon Van Schaik, 'Poetics in Architecture', *Architectural Design*, 72.2 (2002), 4–95, p.5.

¹¹⁶ Juhani Pallasmaa, 'Newness, Tradition, and Identity: Existential Content and Meaning in Architecture', *Architectural Design*, 82.6 (2012), 14–21, p. 21.

¹¹⁷ Dalibor Vesely, *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation: The Question of Creativity in the Shadow of Production* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2004), p.33.

¹¹⁸ Anthony C. Antoniades, *Poetics of Architecture* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1992), p.30.

¹¹⁹ 'Verse | Origin and Meaning Of Verse By Online Etymology Dictionary', Etymonline.com <https://www.etymonline.com/word/verse>[accessed 15 December 2023].

¹²⁰ T. V. F. Brogan and Alex Preminger, *The New Princeton Encyclopedia Of Poetry and Poetics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), p.3.

new meanings, is part of the basis of articulating poetic experience for this study, with regards to architectural space and selected moments of space at the Brion Cemetery. As previously mentioned, the idea of metaphor is not new to the architectural discourse. According to Forty, in the last decades, its linguistic analogy to architecture has been a topic of both great interest and debate. He argues: ‘there has been nothing like a linguistic analogy for stirring up a fight in architectural circles’.¹²¹

In *Words and Buildings*, Forty presents a thorough historical analysis of the use of the metaphorical analogy in architectural discourse and practice by highlighting how it has drawn on either an analogy of linguistic or scientific nature. In the linguistic realm, he discusses a semantic (“language’s structural and grammatical system”¹²²) or semiotic (“meaning”)¹²³ approach.¹²⁴ The analysis of the metaphor for this thesis and its application to the readings in space at the Brion Cemetery, can be said to follow the semantic path, as it focuses on meaning. In the semantic approach, as Forty states, architecture is presented as a medium of communication, where it is supposed to be read as a text and to provide a narrative¹²⁵. The thesis’ alignment to the semantic path can be found in the thesis’s interest in comprehending what is achieved in the interpretation of any potentiality of meaning that emerges from the experience of the metaphor. However, this approach still differs from any sense of an interpretation of metaphor as an experiential vehicle and method. As Mallgrave argues:

It’s not that architects, like other artists, cannot or should not engage in semantic references or operate on highly abstract planes of thought but we should also recognise that few users of buildings perceive the world in this way. In fact, what the bulk of the brain scans are indicating at present is that the vast preponderance of our conceptualization recalling the insights of Merleau-Ponty – is perceptually and emotionally driven from below. Our basic engagement with the world, the world of architecture, is forged from our more basic corporeal responses, which always precede and are often subliminal to our propensity for rationalizations.¹²⁶

¹²¹ Adrian Forty, *Words and Building* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2000), p. 63.

¹²² *Ibid.*, p.64.

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 64.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

¹²⁶ Harry Francis Mallgrave, *The Architect's Brain* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), p.182.

This brings to light the importance of what he defines as ‘embodied metaphor’ stemming from the phenomenological idea of ‘embodiment’. Embodiment, as expressed by Maurice Merleau-Ponty is the idea that ‘the person is understood as a body subject, with consciousness embedded in the body and intentionality that of the body subject, rather than simply one’s consciousness¹²⁷ as Darren Langdridge highlights. This approach implies that we receive and process information through all of our senses and it is a significant idea for this study. It highlights the interpretation of poetry not merely as a linguistic analogy in architecture, stemming from mental processes, but rather as an experience, involving our senses. It is an important clarification, as experience here is regarded as being at the basis of this study’s approach. This statement, I would argue, further strengthens the idea that for the metaphorical function in architecture to become a vehicle of poetry, it must be expressed through experience and senses. The experiential qualities, as perceived by senses, will be a focus for the analysis of metaphor, in the following sections.

What is of interest to this thesis, with regards to the use and function of metaphor, is its contribution to a sense of wellbeing. Antoniades, on the other hand, gives a different definition of the metaphorical act, in *Poetics of Architecture*, while stating that:

We perform a metaphorical act whenever we: 1. Attempt to transfer references from one subject (concept or object) to another. 2. Attempt to “see” a subject (concept or object) as if it were something else. 3. Displace the focus of our scrutiny from one area of concentration or from one inquiry into another (in the hope that by comparison or through extension we can illuminate our contemplated subject in a new way).¹²⁸

This analysis gives a comprehensive idea of the metaphor as an action, as a more general way of constructing experience with regards to architecture. Even though this specific definition does not go into the details of how metaphor has been used, it aligns with the linguistic definition of what a metaphorical act is, emphasising the function of transfer, of carrying over. Another representative description of metaphor, is given by Mallgrave in an analysis of the architect’s brain and the concept of creativity. Mallgrave draws on the field of

¹²⁷ Darren Langdridge, *Phenomenological Psychology: Theory, Research and Method* (Harlow: Prentice Hall, 2007), p.37.

¹²⁸ Anthony C. Antoniades, *Poetics of Architecture* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1992), p.29.

Neuroscience to highlight and provide an interpretation of the pathways that the mind follows to participate in the process of metaphor. In *The Architect's Brain*, he explains that:

Metaphor, if we can summarize in this section, seems to underlie the creative patterns that the brain constructs. It is therefore understandable that metaphoric associations have always been a fundamental part of the arts, not the least of which is that very plastic and sensuous art of architecture.¹²⁹

Further exploring the description of the creative mind having access to metaphorical expression, one useful argument for this study is provided by Mallgrave who highlights that synaesthesia (the neurological merging of senses), 'is seven times more common among artists, poets, novelists' than among the non-artistic population¹³⁰. According to him, what 'artists, poets, and novelists all have in common, is their skill at forming metaphors, linking seemingly unrelated concepts in their brain'.¹³¹ I would argue that this is a significant observation, not only regarding the creator, but also the recipient of the experience. This concept of what could be characterised as poetic synesthesia, meaning an act of creatively bringing together in such a manner that new realisations can be made, is crucial. Going deeper into the findings from Neuroscience, Mallgrave further elaborates on the idea of metaphor, by analysing it as a method of interpreting, making connections. He writes:

There is a neuronal activation occurring simultaneously in two separate parts of the brain: those devoted to emotions and those devoted to temperature. Appropriate neural connections between the brain regions are recruited. These connections physically constitute the Affection Is Warmth metaphor'.¹³²

Concerning the experiential part (effect/poetry), it is important to state here how the synesthetic process of processing information and stimuli, as described by Mallgrave, has been highlighted as part of the architectural experience, too, in an analogous manner. Vesely in *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation*, writes:

¹²⁹ Harry Francis Mallgrave, *The Architect's Brain* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), p.179.

¹³⁰ Ibid., p.174.

¹³¹ Ibid., p.179.

¹³² Ibid.

This receptivity of situations is mostly prereflective and synesthetic. Visual, auditive, and tactile phenomena are closely related, and their affinity constitutes an important condition for the life of metaphors. It is mostly owing to the metaphorical structure of situations and more specifically to the mimetic nature of metaphor that paradigms are formed, paradigms that play not only a synthetic but also a receptive role.¹³³

The idea of synaesthesia in this thesis is introduced in connection to the poetic and how the poet is connected to the body and senses, as analysed by relevant references (Mallgrave and Vesely). It is also connected to the notion of the metaphors, as an integral part of the poetic function and poetic experiential elements.

Both Antoniades's and Mallgrave's definitions of the metaphor could be interpreted in two ways, which are the main directions the thesis has focused on, as mentioned in the introduction: either as method/intention of the architect (poetics) or as part of the experience itself (poetry). When it comes to the creator's role in conceptualising metaphors Aristotle says: 'that alone cannot be learned; it is the token of genius. For the right use of metaphor means an eye for resemblances'.¹³⁴ Furthermore, and according to the 'New Princeton Encyclopaedia of Poetics and Poetry,' this interpretation of metaphors is considered to:

[...] spring from the poet's heightened emotion, keen perception, or intellectual acuity; their functions are aesthetic (making expression more vivid or interesting), pragmatic (conveying meanings concisely), and cognitive (providing words to describe things that have no literal name or rendering complex abstractions easy to understand through concrete analogies).¹³⁵

Pérez-Gómez concludes:

¹³³ Dalibor Vesely, *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation: The Question of Creativity in the Shadow of Production* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2004), p.169.

¹³⁴ B. R. Rees, 'Aristotle's Approach to Poetry', *Greece And Rome*, 28 (1981), 23–39, p.27.

¹³⁵ Terry V. F. Brogan, Alex Preminger, and Frank J. Warnke, *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), p.761.

The architect's task, beyond the transformation of the world into a comfortable or pragmatic shelter, is the making of a physical, formal order that reflects the depth of our human condition, analogous in vision to the interiority communicated by speech and poetry, and to the immeasurable harmony conveyed by music.¹³⁶

Here, Pérez-Gómez extends the role of architecture beyond practical shelter and aligns it to the task of poetry. Vesely speaks of a return to the whole of life when he analyses the importance of the restorative function of the fragment in architecture. In *Architecture in the age of divided representation*, he explains: 'While science has discovered the instrumental analytical meaning of the fragment, it is to poetry that we have to turn to "discover" its restorative and symbolic meaning'.¹³⁷ This synthetic approach rather than analytical is crucial for a humane and inclusive approach to architecture, closer to our psychological needs. Recognizing the importance of poetry in architecture as an agent towards a sense of freedom on the part of the individual, Louis Hammer writes:

For architecture and urban design to make a positive contribution to the growth of the self they must offer designs which are both open through time and suggestive of individual invention. They must free the inhabitants of buildings and cities to enact their own poetry of space.¹³⁸

Pérez-Gómez observes: 'Architecture's well-documented gift through-out history, like poetry's, is indeed to allow humans to perceive their sense in the experience of a coincidence of opposites: being and non being beyond theological dogma.'. ¹³⁹This ontological observation situates architecture, like poetry, as an invitation for the individual to reflect and experience questions on the nature of being and existence by allowing that valuable space to open up, to exist. Pérez-Gómez explains:

¹³⁶ Alberto Pérez-Gómez, 'Questions of Representation: The Poetic Origin of Architecture', *Architectural Research Quarterly*, 9.3-4 (2005), 217–25, p.218.

¹³⁷ Dalibor Vesely, *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation: The Question of Creativity in the Shadow of Production* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2004), p. 322.

¹³⁸ Louis Hammer, 'Architecture and the Poetry of Space', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 39.4 (1981), 381–88, p. 386.

¹³⁹ Alberto Pérez-Gómez, 'Questions of Representation: The Poetic Origin of Architecture', *Architectural Research Quarterly*, 9.3-4 (2005), 217–25, p. 225.

Architecture's gift is to reveal the true temporality of the space of human experience, one that is indeed open to spirituality: the experience of a present moment that, while it can be conceptualized by science (and our clocks) as a quasi-non-existent point between past and future, is experienced as thick and endowed with dimensions- in a sense, as eternal.¹⁴⁰

In her article *Redefining the Poet as Healer: Valerie Gillies's Collaborative Role in the Edinburgh Marie Curie Hospice Quiet Room Project*, Laura Severin analyses the Quiet Room as an example of:

not only an aesthetic space, the 'room of beauty' envisioned by the original project group, but also a theoretical project aimed at redefining the arts in general-architecture and design, the visual arts, and, finally, poetry. In response to the vision of the room's designer, Gillies created a poetic space (not just a poem) that represents a reformulation of the role of the poet and poetry in contemporary society.¹⁴¹

This idea of space connected to poetry and having an active role is one which this thesis aligns with and will be analysed. Overall, the literature has highlighted existing arguments around the beneficial qualities of poetry in architectural space and more specifically at the Brion Cemetery. The study draws on relevant positions, mainly from the phenomenological field, and combines them with insights from Poetry Therapy and poetry used in a therapeutic context to conduct an in-depth study, which grounds and articulates a definition of wellbeing, stemming from the Brion Cemetery as a case study.

¹⁴⁰ Alberto Pérez-Gómez, 'Questions of Representation: The Poetic Origin of Architecture', *Architectural Research Quarterly*, 9.3-4 (2005), 217-25, p. 225.

¹⁴¹ Laura Severin, 'Redefining the Poet as Healer: Valerie Gillies's Collaborative Role in the Edinburgh Marie Curie Hospice Quiet Room Project', *Literature and Medicine*, 33.1 (2015), 184-201, p. 185.

2.3.7 Concluding thoughts: Poetic architectural experience at the intersection of other fields of knowledge / A new reading of wellbeing and poetic experience at the Brion Cemetery

In order to inform its method, the literature review has examined concepts of wellbeing and the poetic experience not only in architectural discourse, but also in other fields as well: the field of poetry and, in the therapeutic context, Poetry Therapy. The review did not identify an existing methodical study which bridges architecture, poetry, and wellbeing by leaning into the intersections of the fields of architecture, poetry, psychology, and insights from Poetry Therapy. This thesis's contribution aligns these fields through an original reading of the Brion Cemetery, arguing that it enables the mechanisms which can, potentially, construct a poetic experience, beneficial for the visitor on a psychosomatic level.

2.4 CARLO SCARPA LITERATURE REVIEW

2.4.1 Introduction

In order to connect the fields of architecture, poetry and wellbeing, this study presents a close reading of Carlo Scarpa's work through an analysis of the Brion Cemetery, in San Vito d'Altivole, Italy, through a literature review, personal observations, site and archival research, and interviews.

The thesis draws on literature written both in Italian and in English, as well as original materials (from archival research). It draws on all relevant analyses about Scarpa, focusing on those which mention poetry and wellbeing in the architectural discourse of Carlo Scarpa, and specifically any material on the Brion Cemetery. Phenomenological approaches of the key references of Scarpa are prioritized in alignment with the broader methodological framework of this research.

Scarpa was born in Venice, on 2 June, 1906, and grew up in Vicenza until the age of thirteen, when his mother died, after which he returned to Venice. He attended the *Accademia delle Belle Arti* (Academy of Fine Arts) in Venice, with a focus on architectural studies. He was also a designer and craftsman with a deep understanding of the arts and materiality, because he also worked within the artisan crafts of Venice and Venetian glass, at the MVM Cappellin

and Venini.¹⁴²

Scarpa operated mostly in Italy and specifically within the Venetian region (Veneto), had a long-standing collaboration with the Venice Biennale, and taught at the IUAV, of which he became the director in 1972.¹⁴³ His architectural projects include a number of renovations, exhibition spaces, houses, furniture, and gardens. In a way, he was an architect who could work from the detail to a larger scale applying the same level of detail and care. This approach becomes relevant at the Brion Cemetery, where the smallest detail is full of intention and meaning, without ever losing its connection to the larger scale and the philosophy behind it. Scarpa died in Japan, on 28 November, 1987.¹⁴⁴ He described himself as ‘A man of Byzantium who came to Venice by way of Greece’.¹⁴⁵ In order to understand his work, one must perhaps look at his complex influences and particular trajectory. Kenneth Frampton writes : ‘It is difficult to write about Scarpa’s work in a systematic manner, for in the last analysis his achievement can only be comprehended as a continuum.’¹⁴⁶ Peter Noever, on the other hand, describes the particularity of his architecture and attitude towards the discipline. He says:

For Scarpa architecture was living space and life was itself a kind of art. This is where the sensitive dialogical quality of his buildings come- a dialogue both with nature and with the culture in which he integrates them. The play, the reflexes of light, sounds of water, gathering moss... Like hardly any other architect, he is able to articulate details without getting lost in them, without losing himself and the general outline of the design. In many cases, this is made possible through an unorthodox combination of materials on the basis of knowledge passed down by tradition, or through the merging of formal languages of widely different origins, from the Occident or the Orient, with its particular affinity to Venice and the symbolism thus engendered. It is always a

¹⁴² Enrico Bertetti, Federica La Forgia, and Filippo Odone, ‘L’Architettura Di Carlo Scarpa’ [https://www.academia.edu/19534656/LArchitettura di Carlo Scarpa](https://www.academia.edu/19534656/LArchitettura_di_Carlo_Scarpa) [15 December 2023].

¹⁴³ Dean Hawkes, *Environmental Imagination* (London: Routledge, 2008), p.111.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Giuseppe Zambonini, ‘Process and Theme in The Work Of Carlo Scarpa’, *Perspecta*, 20 (1983), 21–42, p. 22.

¹⁴⁶ Kenneth Frampton, *Studies in Tectonic Culture: The Poetics of Construction in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Architecture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), p.332.

transcending of functions by expression which makes his works emerge from the object world and brings them closer to life.¹⁴⁷

Olsberg comments: ‘He taught architects by example, to look more respectfully at the banalities, and less solemnly on the monuments of the past, and to weave new work into the ongoing dialogue of an evolving fabric’.¹⁴⁸ Despite the existence of extensive research on Scarpa’s work, Nicholas Olsberg, in his *Intervening with History*, identifies scope for further research :

Despite the heroic work of Francesco Dal Co, Sergio Polano and their colleagues in *Carlo Scarpa: Opera Completa* (published in 1984 but still the indispensable key) and such reconstructive analyses as Richard Murphy’s studies of the Castelvechio and the Fondazione Querini Stampalia, much of Scarpa’s work remains to be elucidated. Scarpa could take nine years on the interior of a small house, work through the night with his artisans drawing and testing models and adjust what he pleased on site. At the same time, he appears to have treated his own history casually. “Unknown” projects correspondence lie unexamined; sketch-books, student drawings, and cigar-box studies appear in profusion.¹⁴⁹

Last but not least, the only written work by Carlo Scarpa needs to be mentioned here:

Memoriae Causa, a book on the Brion Cemetery, published in 1977, with only 200 copies.

As George Dodds argues:

Perhaps the most important published interpretation of the Brion sanctuary is a little known monograph that Scarpa edited – his only book. Scarpa apparently never wrote about architecture, due largely to what Francesco Dal Co calls his “hypersensitivity to the written word.”¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷ Peter Noever and Giovanni Anfodillo, *Carlo Scarpa: The Craft of Architecture* (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2003), p. 12.

¹⁴⁸ Nicholas Olsberg and Guido Guido, *Carlo Scarpa Architect: Intervening with History* (Montréal, Québec: The Canadian Centre for Architecture, 1999), p.239.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p.7.

¹⁵⁰ George Dodds and Robert Tavernor, *Body and Building* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2005), p.247.

The scope of existing literature includes the above interpretations of the Brion Cemetery as well as existing research on Scarpa's general approach, *modus operandi*, and influences – which are needed to elucidate the mechanisms that are employed at the Cemetery.

Referencing these works, this study focuses on the intersection of architecture, poetry, and wellbeing at the Brion Cemetery, and does not examine the totality of Scarpa's works, nor does it draw comparisons with other works of his. It specifically focuses on interpretations of Scarpa's poetic architecture as well as interpretations of its experiential and potentially therapeutic qualities. The study includes visits and interpretations of the Brion Cemetery, prior to the recent conservation.

2.4.2 Explorations of the concept of poetry and wellbeing in the work of Carlo Scarpa

Scarpa's tendency to involve emotions has been observed throughout the years. Olsberg states:

The struggle for clarity of thought through drawing was explored with great rigor, yet with a desire to make the drawing a pure expression of thought and feeling: pattern, texture, weight, and colour were represented in real terms but also with their metaphysical and lyrical characteristics.¹⁵¹

Focusing on Scarpa and more specifically on the relationship between his work and poetry, Olsberg observes that there are two main approaches in architectural circles: those which are focused more on his conceptual nature, but argues that it is 'impossible to emulate his method, today's issues being so different from those that he faced' and those which hold a 'more romantic, even poetic sensibility'.¹⁵² Steven Hall writes that there is great value in Scarpa's 'persistent search for the expressive, appropriate new forms'. In 1967, 11 years before the Brion Cemetery was completed, his close collaborator, Sergio Los, authored *Carlo Scarpa Architetto Poeta*, translated as *Carlo Scarpa Architect Poet* in which he asserts:

¹⁵¹ Nicholas Olsberg and Guido Guidi, *Carlo Scarpa Architect* (Montréal, Québec: The Canadian Centre for Architecture, 1999), p.42.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, p.237.

I wanted to name this book Carlo Scarpa Architect Poet, because a linguistic interpretation of architecture allows a distinction between poetry and prose. And if many works of architectural Rationalism belong to prose, the expression of Scarpa is characterised precisely by the sense of poetry.¹⁵³

Los also authored other books on Scarpa, one monograph entitled *Carlo Scarpa* and another one, *Carlo Scarpa: An Architectural Guide*. In *Carlo Scarpa* Los writes that Scarpa's poetic element belongs primarily to the linguistic and qualitative difference, between prose and poetry:

If dancing is the poetic mode of walking, then it is the skill of the carpenter, the stonemason or the weaver which gives form to architectural motifs, translating them into poetic modes of building. If one regards this dynamic, operational concept of figurative representation as a materialist approach to architectural theory, the logical consequence is the abolition of the referential symbolic dimension. When, in the 1965, I wrote a lecture for my students in which I explained how with Scarpa, a design came about through the drawing process, I described this process as 'poetic'. This aspect provides further motivation for the non-denotative character of Scarpa's compositional language. The language of poetry is centred on itself: it is 'opaque', with respect to its content. On this point, Konrad Fiedler's intuitions on the non-transparency of the visual arts are entirely correct but only by virtue of their specifically poetic-artistic character, and not of their visual nature, as the psychology of visual perception would have it. In poetic language form is so important that it is difficult if not impossible to distinguish it from the content to which it refers. Scarpa's compositions seem to have no content other than their form.¹⁵⁴

Moreover, Los, in identifying a difference between the poetic as a tool and the poetic as a discourse in Scarpa's work, explains:

¹⁵³ Sergio Los, *Carlo Scarpa Architetto Poeta* (Venice: Edizioni Cluva, 1967), p. 9.

¹⁵⁴ Sergio Los, *Carlo Scarpa: An Architectural Guide* (Venice: Arsenale Editrice, 1995), p.26.

Even though in Scarpa's text, because it is poetic, the "discourse" (i.e., the way in which the essay or sculpture gallery is organised) is every bit as important as the "story" that tells (meaning the sculptures that constitute its content), it seems fundamental to me to single out the distinction between this architecture as a "text" and using it as a "tool." As a text the Sculpture Gallery can express a certain content, it can exemplify a type and its various properties; as a "tool"- a sort of "machine an exposer" or displaying machine – it could do no more than to function, perhaps by entertaining the visitors with its own mute loneliness.¹⁵⁵

Los' interpretation points towards the generative qualities of poetry and the ability to be expressive rather than denotative. In this sense, the poetic, as a text, is able to generate endless possibilities of interactions and experiences. This distinction between poetry and prose is close to the Aristotelian argument, about the difference between history and poetry, analysed in a previous subchapter, and is in line with the needs of this research. Maria Antonietta Crippa argues on the poetic quality in Scarpa's work :

It is not difficult to recognize the poet in Carlo Scarpa; it is more difficult to capture his originality. His architecture is much imitated; it is suggestive of greater possibilities and is a point of reference and of comparison. In this way his work contributes to the shaping of taste.¹⁵⁶

This observation is in alignment with the idea presented previously in the literature, that certain things are not to be imitated or followed as a set of rules. Rather, one needs to sharpen one's taste and empathetic understanding of a phenomena by studying, observing and experiencing it in depth. At best, one can hope that one might develop enough sensitivities and allow the maturation of various influences, like in Scarpa's case. Then perhaps, they might be able to conceptualise 'forms that emanate a sense of formal poetry'¹⁵⁷ as he describes. Perhaps, given the right circumstances, that poetry might also be felt and

¹⁵⁵ Sergio Los, *Carlo Scarpa: An Architectural Guide* (Venice: Arsenale Editrice, 1995), p.10.

¹⁵⁶ Maria Antonietta Crippa and Marina Loffi Randolin, *Carlo Scarpa: Theory, Design, Projects* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1986), p.10.

¹⁵⁷ Peter Noever, *The Other City* (Wilhelm Ernst & Sohn Verlag fur Architektur und technische Wissenschaften, 1989), p. 17.

experienced as an empowering experience by someone. Poetry is a possibility, not a guarantee. Scarpa asserts: ‘You mustn't think. "I'll produce a poetic piece of architecture”'. [...] Poetry is born of the thing in itself... The question should be this: "When is an Attic base poetry, and when isn't it? This means that there are huge differences between two of the same object'.¹⁵⁸

Scarpa points at this sharpening of taste and perception, of selection, of understanding of nuance, context, and differences, when two things look similar, like in the case of two attic bases. It is a layered, profound attitude that the architect or the artist carries within themselves. Pérez-Gómez writes:

No matter what we produce as architects, once the work inhabits the public realm, it is truly beyond our control. An expressed intention can never fully predict the work's meaning. It is the “others” who decide its destiny and its final significance. Despite this apparent limitation, understanding that there is a phenomenological continuity between thinking and making, between our words, in our particular language, and our deeds, is still our best bet. What we control, and must be accountable for, is our intentions. Despite the usual saying dismissing good intentions in view of “real” deeds, well-grounded intentions are crucial and rare in the modern world, and they imply a whole style of thinking and action, a past life and thick network of connections with a culture, far more than what an individual is capable of articulating at the surface of consciousness, or through one particular product. This is the nature of an ethical practice guided by practical philosophy or phronesis, by prudence, in the sense of Aristotle.¹⁵⁹

Frampton attributes Scarpa's poetics in the tectonics of his work, with a focus on details.

Olsberg attributes poetic qualities to the manner with which Scarpa draws. He states:

Scarpa thus allowed the drawing to become the external manifestation of his internal process-rich, varied, sometimes moving between several ideas, but at all times precise.

¹⁵⁸ Francesco Dal Co and Giuseppe Mazzariol, *Carlo Scarpa* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), p. 238.

¹⁵⁹ Alberto Pérez-Gómez, ‘Built Upon Love: Towards Beauty and Justice in Architecture’, *Mosaic: A Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature*, no 3 (2011): 43-59, p. 57.

In each drawing the didactic information is overtaken by the poetry and emotional quality of the sketch.¹⁶⁰

Rui Song, An Yuening and Yang Xin characterise Scarpa's ecological aesthetics as poetic, stating that: 'It was the common characteristics of his architecture, landscape, garden, and other designs that made him stand out among his contemporaries in Italy'.¹⁶¹ This attitude of combining different sources has been picked up by others as well. Zambonini connects his poetic language to the ability to draw on different cultures which then pours into his philosophy of craftsmanship and materiality.¹⁶² Similarly, Caroline Voet, Eireen Schreurs and Helen Thomas mention how Scarpa's tectonic poetry stems from the Venetian tradition growing into modernity.¹⁶³ This leads to the next section, which will discuss Scarpa's influences and their connections to poetry.

2.4.3 Scarpa and critical influences

In *Opera Completa (Complete works of Carlo Scarpa)* Francesco Dal Co and Giuseppe Mazzariol write:

In 1942, on returning from a protracted stay with him in the countryside around Treviso, the sculptor Arturo Martini had no hesitation in calling Scarpa a poet. But there are, and always have been, problems in defining the poetics, the characteristic channel and set of insights apart from immediate reference, in the case of this poet.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁰ Nicholas Olsberg and Guido Guidi, *Carlo Scarpa Architect* (Montréal, Québec: The Canadian Centre for Architecture, 1999), p. 40.

¹⁶¹ Song, Yuening An, and Xin Yang, 'The Ecological Aesthetics of Funeral Architecture towards Death: A Case Study of Tomba Brion Family Cemetery', *Journal of Landscape Research*, 15.3 (2023), 90–94, p. 94.

¹⁶² Giuseppe Zambonini, 'Notes for a Theory of Making in a Time of Necessity', *Perspecta*, 24 (1988), 2–23, p. 22.

¹⁶³ Caroline Voet, Eireen Schreurs, and Helen Thomas, *Hybrid Practitioner: Building, Teaching, Researching Architecture* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2022), p. 90.

¹⁶⁴ Francesco Dal Co and Giuseppe Mazzariol, *Carlo Scarpa: The complete works* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), p.13.

Indeed, the origins of his poetic sensibilities are attributed to several causes. Nicholas Olsberg argues that Scarpa's poetry stems from the fact that:

[...] his closest friends were artists and writers, and so his work reflected the poetics of his time rather than its reason. Thus, in the 1960s and 1970s, Scarpa's focus on the specificities of place and his revival of such poetic concerns as narrative, time, personal symbolism, and the senses engaged him in a subtle, discreet, and sometimes subversive debate with prevailing architectural models and attitudes.¹⁶⁵

Furthering a focus on the specifics of time and place, Olsberg also describes Scarpa's Venetian roots and the role they play in Scarpa's *modus operandi*. He states:

Out of this Venice and its Byzantine sense of colour, texture, and detail, Scarpa begins to assemble an essentially poetic language, in which personal history and private fascinations – from the textile samples of his mother (a dressmaker) to the aging brickwork on the Venetian island of Torcello- are given public meaning.¹⁶⁶

Alan Hing highlights: 'Because of its ties to the East, Venice also has cultural distinctions. It is a colorful city in dress and in art and in the ways its people display a lively sense of the fantasy and a wealth of decoration and color'.¹⁶⁷ All of the above start to reveal the diversity of his influences, and the importance of the Venetian context, as a rich palette to draw on. As well as using a poetic language, Scarpa's collection of and influence by poetic literature is identified in the literature. Robert McCarter highlights the content of his library and influences:

This library contained a number of books by the French poet and essayist Paul Valéry, including his Cahiers, or notebooks, a lifelong examination of the working of the human mind in which Valéry argues the importance of "finding the right combination of things," and Eupalinos, or *The Architect*, a debate on the nature of architecture in

¹⁶⁵ Nicholas Olsberg and Guido Guidi, *Carlo Scarpa Architect* (Montréal, Québec: The Canadian Centre for Architecture, 1999), p. 237.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 15.

¹⁶⁷ Allan M. Hing, 'Learning from Scarpa', *Journal of Interior Design*, 9.1 (1983), 21–26, p. 21.

the style of Plato's dialogues, which Scarpa counted among the most important books he had ever read.¹⁶⁸

Dal Co and Mazzariol argue: '[...] nor, to his regret, did he [Scarpa] know Greek, a deficiency he tried to remedy studying before the history of Greek literature, and later by reading Quasimodo's translations of Greek poems'.¹⁶⁹

Alberti and Bagnoli frame Scarpa as being infused in poetic works or thought:

Scarpa readily borrowed a poet's verses to express a concept or even to indicate the necessity of certain spaces, whenever such verses were applicable to persons or situations that held literary connotations for him. Students or close acquaintances often were called by the names of heroes of novels or celebrated artists.¹⁷⁰

In a way, the ease with which Scarpa was able to draw these references and make instant connections, as part of this teaching, demonstrates, I would argue, the depth of his appreciation and knowledge of literature and poetry. The next subchapter delves into experiential, potentially beneficial to the body and mind, qualities in Scarpa's work.

2.4.4 Scarpa's architecture, experiential qualities, and beneficial elements

Jo Seungkoo, argues that:

Scarpa placed the ontological dimension of human figures in his projects by responding to human gestures and actions. On the basis of body-subject's knowledge of the world, bodies become lived experiences in Scarpa's works.¹⁷¹

In *The Experience of Architecture*, Henry Plummer focuses on Scarpa's kinesthetic quality in his work, highlighting him as a 'master of the art of motion'. He writes:

¹⁶⁸ Robert McCarter, *Carlo Scarpa* (London: Phaidon Press, 2013), p.31.

¹⁶⁹ Francesco Dal Co and Giuseppe Mazzariol, *Carlo Scarpa* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), p.11.

¹⁷⁰ Bianca Albertini and Sandro Bagnoli, *Scarpa* (Milano: Jaca, 1988), p. 12.

¹⁷¹ Seungkoo Jo, 'Body-Subject's Knowledge of The World in Architectural Representation', *Journal of Asian Architecture and Building Engineering*, 3.1 (2004), 207-215, p. 214.

Another master of the art of motion, Carlo Scarpa, enlarged at length on the art and mystery of kinetic architecture, beginning with the exquisitely detailed shutter system of the Aula Magna at Ca' Foscari, overlooking Venice's Grand Canal. To periodically screen this meeting room and lecture hall from an adjoining corridor, the intervening glass wall was overlaid with a remarkable series of operable panels. Pivoting off timber posts on a complex assembly of iron and brass pivots, each pair of shutters can be folded together to open views into the room and canal beyond, or unfolded to form a discreet visual barrier (opposite). It is the manner in which the shutters open and close, however, that is of paramount significance. The panels intrigue the eye initially with uncertainty about how they might move, and about where to place one's hand and exert force. Bevels mark the boundary and invite touch, but then one slowly becomes aware of the curious and complicated mechanism of the pivots and, when the shutters are fully retracted, an intriguing metal catch below into which the shutter slips and causes one part to rotate upward and click smoothly into place (below). Within this phenomenology of motion lies a pregnant tension, an evasive presence and revelation that are able each time to provoke wonderment and, in William Carlos Williams's words, 'startle us anew'.¹⁷²

Here, Plummer identifies motion in Scarpa's work as bringing forth tension, revelation and wonder, a theme similarly identified by Andrea Jelic and Vecchiato Giovanni who argue that:

Scarpa's architectural works, the aesthetic experience of spatial narrative is identified as an anticipatory process of sense-making, where the subjective experience of time for each spatial sequence corresponds to a particular pattern of emotional activity (that can, in turn, modulate subsequent navigation choices), slowly building from the feelings of suspense to awe/wonder as the visitor moves through space'.¹⁷³

¹⁷² Henry Plummer, *The Experience of Architecture* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2016), p.102.

¹⁷³ Andrea Jelic and Giovanni Vecchiato, 'Experience of Space/Time in Tadao Ando and Carlo Scarpa's Narrative Architecture: The Embodied-Enactive View', in *ANFA 2016 Conference* (2016), 86–87, p.86.

George Dodds, whose approach focuses on the Brion Cemetery as landscape and on concepts such as the body, dreams, and desire argues that the Cemetery ‘involves both a conceptual body and the physical body of the visitor’.¹⁷⁴ Literature on Scarpa also explores the body’s perception towards a valuable architectural experience. In *Environmental Imagination*, Dean Hawkes connects the creative value of Scarpa’s work to an imaginative environmental language, open to possibilities. He remarks: ‘Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe, Alvar Aalto, Erik Gunnar Asplund, Sigurd Lewerentz, Louis Kahn and Carlo Scarpa all can be shown to have sought quite specific qualities in the conception and realisation of the environmental character of their designs’.¹⁷⁵ Michael Cadwell explores the tactile and experiential qualities of Scarpa’s architecture by looking into another Scarpa’s work, the Querini Stampalia, in Venice in a journey through the space, a careful, gentle exploration of its qualities. He observes: ‘And there is a murmuring, a low hum, a sympathy between things’.¹⁷⁶ Olsberg summarises: ‘Above all, he insisted that the building of a vocabulary of material and ornament was a critical step in capturing those senses-tactile, psychological and mnemonic-that open a work of architecture to maximum expression and meaning’.¹⁷⁷ He further states:

Hall Believes that what matters in Scarpa’s work are the experiential essences: “It is these- the thorn on the rose, the drop of water on the leaf – that must be reinstated in our daily lives”. Scarpa possessed what Fumihiko Maki called “a superior power of appreciation, a private hedonism”.¹⁷⁸

McCarter observes:

For Scarpa, the ultimate measure of his work was the human figure - in its many sizes, in the precise positions of the eye, in what is within reach of the hand to be touched - and his architecture comes to life only when we inhabit its spaces.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁴ George Dodds and Robert Tavernor, *Body and Building* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2005), p.255.

¹⁷⁵ Dean Hawkes, *Environmental Imagination* (London: Routledge, 2008), p. xvii.

¹⁷⁶ Michael Cadwell, *Strange Details* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2007), p. 29.

¹⁷⁷ Nicholas Olsberg and Guido Guidi, *Carlo Scarpa Architect* (Montréal, Québec: The Canadian Centre for Architecture, 1999), p.13.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 247.

¹⁷⁹ Robert McCarter, *Carlo Scarpa* (London: Phaidon Press, 2013), p.5.

Frampton argues: 'Edification has two principal meanings—to build and to be morally uplifting ... That is, edification must be ethical, entailing communication of value choices'.¹⁸⁰ Furthermore, Robert Gottardi observes that 'This persistent questioning and the inclusion of all experiences of life made him a highly sensitive architect'.¹⁸¹ In the extensive body of literature on Scarpa, there are relatively few texts which address wellbeing, but those which identify the therapeutic dimension of experiencing Scarpa's work are significant. Scarpa himself wrote of the emotional impact of the Brion Cemetery. As previously mentioned, he once remarked: 'If the architecture is any good, a person who looks and listens will feel its good effects without noticing'.¹⁸² Marco Frascari, Scarpa's student and Scarpa's scholar, connects embodiment with a 'therapeutic dimension'.¹⁸³ Scarpa himself, asked 'We have created a void around things. What can we offer when we decide to participate with our works in the creation of a more meaningful life for people?'¹⁸⁴ The language that was used by Scarpa points towards a beneficial experience, without necessarily using the term "wellbeing". The term of wellbeing is, after all, non-homogenous in its definition and still evolving, as explained in the literature review of the thesis.

2.4.5 Brion Cemetery and the value of poetic experience

The Brion Cemetery has been the focus of research and architectural commentary for decades, since it was first conceived and built. The literature identifies themes of materiality and detail, experiential elements, bodily and intellectual experience, the effect of natural elements, photographic documentation of the place, analysis of drawings of the Cemetery, analyses of the construction process and Scarpa's creative and design process and background. Some studies and writings include analyses specifically characterizing the Cemetery as "poetic," in connection with the characterization of Scarpa as an architect - poet.

¹⁸⁰ Kenneth Frampton, *Studies in Tectonic Culture: The Poetics of Construction in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Architecture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), p.299.

¹⁸¹ Peter Noever and Giovanni Anfodillo, *Carlo Scarpa: The craft of Architecture* (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2003), p.18.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, p.286.

¹⁸³ Marco Frascari, 'A New Corporeality of Architecture', *Journal of Architectural Education*, 40.2 (1987), 22–23, p.23.

¹⁸⁴ Francesco Dal Co and Giuseppe Mazzariol, *Carlo Scarpa: The complete works* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), p. 282.

The Cemetery is found in a small village, called San Vito D'Altivole, in the North of Italy, near Venice, in the region of Veneto. The project was commissioned to Scarpa, by the Brion family (who founded the Brion-Vega electronics company, in Italy) and, more specifically, Onorina Brion and Ennio Brion (their son), when Giuseppe Brion (husband), died, in 1968.¹⁸⁵ Onorina Brion is now buried there, too, next to her husband. The project started in 1969 and was completed in 1978 because of Scarpa's sudden death. Scarpa's close assistant, who worked with him on site and was responsible for the conservation project of the Cemetery, Pietropoli, observes that he still is not sure how much of the Cemetery was still unfinished, given the sudden death of Scarpa.¹⁸⁶ It is significant to note that the Cemetery was donated to FAI (Fondo per l'Ambiente Italiano) by Ennio and Donatella Brion in 2022 and it currently goes by the name of "Brion Memorial"¹⁸⁷. The study acknowledges this terminology as a rather evocative one and one that is also very suited to the place, along with "Brion Cemetery". However, for the purposes of this study, the name Brion Cemetery has been used from its beginning and throughout the data collection and analysis, and, also in alignment with the terminology used in the literature but also by Scarpa himself. Therefore, this name will be used throughout the thesis.

The Cemetery is situated in an L-shaped site, which engulfs the existing San Vito D'Altivole community cemetery on its east and north side.¹⁸⁸ In total, it covers an area of 2200 square meters.¹⁸⁹ It could be described as a garden which, in different positions of the site, consists of: two separate entrances (the first entering from the old cemetery, the other leading to a chapel for funerary purposes), a sheltered corridor dividing the entrance from the cemetery towards two directions in space, a space for the couple's sarcophagi (burial spaces), a space for the relatives' tombs, a Water Pavilion placed in a pool of water, and a small Chapel. The conservation project of the Cemetery began in 2016.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁵ George Dodds, 'Monumental Revival: Architect Guido Pietropoli Resurrects Carlo Scarpa's Revered Brion Memorial in Italy's Veneto', *Architectural Record*, (2022), p. 52.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 55.

¹⁸⁷ FAI, 'Memoriale Brion|Beni' <https://fondoambiente.it/luoghi/memoriale-brion> [accessed on 15 December 2023].

¹⁸⁸ Guido Pietropoli and Anne-Catrin Schultz, 'Standing or Sitting: The Water Pavilion at Carlo Scarpa's Brion Memorial and its Restoration', *Technology/Architecture + Design*, 6.1 (2022), 33–41, p.34.

¹⁸⁹ Y. Saito, *Poetry Made Visual: The Maestro's Riddles, Carlo Scarpa* (1997), 10–21, p. 16.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 34.

In *A Lezione con Carlo Scarpa*, Franca Semi, one of Scarpa's students, reveals a set of transcripts for lectures Scarpa gave when he was teaching in the IUAV (Università IUAV di Venezia). These include lectures discussing the Brion, giving valuable insight on the details of the Brion Cemetery from Scarpa's perspective. In these lectures, Scarpa describes his inspiration from poets including Valery, and connects this influence on elements at the Cemetery, for example death and flowers'.¹⁹¹ It constitutes a valuable testimony and deep dive inside Scarpa's intentions and thought process, concerning the Cemetery. In his monograph on the Brion Cemetery, *The Other City*, Noever presents a sequence of drawings, photographs and commentary on the Cemetery, and references Scarpa's words from the 'Can Architecture be poetry?' conference, in which Scarpa states:

I would like to explain the Tomba Brion because it is a rather dream work. It's very odd, or, perhaps strange and it is not easy to get society to commission this sort of thing: I mean to express oneself freely about highly questionable areas which may exclude modern rational thought, because it could be superfluous to this work. I consider this work, if you permit me, to be rather good and which will even get better over time. I have tried to put some poetic imagination into it, though not in order to create poetic architecture but to make a certain kind of architecture that could emanate a sense of formal poetry. I mean an expressed form that can become poetry, though, as I said before, you cannot intentionally make poetry.¹⁹²

This approach, I would argue, alludes to that in-between space created by visitor and architecture, which can never be predicted, nor imposed, but only inspired, and which this thesis articulates as a poetic possibility. In *Thresholds*, Ina Macaione embarks on a walk around the Brion Cemetery, and analyses the experiential effects as well as the importance of detail and materiality, arguing:

This is not only philosophy, but a concrete way of life. Because here we finally feel in control of time and free to think, converse, open ourselves up to one another and

¹⁹¹ Franca Semi, *A Lezione con Carlo Scarpa* (Milan: HOEPLI, 2019), p. 262.

¹⁹² Carlo Scarpa and Peter Noever, *The Other City. Carlo Scarpa. Die Andere Stadt* (Wien: Ernst & Sohn, 1989), p.17.

to the world, to observe from afar but also to look into the depths, to join hands walking and crossing the labyrinthine thresholds...¹⁹³

The walking method will be explored in the next chapter, on methodology. Another method of tracing the qualities of the Cemetery on-site has been conducted by Guido Guidi. He has conducted a long documentation of the Brion Cemetery, through a sequence of photographs, over the course of 10 years. It started in 1997 and produced more than 600 photographs in total, on different days, seasons, and times of the day.¹⁹⁴This differs from the approach this thesis has taken, in that personal photography is intentionally less structured and viewed as a complementary tool. Concerning the poetic possibilities of the space, Macaione states: ‘Here, as in the poetry of Jorge Luis Borges, the maze is an allegory for the complexity of the world, which cannot be understood merely through reason’.¹⁹⁵Emotions play a major part at the Cemetery, both on a conceptual and design level as well as on the experiential level. Vitale Zanchettin’s monograph on the Brion Cemetery focuses on the construction process, drawing, and architectural intentions, and analyses the love story of Giuseppe and Onorina Brion and the role of love as a core element of the place.¹⁹⁶*Quasi Un Racconto (2021)* is a narrative, emotional and personal in-depth narration of one of the closest collaborators of Scarpa and someone who spent not only quality time next to Scarpa but ,as mentioned above, was also involved with both the original construction as well as the conservation of the Cemetery, Guido Pietropoli. Pietropoli narrates anecdotes, encounters across the years, incidents on-site at the Brion Cemetery) and revolves around the formative years of it. The analysis presents original Scarpa drawings, discusses Scarpa’s architectural intentions and photographs of Scarpa working on-site. This leads to 2020 towards the end of the book, with anecdotes on the works of the recent conservation by him that took place at the Cemetery. On another occasion he remarks: ‘I took the same approach to the conservation as the actress Anna Magnani, who cautioned a photographer,“ Please don’t retouch my wrinkles. It took me

¹⁹³ Ina Macaione, *Thresholds: Brion Cemetery by Carlo Scarpa* (Trento: List, 2017), p. 36.

¹⁹⁴ Antonello Frongia and Guido Guidi, *Guido Guidi: Carlo Scarpa's Tomba Brion* (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2011), p.25.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

¹⁹⁶ Vitale Zanchettin, and Carlo Scarpa, *Carlo Scarpa : Il Complesso Monumentale Brion* (Venezia: Marsilio, 2005), p.17.

so long to earn them”.¹⁹⁷ Pietropoli ends *Quasi Un Racconto* with some verses by the poet Holderlin and a question concerning the use/role of poets:

Meanwhile I often think it is
Better to stay asleep, than to exist without companions,
Just waiting it out, not knowing what to do or say
In the meantime. What use are poets in times of need?
But you'll say they're like holy priests of the wine god,
Moving from land to land in the holy night.¹⁹⁸

What use are poets in times of need? A good question. In a similar observation in *A fianco di Carlo Scarpa*, Pietropoli presents an analysis of the thought process, symbolisms, and design process for the Brion Cemetery. It is a most personal account by someone who spent days close to him, on a personal and professional level. Pietropoli offers a vivid description of the process, the discussions, as well as the man himself, and explains how his “poetic fertility” was intimately connected to the mutability of his emotions. Linda J. Cook observes: ‘His [Scarpa’s] ability to design with metaphor, veiled references and the use of narrative created a fitting ending to his career and his own life’.¹⁹⁹ Chris L. Smith, in *Bare Architecture*, explores the therapeutic dimensions of the Brion Cemetery and connects it to its poetic dimensions and possibilities for life. He states:

The same time Scarpa constructs a subjectivity of death and departure and articulates it as an actual problem (symptomatology is concrete-real). Scarpa’s architectural procedure engages with the present by reinterpreting the world and its “symptoms”. Opening up new ways of thinking about life and death and in so doing creating new ways of living. The elements both “bear” and give birth to, “bare “a new people. In this sense Scarpa’s Brion-Vega Cemetery is posited as, at once, a poignant thanatopolitics: a politics of death, and a profound symptomatology: a constructing of

¹⁹⁷ George Dodds, ‘Monumental Revival: Architect Guido Pietropoli Resurrects Carlo Scarpa’s Revered Brion Memorial in Italy’s Veneto’, *Architectural Record* (2022), p. 55.

¹⁹⁸ Guido Pietropoli, *Quasi Un Racconto* (Amazon, 2020), p.50.

¹⁹⁹ Linda J. Cook, ‘The Italian Way of Death’, *Landscape Architecture Magazine* , 81.2 (1991), 66-69, p. 69.

life.²⁰⁰

In 2008, in a collaboration with the Altivole municipality, Guido Pietropoli, Enrico Renai, Lino Bettanin and Mario Toselli published a book on the Cemetery, and, in 2019, the Altivole Municipality installed an application with which one can have a guided tour on their mobile phone.²⁰¹ It consists of three guided narrative audio paths: the emotional, the architectural and the botanical. Scarpa describes the intention to instill emotional qualities, by examining meaning.

Overall, the review specifically focused on the Brion Cemetery, on its relation to poetic architectural qualities, and relevant readings, which focus on psychological and emotional qualities.

2.5 CONCLUSION

The literature review has identified common arguments and recurring themes, within its scope and theoretical frameworks. The thesis provided a thorough description of theories of wellbeing for its literature review. It does draw on relevant arguments around wellbeing from the fields of psychology, especially from a phenomenological background to fit with the broader theoretical context of the study. However, it mainly relies on the insights of the use of poetry in the therapeutic fields and Poetry Therapy for the actual analysis of the three moments in space. This choice is intentional, and it aligns with the main focus of the study, which is to create bridges between the fields of architecture, poetry and wellbeing.

The main focus of the thesis is to articulate poetic experience in architecture and understand its potential therapeutic value. Therefore, what is examined is not how Poetry Therapy can extend itself towards architecture. The focus is on architectural space, which is also informed by the poetry's therapeutic value, as explored in the context of Poetry Therapy, in an interdisciplinary examination. However, as a researcher, I am still reluctant to nail down a definition of what this is, whether it is 'poetic space therapy' or 'therapeutic architecture', because I believe my thesis is only the beginning of what could be a much more thorough

²⁰⁰ Chris L. Smith, *Bare Architecture: A Schizoanalysis* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing PLC, 2017), p. 118.

²⁰¹ 'Brion,' Servizi.comune.altivole.tv.it <http://servizi.comune.altivole.tv.it/appbrion/> [accessed 30 December 2023].

examination of the interdisciplinary ties between architecture, poetry and wellbeing. Scarpa's relation to poetry has been identified in characterisations of his work, as well as himself as an architect "poet, "and his influences and appreciation of poetry and statements around it have been frequently discussed. The literature has also uncovered different accounts of how the Brion Cemetery deals with matters of perception and experience, the involvement of the body, and its psychological effects. It draws on these interpretations of the Brion Cemetery, especially those which connect poetry with beneficial psychological and emotional effects at the Cemetery, the bodily engagement, and the role of natural elements. In a systematic exploration, from the personal to the shared experience, poetry is viewed through its potentially empowering and therapeutic qualities, as perceived by architects, philosophers (mainly in the phenomenological field), poets, and mental health practitioners and scholars. Qualities within poems and Poetry Therapy, and its established trajectory of using poetry as a means towards wellbeing, are often in comparison with qualities within the space of the Brion Cemetery. This constitutes a new reading of the Brion Cemetery. The study aims at connecting architecture with other disciplines, in order to understand space, but also, as a way for architecture to present, construct and propose meanings, possibilities, and definitions of wellbeing.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

3.1.1 Discussion of phenomenological method and related references

This study is developed through a phenomenological framework with an emphasis on experience, to interpret the phenomenon of a sense of wellbeing at the Brion Cemetery. This framework references the phenomenological philosophical movement, the psychology field, and phenomenology as applied to architecture. In lack of one unifying definition of

phenomenology,²⁰² a literature review identified several approaches. Hrvoje Cargonja sustains:

Phenomenology never evolved into a uniform system of ideas. Husserl's successors like Martin Heidegger, Emmanuel Levinas, Jean-Paul Sartre, Maurice Merleau-Ponty and others each had their own views on what phenomenology is and how it should be practised. However, the appeal to return to, or rather to begin with, the lived human experience in all its richness and devoid of distortive interpretations imposed by culture, seems to be more or less the common ground of all. This is why phenomenology is best understood as a method rather than a philosophical system; a method that compels one to take into account the way events, things and problems appear to the consciousness (of the researcher or the people being researched) and that strives to suspend explanation before the phenomena are understood on their own terms.²⁰³

The thesis interprets this statement as an attempt to focus on phenomenology as a way of seeing and doing things, with the main aim of reaching a certain understanding through a process, a method. Within the context of architectural studies, David Seamon has been able to articulate phenomenology as a methodology and a useful point of reference for researchers. He has also presented these disagreements surrounding philosophy and method that exist among phenomenologists, in *Whither Phenomenology? Thirty Years of Environmental and Architectural Phenomenology*. He states:

Van Manen (2019, p. 910) criticizes Zahavi's work because it involves little actual phenomenological discovery but emphasizes instead a "philosophical exegesis" of the major phenomenological thinkers, particularly Husserl. These cerebral explications, says van Manen (2019, p. 913), are mostly produced by philosophers, who "argue about issues of phenomenology rather than do a phenomenology of lifeworld

²⁰² M. Reza Shirazi, *Towards an Articulated Phenomenological Interpretation of Architecture* (Oxon: Routledge, 2014), p. 153.

²⁰³ Hrvoje Čargonja, 'Bodies and Worlds Alive: An Outline of Phenomenology in Anthropology', *Studia Ethnologica Croatica*, 25 (2013), 19–60, p. 20.

phenomena or events. For many outsiders, the technical philosophical terminology [of these thinkers] ... can be rather impenetrable.

[...]

In responding to van Manen and Zahavi's concerns, I would argue that, yes, we need the conceptual exegeses of the major phenomenological works, but we also need accurate, comprehensive explications of specific lifeworlds, natural attitudes, and lived experiences. As Zahavi demands, we must continue to write about phenomenology, but we also must do phenomenology and perhaps recognize lifeworld phenomena of which earlier phenomenological philosophers were unaware.²⁰⁴

Phenomenology has been described 'as a return to the things themselves,' as a method 'or a way of seeing,' and as the 'essence of perception'.²⁰⁵ Historically, it is Edmund Husserl who lays the foundations, with transcendental phenomenology ('standing outside of ourselves'), while, later on, Heidegger shapes what we know as the foundations of hermeneutical phenomenology (interpretation of texts)²⁰⁶ and contributes to existential phenomenology (focus on understanding existence).²⁰⁷ After that, Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, and Maurice Merleau-Ponty each develop the existential aspect of the phenomenological movement, whereas Hans-Georg Gadamer and Paul Ricoeur contribute and further develop the hermeneutical path.²⁰⁸ Phenomenological methods have been applied within the architectural field by approaching architectural phenomena from the experiential point of view as a means to identify, analyse and communicate aspects of architectural experience. Christian Norberg-Schulz describes phenomenology as 'a method well suited to penetrate the world of everyday existence', while Pallasmaa describes it as 'pure looking at phenomenon', or 'viewing its essence'.²⁰⁹ However, it is Seamon who creates a systematic

²⁰⁴ David Seamon, 'Whither Phenomenology? Thirty Years of Environmental & Architectural Phenomenology', *Environmental & Architectural Phenomenology* vol. 30, no. 2, (2019), 37-44, p.38.

²⁰⁵ M. Reza Shirazi, *Towards an Articulated Phenomenological Interpretation of Architecture* (Routledge, 2014), p. 20.

²⁰⁶ Susann M. Laverty, 'Hermeneutic Phenomenology and Phenomenology: A Comparison of Historical and Methodological Considerations', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 2.3 (2003), p.24.

²⁰⁷ Darren Langdrige, *Phenomenological Psychology: Theory, Research and Method* (Harlow: Pearson / Prentice Hall, 2007), p. 12.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ M. Reza Shirazi, *Towards an Articulated Phenomenological Interpretation of Architecture* (Routledge, 2014), p. 3.

phenomenological methodology to be applied to architectural research and spatial practices.²¹⁰ By reviewing the frameworks that have been available in the past decades, he draws on methodological approaches from the field of psychology, which has had a long history of applying phenomenology to lived experience. He states:

For the most part, it has been psychologists-especially psychologists associated with what has come to be called the "Duquesne School of Phenomenological Psychology"-who have sought to establish reliable procedural methods for conducting empirical phenomenological research (Giorgi, Barton, & Maes, 1983; Valle, 1998; also see Moustakas, 1994). Drawing on the designations of Duquesne phenomenological psychologist von Eckartsberg (1998a, b), I discuss two methodological approaches-what von Eckartsberg calls the existential and the hermeneutic. I also add a third approach that I call first-person.²¹¹

For the purposes of the study's analysis, as part of a broader phenomenological methodological discourse, some clarifications need to be made. Phillips-Pula and others sustain: 'Phenomenological methods are often chosen because of a researcher's philosophical or methodological congruence with the nuances of the approach'.²¹² Richard Hycner, on the other hand, argues: 'Unlike other methodologies, phenomenology cannot be reduced to a 'cookbook' set of instructions. It is more an approach, an attitude, an investigative posture with a certain set of goals'.²¹³ Indeed, far from seeing phenomenology as a cookbook of instructions, for the purposes of this study, the thesis acknowledges the significant role of phenomenology as a way of both seeing and doing things. In this sense, phenomenology assists the researcher dive into the richness of what is observed and experienced, which would otherwise be difficult, by adopting a phenomenological "eye" or what could be characterised as a filter for processing information. At the same time, by adopting David

²¹⁰ David Wang and Linda N. Groat, *Architectural Research Methods* (Hoboken: J. Wiley, 2013), p.228.

²¹¹ David Seamon, 'A Way of Seeing People and Place,: Phenomenology in Environment-Behaviour Research', in S.Wapner, J. Yamamoto, and H Minami (Eds),*Theoretical Perspectives in Environment-Behaviour Research* (, (New York: Plenum, 2000), 157-178,78, p. 165.

²¹² L. Phillips-Pula, J. Strunk, and R. H. Pickler, 'Understanding Phenomenological Approaches to Data Analysis', *Journal of Pediatric Health Care*, 25.1 (2011), 67–71, p. 67.

²¹³ H. Richard Hycner, 'Some Guidelines for the Phenomenological Analysis of Interview Data', *Human Studies*, 8 (1985), 279–303, P. 279.

Seamon's significant work in this field, which will be analysed in the following subchapter, it allows a structured way of analysing results and then creating links with other fields, given the interdisciplinary nature of the study. This study references the Greek word ' "méthodos" ' pursuit of knowledge, mode of investigation, f.metá with + hodós way'²¹⁴ as a holistic way of proceeding ahead, taking the path forward. The methodology has been developing throughout the years and has been shaped by the changes in the research question, the primary research and the realisations that emerged during the maturation of the ideas. For the specifics of this study and given the fact that many of the choices that have been made so far have been informed by the Brion Cemetery and the emerging, shifting realisations stemming from the in-depth involvement with what I encountered through the process of this study, I am therefore suggesting a combination of methods to approach the study, which will be described in the following section.

3.1.2 Discussion of Seamon's three categories

Seamon creates three categories for phenomenological research in environmental psychology and architecture, as well as a fourth category the so called 'commingling methods', which is a combination of the previous three categories. Seamon writes:

The phenomenologist pays attention to specific instances of the phenomenon with the hope that these instances, in time, will point toward more general qualities and characteristics that accurately describe the essential nature of the phenomenon as it has presence and meaning in the concrete lives and experiences of human beings .²¹⁵

With regard to the first category ,Franci Violiche's comparative analysis of place experience in five Dalmatian Towns, Igor Stefanovic's work, and Toombs work stand out.²¹⁶Seamon states:

²¹⁴ T. F. Hoad (ed.), *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), <https://doi.org/10.1093/acref/9780192830982.001.0001> [accessed 15 December 2023].

²¹⁵ M. Reza Shirazi, *Towards an Articulated Phenomenological Interpretation of Architecture* (Oxon: Routledge, 2014), p. 3.

²¹⁶ David Wang and Linda N. Groat, *Architectural Research Methods* (Hoboken: J. Wiley, 2013), p. 228.

In first-person phenomenological inquiry, the researcher uses her own firsthand experience of the phenomenon as a basis for examining its specific characteristics and qualities [...]

Another way in which the first-person method can be used in phenomenology is as a starting place from which the phenomenologist can bring to awareness 'her preconceived notions and biases regarding the experience being investigated so that the researcher is less likely to impose these biases when interpreting [the phenomenon]' (Shertock, 1998, p. 162; also see Colaizzi, 1973) .

In this sense, if the phenomenologist has access in her own experience to the phenomenon she plans to study, first-person research can offer clarity and insight grounded in one's own lifeworld. This understanding is derived from a world of one, however, and the researcher must find ways to involve the worlds of others. This need leads to the method of existential-phenomenological research.²¹⁷

The second category, the existential-phenomenological is that bridge towards a better understanding as Seamon states. It is the inclusion of others' experiences, an example mentioned by Seamon is Million's work around involuntary displacement and Nogué i Font's phenomenology of landscape. The last category, hermeneutical, relies on the idea of hermeneutics. Marilyn Annells views hermeneutics as 'an interpretive process that seeks to bring understanding and disclosure of phenomena through language'.²¹⁸ The method has been described and analysed by Seamon, as the following:

Most broadly, hermeneutics is the theory and practice of interpretation (Mugerauer, 1994, p. 4), particularly the interpretation of *texts*, which may be any material object or tangible expression imbued in some way with human meaning--for example, a public document, a personal journal, a poem, a song, a painting, a dance, a sculpture, a garden, and so forth.

²¹⁷ David Seamon, 'A Way of Seeing People and Place: Phenomenology in Environment-Behaviour Research', in S. Wapner, J. Yamamoto, and H. Minami (edn), *Theoretical Perspectives in Environment-Behaviour Research* (New York: Plenum, 2000), 157–78, p.165.

²¹⁸ Susann M. Laverty, 'Hermeneutic Phenomenology and Phenomenology: A Comparison of Historical and Methodological Considerations', *International Journal of Qualitative Method*, 2.3 (2003), p. 24.

The key point hermeneutically is that the creator of the text is not typically available to comment on its making or significance, thus the hermeneutic researcher must find ways to discover meanings through the text itself. As von Eckartsberg (1998b, p. 50) describes the hermeneutical process:

One embeds oneself in the process of getting involved in the text, one begins to discern configurations of meaning, of parts and wholes and their interrelationships, one receives certain messages and glimpses of an unfolding development that beckons to be articulated and related to the total fabric of meaning. The hermeneutic approach seems to palpate its object and to make room for that object to reveal itself to our gaze and ears, to speak its own story into our understanding.²¹⁹

Notable works in this category include Norberg-Schulz and the idea of “Genius Loci,” Thiis-Evensen’s *Archetypes in Architecture*, Edward Relph’s *Place and Placeness*, and Bachelard’s *The Poetics of space*. Bachelard makes an observation which is of use for this study, on account of its connection to poetry. He states that:

But the poetic act itself, the sudden image, the flare-up of being in the imagination, are inaccessible to such investigations. In order to clarify the problem of the poetic image philosophically, we shall have to have recourse to a phenomenology of the imagination. By this should be understood a study of the phenomenon of the poetic image when it emerges into the consciousness as a direct product of the heart, soul and being of man, apprehended in his actuality.²²⁰

Lastly, Seamon describes what he calls ‘commingling methods’:

Very often the phenomenological researcher uses the first-person, existential, and hermeneutic approaches in combination, thus, for example, Nogué i Font (1993), in his phenomenology of the Garroxta landscape, made use of interviews but also did

²¹⁹ David Seamon, ‘A Way of Seeing People and Place: Phenomenology in Environment-Behaviour Research’, in S. Wapner, J. Yamamoto, and H. Minami (eds), *Theoretical Perspectives in Environment-Behaviour Research* (New York: Plenum, 2000), 157–78, p. 167.

²²⁰ Gaston Bachelard, *Poetics of Space* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), p.xvii.

hermeneutic readings of nineteenth-century Garroxtan photographs and the pictures of artists associated with the nineteenth-century Garroxta school of landscape painting. [...]

The ultimate question, especially for the non-phenomenologist, is whether, in fact, phenomenological interpretations like Chaffin's offers a truthful picture of the phenomena they purport to present. This question leads to the issue of validity and trustworthiness as understood phenomenologically.²²¹

The study draws on all of the above, as they align not only with the purposes but also the complexity of the data. A detailed explanation of the primary materials analysis and collection will be described in the following section of this chapter.

3.2 METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS & LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

3.2.1 Methodological phenomenological considerations

David Schwandt remarks: Phenomenological research must struggle with 'the paradox of how to develop an objective science of subjective human experience'.²²² Phenomenology is often criticized, in the context of other methodologies, as risking of compromising certain essential elements of rigour for a study. This is a legitimate concern; however, one needs to consider the epistemology and ontology of the study. One might ask: How can lived experience best be evaluated, in an intimate manner, rather than measured? Seamon mentions:

Though phenomenological research in the human sciences has been criticized on a number of grounds, perhaps the most significant concern among conventionally-trained, positivist social scientists is the issue of trustworthiness—in other words, what

²²¹ David Seamon, 'A Way of Seeing People and Place: Phenomenology, Place, Environment, and Architecture: A Review of the Literature', in S. Wapner, J. Yamamoto, and H. Minami (eds), *Theoretical Perspectives in Environment-Behaviour Research* (New York: Plenum, 2000), 157–78, p 169.

²²² David Wang and Linda N. Groat, *Architectural Research Methods* (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2013), p.229.

criteria can be used to establish the reliability of phenomenological descriptions and interpretations? [...]

From a phenomenological perspective, the issue of reliability first of all involves interpretive appropriateness: In other words, how can there be an accurate fit between experience and language, between what we know as individuals in our own lives versus how that knowledge can be accurately placed theoretically? [...]

Ultimately, the most significant test of trustworthiness for any phenomenological study is its relative power to draw the reader into the researcher's discoveries, allowing the reader to see his or her own world or the worlds of others in a new, deeper way. The best phenomenological work breaks people free from their usual recognitions and moves them along new paths of understanding.²²³

He also introduces the following evaluating criteria, which specifically address these concerns:

Comprehensiveness, whereby the interpretive account is complete in that it addresses essential aspects of the text or situation [...]

Semantic depth, whereby the interpretation evokes a thickness of interpretive understanding that incorporates past, present, and future experiences; the interpretation [...]

Inclusivity, whereby the interpretive text offers an encompassing frame of reference that incorporates and shelters less inclusive interpretive texts; the interpretation offers a thoroughness “that demonstrates its superior truth over other texts in that it can give a more comprehensive interpretation of some phenomenon that is suggestive of both the strengths and weaknesses of other accounts” (Wachterhauser 1986, p. 235).

Architectonic structure, whereby the interpretation provides a fitting place for all the interpretive parts; the interpretation works architectonically and teleologically “in that

²²³ David Seamon, ‘A Way of Seeing People and Place: Phenomenology in Environment-Behaviour Research’, in S. Wapner, J. Yamamoto, and H. Minami (eds), *Theoretical Perspectives in Environment-Behaviour Research* (New York: Plenum, 2000), 157–78, p. 172.

it orders and structures our experience into an intelligible pattern” (Wachterhauser 1986, p.235).²²⁴

The above criteria address the question of trustworthiness. However, disagreements concerning the focus of phenomenological research are not limited only outside the field. In fact, Seamon, has conducted a comprehensive review of the state of the art in the field in the last 30 years. One observation is that there are two main “schools of thought”. The first one is based on Dan Zahavi’s approach which puts the specifics of the experience, rather than the theory of the philosophical moment, at the center of the enquiry. The second one is based on van Manen’s approach which opposes that approach and favours phenomenological theory to explain phenomena.²²⁵ Both have been long practiced.

The study aligns itself with the first approach, in that it examines experience, and its focus is on the description of the phenomenon, rather than its etiology. The study also does not assume that it is possible to deal with absolute essences, with regard to the specifics of the wellbeing experience at the Brion Cemetery. A significant distinction needs to be made, for the purposes of the research: The generalisable and transferable aspect of the study is not one specific interpretation of wellbeing. Rather, it stems from in-depth examinations of the mechanisms at play that set in motion potential and different interpretations of wellbeing. In fact, as mentioned previously, it is Norberg-Schulz who disagrees with Rasmussen’s interpretation of experience in his seminal work, due to the fact that it relies on architectural theory, not taking into consideration the specifics of context and the differences in people’s experiences etc.²²⁶

In addition to that, the study uses triangulation and NVivo coding as a way of addressing dependability and confirmability and structure the rich ecosystem of data collected. These parts of the methodology will be addressed in a following section of this chapter.

²²⁴ David Seamon, ‘Hermeneutics and Architecture: Buildings-in-Themselves and Interpretive Trustworthiness’, in Bruce Janz (ed.), *Place, Space and Hermeneutics*, (Cham: Springer, 2017), p. 352.

²²⁵ David Seamon, ‘Whither Phenomenology? Thirty Years of Environmental & Architectural Phenomenology’, *Environmental & Architectural Phenomenology* vol. 30, no. 2, (2019), 37-44, p. 38.

²²⁶ Christopher Tweed, ‘A Phenomenological Framework for Describing Architectural Experience’, *Phenomenology Culture conference*, University College Cork, Ireland (2000). p.4.

3.2.2 Limitations of the study:

In terms of the scope that the study covers, there are certain limitations.

To begin with, the study does not examine all Scarpa's oeuvre, but only the Brion Cemetery. Furthermore, it does not investigate comparisons with other cemeteries, in Italy or abroad. The choice to not pursue a comparative method was an intentional one. In fact, discussions around the potential value of comparative methods were brought forth at several stages during the research. This included the consideration of exploring comparisons between different spaces for wellbeing, generally, as well as other cemeteries. However, as the rich data/primary materials at the Brion, specifically, were being processed, and the complexity of the Cemetery was being unfolded, the main concern was to have enough time to be able to properly delve into it. The study, specifically, aimed at the exploration and articulation of elements which contribute to a sense of wellbeing at the Brion Cemetery. In other words, any comparative study was considered to be not necessarily helpful, given the scope of the study and direction the topic was taking, with regards to deciphering as a priority the specifics of the concept of wellbeing. Moreover, the research could offer a potentially promising methodology for future steps. The advantages of this choice, as analysed before, are aligned with the need of the thesis to leave room for in depth analysis of the Brion, as a case study, and of a deeper understanding of the primary materials that have been collected. The main disadvantage of focusing on one project is the lack of confirmation of the insights perceived at the Brion Cemetery. This could have been achieved either from the observation of similar patterns, or the lack of any similarities, given their differences in the experience of architecture. In fact, the researcher acknowledges this as a limitation of the study and encourages comparative studies in the future. Now that a first articulation of potential concepts of wellbeing have been analysed, the comparative approach would, perhaps, bring richness and insights from other spaces as well, in order to complement or contrast these concepts.

Concerning the focus of the study, the three tangible moments in space which were selected to be at the centre of analysis, rather than the totality of the Cemetery will be explored. It is significant to clarify that the Chapel of the Brion Cemetery, found on the northwest corner of the site, has not been chosen as part of the three tangible examples of analysis of the thesis. This was a decision taken during the data analysis phase of the research. By no means does the researcher imply this part of the Cemetery, which is, otherwise, particularly evoking, and

beautifully crafted, is not a space for emotions or poetic experience. The choice does not reflect an intention to leave the Chapel out of the analysis, but rather to focus on the organisation of the analysis around the following main considerations.

During the data analysis, what became evident was that there was a rich, complex, and generative ecosystem of data that was collected. The thesis required a very intentional selection of tangible examples to facilitate the analysis and allow an in-depth exploration of the experience.

Out of the many potential parts for analysis and exploration of the Cemetery, the ones that were eventually selected were those connected to visceral and emotional personal experiences. Ultimately, the parts chosen were the Propylaea, the Water Pavilion and the Arcosolium. In addition to this, these three parts create a spatially as well as a conceptually complete axis; the themes of death, life and love become vibrant here. As stated previously, this does not diminish the importance of the Chapel. In fact, future research could extend the methodology followed in this study to include the Chapel.

All these decisions were made after careful consideration, year after year, and by taking into consideration the totality, richness, and complexity of the collected primary materials as well as of their ability to cover the research question at hand. The three tangible moments were also considered to be a complete axis representative of the phenomena of love, life, and death.

There are methodological limitations to the use of the phenomenology mentioned, owing to its nature. This, in part, is due to the difficulty in defining it and also the disagreements that exist within the research community of phenomenologists. I would argue that any method that wishes to address human experience in depth and be true to its nuances and subjectivity is bound to have inherent difficulties and paradoxes, precisely like human experience itself. This thesis explicitly recognises that, but also embraces it. In the architectural and environmental fields, Seamon remarks:

What is phenomenology as a philosophy, research method, and way of understanding?
One would suppose this question had long since been answered but, in fact, the matter remains controversial as indicated by recent debates among philosopher Dan Zahavi,

educator Max van Manen, nursing researcher John Paley, and psychologists Amedeo Giorgi, James Morley, and Jonathan A. Smith.²²⁷

The study dealt with these difficulties by aligning itself with the four criteria mentioned previously (comprehensiveness, semantic depth, inclusivity, and architectonic structure).

Seamon argues:

Wachterhauser (1986, p. 234) emphasizes that these criteria are not: rules in the sense of either necessary or sufficient conditions.... Instead these [criteria] may be thought of as heuristic ideals that guide us in many situations of inquiry but do not bind us universally. In short, these four criteria attend to research results rather than process and ,at least, partly circumvent the three disagreements highlighted earlier in relation to phenomenological aims and methods. Wachterhauser's criteria offer one means to "set aside" the many different phenomenological approaches and styles, instead giving primary evaluative attention to thoroughness, soundness, rigor, and believability.²²⁸

The thesis recognises that the phenomenological path followed as well as the overall exploratory process were achieved in the course of five years. That allowed a very organic, gradual, and in-depth maturation of ideas, which might not ,otherwise, have occurred if there had not been enough time. Moreover, the biases of the author and the interviewees need to be recognised. Both the students and Guido Pietropoli have an architectural background. In other contexts, interviews , focus groups and the language used might have been different. However, this could also be perceived to be positive, in a phenomenological research, as participants ideally need to have an interest in the phenomena observed and be familiar with it. Lastly, the richness of primary materials collected and analysed led to narrowing down the focus. This resulted in the choice of not including the Chapel or making comparative studies between other Scarpa's work or other spaces for wellbeing and cemeteries.

²²⁷ David Seamon, 'Whither Phenomenology? Thirty Years of Environmental & Architectural Phenomenology', *Environmental & Architectural Phenomenology* vol. 30, no. 2, (2019), 37-44, p.37.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.41.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION

3.3.1 First-person

Applied to this study, first-person phenomenological research includes subjective material from three sets of multiple visits to the Brion Cemetery in 2015, 2018 and 2019.

Documentation from these visits includes material in the form of photographs and video recording on my phone, my observations (which have been transcribed into text), and some anecdotes on-site, recreated from memory.

3.3.1.1 Personal Observations

The observations that took place at the Cemetery were initially unplanned and took place as part of an attempt to enhance my own experiential interpretation of the space. These observations took place on the 29th of March, 2019. The process was as follows: I used a recorder to record myself as I was walking in the Cemetery. This walk aimed at looking at the space with new eyes and distancing myself from any prior knowledge and preconceived notions. I actively tried to refrain from attaching symbolisms too, but tried to allow myself into an exploration, once again, by immersing myself into the place and paying attention to everything. This, of course, was close to impossible, given my deep involvement with this space. However, what happened was that by leaving the recorder on and without any pressure to describe something, I would simply let my thoughts flow without censoring myself.

Sometimes, listening back to the recordings, I was surprised by some observations that I had made during those walks and did not remember, as they sounded quite fresh and unfiltered, and seemed to spring out from the circumstances and what I was experiencing then and there: not only the architecture, but the very evocative natural elements that one is exposed to, at the Brion Cemetery. Discourses around walking, as a way of understanding landscape and spatial experience, are well established in the literature, and so are its connections to literature. Lee Vergunst and Tim Ingold observe:

On paper, written words are separated by spaces, as are footprints on the ground. Yet although the traces are discontinuous, the movement they register is a continuous one.

[...] But the writer does not cease to write on lifting the pen, nor does the walker cease to walk on lifting each foot, alternately, from the ground. Nor, for that matter, does the singer or storyteller cease his recitation every time he pauses for breath. ‘Stories walk’, writes John Berger, [...] And their steps are not only between narrated events but between each sentence, sometimes each word. Every step is a stride over something not said’ (Berger 1982, 284-5).²²⁹

This is also compatible with phenomenological research. Maggie O Neill and Phil Hubbard note:

Walking is not to be privileged as a way of “knowing,” but has certain sensate, kinaesthetic, and performative attributes that make it particularly ‘insightful’ for means for biographical, ethnographic, phenomenological, and psycho-social research - in accessing the ‘routes’ and movement, and the use and interpretations of spaces by individuals, as well as for sharing research findings with various publics.²³⁰

Moreover, walking has been used as a way of experiencing Scarpa’s buildings by key references of this study. Federica Goffi uses this peripatetic approach, at Castelvechio Museum, and describes:

The visit began by identifying Scarpa’s site office
and then walking throughout the Castelvechio Museum so that recollections emerged
on site through an instance of peripatetic storytelling
[...]
Scarpa’s practice of conversion is more akin to ‘storytelling’ than ‘historical materialism’, as defined by Walter Benjamin (1892–1940). Architectural stories are not the product of the accumulation of information, which produces an indexable material history to be preserved; instead, they come alive over time when passed on

²²⁹ Jo Lee Vergunst and Tim Ingold (eds), *Ways of Walking: Ethnography and Practice on Foot* (London: Routledge, 2008), p. 8.

²³⁰ Maggie O’Neill and Phil Hubbard, ‘Walking, Sensing, Belonging: Ethno-Mimesis as Performative Praxis’, *Visual Studies*, 25.1 (2010), 46–58, p. 46.

from one author to the next, but also from one author to their collaborators — architects, technologists, engineers, crafts people, construction workers.²³¹

Michael Cadwell also takes time to slowly understand the space, at the Querini Stampalia, with his book *Stange Details*, while Ina Macaione, in her book *Thresholds*, explores the Cemetery by using a “journey” around the Brion Cemetery and documents the discoveries.

3.3.1.2 Analysis of personal photography

The photography was taken in situ, during my visits to the Brion Cemetery, as a spontaneous process of documenting points of interest. Some of the shots were used strategically, as part of the chapter writing, to evidence changes of moods/emotions, to highlight specific viewpoints and/or highlight thresholds of interest.

The dates of visits were 27th& 28th of October 2018 and 27th& 29th March 2019, therefore, the photographs were taken in different weather circumstances (with/without rain, in the Autumn/early Spring). The process of analysing the photography is based on a simple visual content analysis, where each photograph represents a code. A code is a reference for each saved description of content. The codes were created by providing textual descriptions of the content in the image, with a focus on what was seen and the point of view of the camera. It is significant to clarify that several codes overlap in content, as the descriptions include several elements which are coded in different codes.

3.3.2 Existential

Secondly, the existential phenomenological method focuses on ‘the specific experiences of specific individuals or groups in actual situations or places’²³² where further clarifications are sought through the shared experience of others on the site. A site visit to the Brion Cemetery with ten Master’s architectural students from the Welsh School of Architecture took place in October, 2018, with on-site observations of the students’ reactions. It is important to note

²³¹ Federica Goffi, ‘Sited-Memory’, *Joelho Revista de Cultura Arquitectonica*, 13 (2022), 83–98, p. 86.

²³² David Wang and Linda N. Groat, *Architectural Research Methods* (Hoboken: J. Wiley, 2013), p. 232.

that, at the time of the first visit, the decision to involve students was taken proactively to make use of the opportunity, as the focus on the Brion Cemetery was at a very early stage. At that stage, their involvement, which of course followed all the rules of ethics, was considered a pilot study. Therefore, and because I was an outsider (in the sense that I was not their official tutor), I did not want to add further responsibilities on them, during the visit. The choice not to include students' drawings was something I had not considered, due to circumstances, and eventually, this could potentially be considered an idea to develop, for future studies.

Also, in August 2019 an interview with Pietropoli took place. Writing of the existential-phenomenological method, Seamon clarifies:

Phenomenological psychologists, particularly those associated with the Duquesne School, have devoted considerable effort to establishing a clear set of procedures and techniques for this style of phenomenology (see Valle, 1998). For example, Von Eckartsberg (1998b) speaks of four steps in the process: (1) identifying the phenomenon in which the phenomenologist is interested; (2) gathering descriptive accounts from respondents regarding their experience of the phenomenon; (3) carefully studying the respondents' accounts with the aim of identifying any underlying commonalities and patterns; and (4) presenting results, both to the study respondents (in the form of a "debriefing" about the study in ordinary language) and to fellow researchers (in the form of scholarly presentation).²³³

3.3.2.1 Students' Interviews

The following section will discuss and analyse the methodological process of data gathering and analysis of the architectural students' interviews, with whom we visited the Brion Cemetery during our visit in October, 2018. The interviews took place in the following weeks, after our return to the UK, and took the form of semi-structured interviews. Out of the eleven students that were initially available on site, only eight were able to participate in the

²³³ David Seamon, 'A Way of Seeing People and Place: Phenomenology in Environment-Behaviour Research', in S. Wapner, J. Yamamoto, and H. Minami (eds), *Theoretical Perspectives in Environment-Behaviour Research*, (New York: Plenum, 2000), 157–78, p.166.

interviews. The interviewing process took place in the following month, November of 2018. The questions were created before the visit and had as their purpose to elicit their own interpretations of the experience of the Cemetery. One significant observation here to state is that this visit was not initially planned, as part of the design research, but rather emerged as a possibility, which I took on as an opportunity and used the relevant information and rationale that was available to me, at that time, which was still at a preliminary stage. However, the main idea was that the questions would focus on their perception and interpretation of the space, any experiential elements, the value of this space, and any poetic elements. These are the following questions:

Q1: If you could describe the Brion-Vega Cemetery in three words, what would they be?

Q2: During the visit, do you remember how you felt in the space?

Q3: What stayed with you from this experience, up to this day?

Q4: How is this space different or similar to what you experience in your everyday life?

Q5: Do you believe the architect was thinking about people when he was designing it?

Q6: (If the response to the previous question is positive): How do you think this manifests itself in this project?

Q7: As a student of architecture, what is your first thought when you hear “poetry in architecture”?

Q8: (Based on the previous answer) Would you say that you could find any such elements in the Brion -Vega Cemetery?

Q9: What aspects of this space do you think most contribute to the creation of a certain atmosphere?

Q10: Do you think there is value in such a space, in our times, and why?

Q11: What do you think is needed to achieve such an architecture, in our days?

The questions were open ended and shaped in an exploratory tone. I suspended my previous personal experiences as much as possible and remained curious about their points of view. In fact, because of this process and my detachment, the first shift happened. During the interviews and from the analysis of the students’ responses the realisation that the Brion Cemetery is not solely a restorative, joyful space but also a space where effort is present, emerged. The interviews were recorded with the consent of the interviewees and having followed all the relevant ethical procedures of the Welsh School of Architecture

3.3.2.3 Students 'observations

The third category was designed from the beginning and included the observation, recording and documentation of architectural students on site, during our visit in 2018 (27 October, 2018). This was conducted by following all ethical procedures of the Welsh School of Architecture, and eliciting informed consent from the participants. During our visit to the Brion, I refrained from explaining anything to them about the space and when we arrived there I asked them to explore and experience the space, first on their own in order to avoid tinting their first impression. During that stage I recorded their reactions and observations. The process was as follows: The students were left to wander on their own at the Brion Cemetery and I was at the background, not interfering or commenting, simply recording, and observing them, while they were absorbed and interacting in their observations. Overall, 11 architectural students were observed, and the observation included moments where students were on their own or in groups.

It could, of course, be argued that, given their architectural background and interest in such a space they could have researched it before hand , since they knew we were visiting it. All of these potential biases are recognised as potential limitations of the study.

3.3.2.4 Conversation with Guido Pietropoli

The conversation with Pietropoli took place in August ,2019,as mentioned above, at his home/office, in Rovigo, Italy, and lasted approximately 2,5 -3 hours. The value of the conversation lies in the openness and unbiased flow of the conversation (which could be considered an unstructured interview), since the only initial statement on my behalf was the description of my study and its objectives. This process can offer a rich, deep understanding and a close examination into the themes that have been identified throughout the research, as well as potential interpretations of the questions that have been raised. The interview was held in Italian, which is Pietropoli's and my native language, and, therefore, there is a heightened understanding of all the nuanced expressions and meanings within the conversation. The aim of the analysis was to uncover themes and statements that are relevant to the Brion Cemetery, Carlo Scarpa's work and the overarching topic of this research with regards to poetic experience and a sense of wellbeing, as well as the primary materials analysis .

3.3.3 Hermeneutical

For this part of the analysis, the aim was to identify and interpret drawings and texts from original material and proceed into in-depth analyses and interpretations for the clarification of concepts of wellbeing and poetics, in the work of Carlo Scarpa at the Brion Cemetery.

3.3.3.1 Archives

Archival research took place, at the end of March ,2019 and the beginning of April ,2019, aiming at uncovering original materials by Scarpa. Several visits took place to the MAXXI museum in Rome, Castelvecchio Museum in Verona, and the Carlo Scarpa Centre in Treviso. During this process, around two thousand (available in 2019) original drawings for the Brion Cemetery were examined as well as the following folders: 1. Poetic Texts 2. Cigarette Packs 3. All Documents- 3 files 4. Correspondence 1+1/4. Most of the material was in the Italian language. The drawings were free of charge to photograph, and therefore, all those which were of interest for the study were photographed. With “interest for the study” a specific focus is meant: those drawings which include human figures. Part of the hermeneutical process of examining the drawings is critically filtered out, observing the drawings as well as interpreting any human emotions or figures interacting with the architecture. Also, part of the hermeneutical process includes drawings, comparisons between drawings and other data (for example, on-site observations), in order to analyse points of interest for the study.

For this part of the analysis, the aim was to identify and interpret drawings and texts from original material and proceed into in-depth analyses and interpretations for the clarification of concepts of wellbeing and poetics in the work of Carlo Scarpa at the Brion Cemetery.

With regards to the texts found in drawings or in other archival material, they provided a direct insight into the architect’s mind and some of his intentions, which in some cases were extremely valuable; for example, statements about the role of poetry were revealed in a manner which were enlightening for the progress of the study. They also revealed background thoughts concerning the pre-construction phase and the architectural intentions that were in line with the clients’ desires (for example, to have an entrance bearing a symbolic and poetic meaning). Lastly, they evidenced a liveliness in the manner they were written, but also in their content. Furthermore, most of them described architectural intentions. The textual observations do not offer an opportunity for grouping, as they are

sporadic and most of them appear either as nuggets of wisdom, random thoughts by the architect as well as elaboration on architectural intentions. A few of them were also out of context and difficult to interpret. However, one significant observation is that the majority of texts found in the archives referred to observations around the architecture and architectural intentions. The purpose of these texts for the study is to inject them into the discussion and analysis, in correlation with other primary materials, to strengthen specific arguments.

3.3.3.2 Visitors' Guestbook

The following subchapter discusses and analyses the methodological process of primary materials gathering and analysis of a visitors' guestbook which was found at the Chapel of the Brion Cemetery during a visit on 29 March ,2019. The guestbook was photographed on the spot from the first to the last page for later use and analysis. The guestbook pages recorded date from 1-11-2018 to 24-3-2019. Written permission for their use was granted by the San Vito D'Altivole Council, the official owner of the guestbook. However, there are certain limitations. The precise sample of people who visited the Cemetery in that period is not necessarily connected to the number of comments in the guestbook, and, therefore ,not necessarily indicative of the traffic there.

One further limitation includes the fact that the only comments that were documented were those legible and written either in English or the Italian language. Overall, the frequency of visits, based on the comments that appeared with a date, was the following:

- November 2018: 147
- December 2018: 104
- January 2019: 125
- February 2019: 101
- March 2019: 162

Several of the above comments were simply dates followed by names. The only times recorded were 1 November at 16:26, and another on a different day at 11:15 in the morning. Therefore, there is no way to appropriately interpret various times of the day. One explanation here to interpret the increase in visits in Autumn and the end of Winter is the weather conditions (warmer, sunnier, and more sunlight during the day).

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

For the data analysis, a multitude of methods was used in order to achieve the aims of the methodology, which was to uncover the qualities of the experience of wellbeing and poetry at the Cemetery, and to do so in a rich manner, as much as possible, in order to organise the primary materials.

The material that was analysed and coded was:

1. Photography taken by the researcher on site, transcribed by the researcher into textual descriptions
2. Interviews with students (text)
3. Observations from visits with students (transcriptions of text/speech and description of \events happening)
4. Personal observations (transcriptions from video/audio recordings)
5. Drawing descriptions (transcribed into textual descriptions)
6. Drawing texts (In Italian)
7. Texts from letters, cigarette packs (In Italian)
8. Interview with Guido Pietropoli (in Italian)
9. Guestbook text from visitors (multiple languages).

The analysis of the qualitative data gathered through these three methods was then analysed through Nvivo, following a Thematic Analysis approach. Sundler explains: ‘Thematizing meaning has been emphasized as one of a few shared aspects across different qualitative approaches.’²³⁴ Content and Thematic analysis ‘offers a method for identifying patterns (‘themes’) in a dataset, and for describing and interpreting the meaning and importance of those’.²³⁵ This is similar to content analysis as a qualitative data analysis method but differs with regards to the depth that the analysis wishes to reach. Thematic analysis is also

²³⁴ Annelie J., Sundler, Elisabeth Lindberg, Christina Nilsson, and Lina Palmér, ‘Qualitative Thematic Analysis Based on Descriptive Phenomenology’, *Nursing Open*, 6.3 (2019), 733–39, p.734.

²³⁵ Virginia Braun, Victoria Clarke, and Paul Weate, ‘Using Thematic Analysis in Sport and Exercise Research’, in *Routledge Handbook of Qualitative Research in Sport and Exercise*, ed. by Brett Smith and Andrew C. Sparkes (London: Routledge, 2016), pp. 191-205, p.2.

compatible with phenomenological research. Chi-Cheng Chang and Wang Yao-Hua write: 'In fact, thematic analysis is relevant to phenomenology since it stresses subjects' perceptions, feelings, and experiences subjectively.'²³⁶

This include the following steps of thematic analysis, as described by Braun ,Clarke and Weate: 'Phases 1-2: Familiarization, Phases 3-5: Theme development, refinement and naming themes, Phase 6: Writing up'.²³⁷Moira Maguire & Brid Delahunt describe the nuanced approach of thematic analysis, by saying: 'As defined earlier, a theme is a pattern that captures something significant or interesting about the data and/or research question'.²³⁸As Moira Maguire and Brid Delahunt explain:

there are no hard and fast rules about what makes a theme. A theme is characterised by its significance. If you have a very small data set (e.g., one short focus-group) there may be considerable overlap between the coding stage and this stage of identifying preliminary themes.²³⁹

This is relevant to this study, as the sample of interviewees was limited.

A thematic analysis was conducted by textually correlating all data and grouping all the nodes from the content and thematic analysis into larger thematic nodes. The nodes in NVivo represent a place where codes are collected, based on the analysis. As mentioned previously, NVivo was used as an organizational tool for the analysis. NVivo is deemed as a useful technology, as it is compatible with a number of research designs and methodologies, including phenomenology.²⁴⁰

The above process has been followed, and several layers of analysis were structured towards a systematic filtering of the material. This resulted in initial codes (337 in number) that were

²³⁶ Chi-Cheng Chang and Yao-Hua Wang, 'Using Phenomenological Methodology with Thematic Analysis to Examine and Reflect on Commonalities of Instructors' Experiences in MOOCs', *Education Sciences*, 11.5 (2021), 203, p.6.

²³⁷ Virginia Braun, Victoria Clarke, and Paul Weate, 'Using Thematic Analysis in Sport and Exercise Research', in *Routledge Handbook of Qualitative Research in Sport and Exercise*, ed. by Brett Smith and Andrew C. Sparkes (London: Routledge, 2016), pp. 191-205, p.8.

²³⁸ Moira Maguire and Brid Delahunt, 'Doing a Thematic Analysis: A Practical, Step-By-Step Guide for Learning and Teaching Scholars', *AISHE-J*, 9.3 (2017), 3351-33514, p. 3356.

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ FC Zamawe, 'The Implication of Using NVivo Software in Qualitative Data Analysis: Evidence-Based Reflections', *Malawi Medical Journal*, 27.1 (2015), 13-15, p. 14.

then categorised in different themes/clusters (45 in number). These themes were then grouped and organised in larger groups (9 groups).

These are: 1. Scarpa and Architectural Intentions 2. Tangible descriptions, materiality and parts of the Cemetery 3. Experience and Body 4. Emotions, Wellbeing and Value 5. Poetic 6. Landscape and Natural Elements 7. Static (rest) 8. Dynamic (action) 9. Solitary themes .

The analysis of the chapter eventually focuses on two main overarching large-themes that have been considered and interpreted as rather important for the context of this study, for two main reasons ,which will be further analysed in the relevant - next section: 1. Their importance, as interpreted within the context of this study, specifically with regards to the emotions and an emerging sense of wellbeing 2. Their frequency, with which they appeared in the data. These themes are :a. REST (static elements): reflection, contemplation, silence, stillness b. ACTION (dynamic elements): play, curiosity, surprise, excitement. At a later stage, all primary materials were correlated by qualitatively interpreting the different conclusions which emerged from the analysis of each data set, as presented in each section.

Throughout the primary materials some common observations emerged:

- An active engagement of the visitor with the space is highlighted, and this is often accompanied with curiosity.
- The body and the experiential elements are significant.
- The space seems to evoke emotions, and most importantly, a spectrum of emotions.
- The poetic element comes up quite frequently in the data.

3.4.1 First-person

3.4.1.1 Personal Photography

The photographs were inserted in NVivo to code them and organise them alongside other primary materials. One example of how the photographs were coded can be seen in Figure 4 and the respective image can be seen in Figure 5.

Reference 5 - 1.38% Coverage

5. IMG_20181028_143816_wet floor_looking at the corridor towards pavilion_close up_light_reflections

Figure 4 Example of photography coding in NVivo

From the analysis, several codes were formulated, and some of them can be seen in Figure 6. Much of the photography focused on materiality, on details, and/or on specific parts and viewpoints in the Cemetery. One observation here is that the Brion is immensely rich in details and material complexity, and, therefore, one is pulled towards capturing that element.

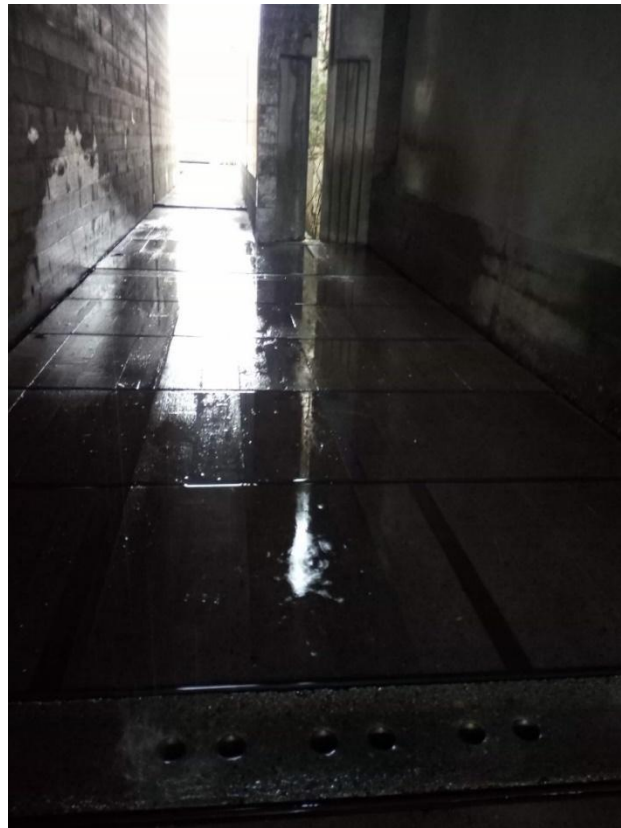


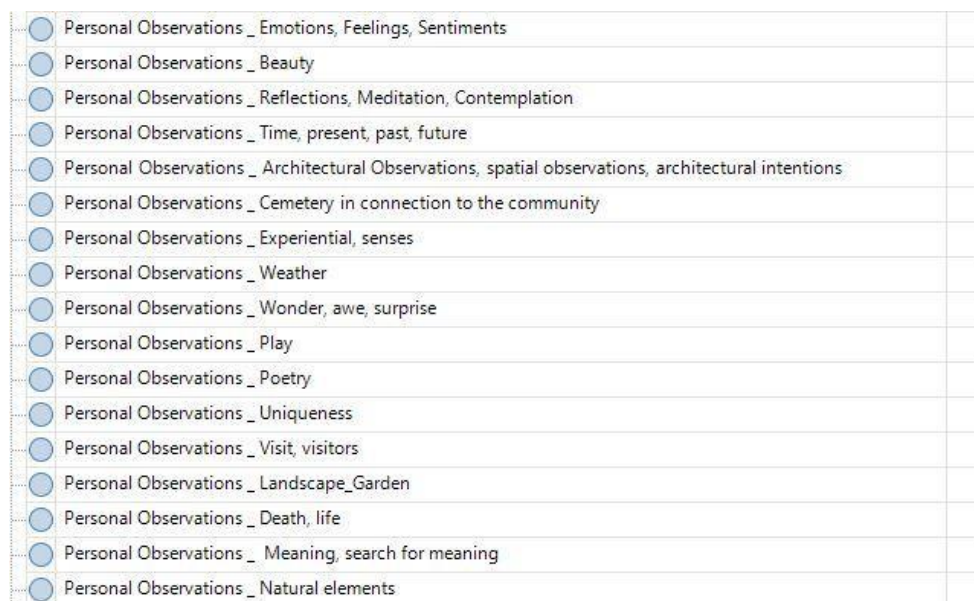
Figure 5 Example of photograph, as analysed in NVivo in Figure 4

<input type="radio"/>	Photography_landscape
<input type="radio"/>	Photography_propylaea
<input type="radio"/>	Photography_ramp
<input type="radio"/>	Photography_arcosolium
<input type="radio"/>	Photography_sarcophaghi
<input type="radio"/>	Photography_chapel_view
<input type="radio"/>	Photography_chapel corridor
<input type="radio"/>	Photography_family tomb

Figure 6 Example of photography nodes, from the analysis in NVivo

3.3.1.2 Analysis of personal observations

They were introduced in NVivo and with a simple thematic analysis some themes were identified, by creating nodes which described the main content of the observations, as precise descriptions of the recordings. These are seen below, in Figure 7. The most mentioned themes were experiential elements and senses, architectural, spatial observations and architectural intentions, natural elements and the landscape/garden, emotions, feelings, sentiments. Overall, on-site 117 personal observations were analysed and coded. When it came to observing others (random visitors) while on site, this was initially unplanned (second category of observations), during my time there, on my second set of visits, in March, 2019. These are presented as first-hand experiences and are described and reconstructed by eliciting memories. Therefore, there is an element of subjectivity, and the writing will follow a personal tone.



Personal Observations _ Emotions, Feelings, Sentiments	
Personal Observations _ Beauty	
Personal Observations _ Reflections, Meditation, Contemplation	
Personal Observations _ Time, present, past, future	
Personal Observations _ Architectural Observations, spatial observations, architectural intentions	
Personal Observations _ Cemetery in connection to the community	
Personal Observations _ Experiential, senses	
Personal Observations _ Weather	
Personal Observations _ Wonder, awe, surprise	
Personal Observations _ Play	
Personal Observations _ Poetry	
Personal Observations _ Uniqueness	
Personal Observations _ Visit, visitors	
Personal Observations _ Landscape_Garden	
Personal Observations _ Death, life	
Personal Observations _ Meaning, search for meaning	
Personal Observations _ Natural elements	

Figure 7 Nodes from the data analysis of the personal observations in NVivo

These experiences are not included to testify as hard evidence for the study but ,given the fact that they happened completely spontaneously and without planning or being part of a research design, they rather present some valuable insights, which include another type of visitors: children and youngsters who chose the Brion Cemetery as a space for their daily activities. These are also brought forth as a complementary way to strengthen the statements and intentions of Scarpa about children's presence at the Brion Cemetery. Four different instances were documented, on the same day, on a Sunday in March ,2019, while the

Cemetery was quiet: one group and three individual cases. The timing of their presence there might not be coincidental, as it might signal a period where the Cemetery is most quiet from tourists and visitors and belongs to the community, more wholly. This was refreshing to see and a confirmation that this space, despite its fame and its function as an architectural educational example for architectural reflection, is still, many years later, a gift to the community in a very ordinary and natural manner: appropriated by children who live in the San Vito D'Altivole village. The experiences also revealed the fact that this space can potentially feel intimate to allow ordinary daily activities, the way Scarpa envisioned. To respect the identities and anonymity of the visitors, and given the fact that there was no ethical procedure in place before observing them since their presence was completely unexpected, no photographs are presented, and everything will be reconstructed in a manner which conceals their identity.

3.4.2 Existential

3.4.2.1 Students' Interviews

In the case of the students' interviews (which took place after our return in the following couple of months) the respondents shared an experience within a common time frame and all interviewees shared similar knowledge and/or "language" (architectural experience) while also being interested in the Cemetery precisely because of their background.

During the first stage of the analysis, the interviews were transcribed and analysed by creating themes, as described above, which stemmed from the interviews and were aiming at categorising the statements, made by the students, by thematic content. These patterns/codes were either terminologies they used (e.g., "calmness"), or the overall theme of a specific question (e.g., how the value of the space was described).

Each interview transcript produced similar and different themes. One such example can be seen in Figure 8. The similar themes directly stemmed from the phrasing of the questions themselves. These are:

1. Experience
2. Architectural intentions, Carlo Scarpa, spatial considerations
3. Atmosphere

4. Emotion, Feeling, Sentiment
5. People, wellbeing
6. Poetry
7. Prerequisites and characteristics of such an architecture
8. Uniqueness
9. Value nowadays

Any additional statements/patterns were grouped in separate sections, and were different, as each interviewee gave different perspectives. At a later stage, these themes were included in NVivo, as codes to categorise them and relate them to another primary research. During the first writing of the chapters, these statements were used qualitatively and inserted within the narrative as quotations, in order to emphasise and strengthen an argument.

_interview_effort_
_interview_experiential elements
_interview_explorative element
_interview_gate_door
_interview_materiality as atmosphere
_interview_playfulness
_interview_playfulness, beauty & optimism
_interview_poetry as layers_depth
_interview_poetry at the Brion as symbolism_couple and intersecting circles
_interview_story at the Brion_
_interview_the transformative aspect of the Brion

Figure 8 Example of interviewee codes in NVivo. The first part of name is missing here, to protect the anonymity of the student.

The codes were then added to other groupings of larger nodes in NVivo. One major stage of the research, when it came to grouping the nodes, was by creating two major categories emerging from the observation of the primary materials in total. At a later stage, when the need arose to ground the writing in specific tangible examples, the initial nodes of the interviews were also categorised in NVivo based on the three tangible examples that the thesis examines: the Propylaea(entrance),the Water Pavilion and the Arcosolium (couple’s burial space). The total number of patterns/nodes amounted to fifty-four larger nodes, some of them shown in Figure 9. During the first writings of chapters, the statements from the interviews were used strategically as quotations, to reinforce a specific point made. They were always placed in relation to other data. Their value stems from the fact that the participants were architecturally aware and architecturally educated. This could be said to be

meaningful in terms of how their observations connect to more specific architectural elements. All of them visited the Brion Cemetery for the first time, which gives the visit an interest, in terms of validity, as a first impact.

However, there are limitations to the data, stemming from the fact that a. their architectural background could be considered either as a limitation or a strength for the research b. due to their background and the intention to visit the place as part of an educational trip, one cannot claim that their perspective is not biased.

STUDENTS INTERVIEWS	
+	REST (Static elements), REFLECTION, CONTEMPLATION, SILENCE, ST
+	ACTION (dynamic elements) PLAY, CURIOSITY, SUPRISE, EXCITEMEN
+	TANGIBLE DESCRIPTIONS, MATERIALITY & PARTS OF THE CEMETER
+	EXPERIENCE & BODY
+	EMOTIONS, WELLBEING & VALUE
+	POETIC
+	SCARPA & ARCHITECTURAL INTENTIONS
+	LANDSCAPE & NATURAL ELEMENTS
+	ARCHITECTURAL INTENTIONS
+	DEATH & LIFE
+	NATURAL ELEMENTS
+	WATER
+	BEAUTY
+	ATMOSPHERE
+	PEOPLE INTERACTING WITH ARCHITECTURE
+	LOVE
+	ART
+	WEIRD TO FIND THESE EMOTIONS IN CEMETERY
+	MEANING
+	VALUE
+	UNIQUENESS

Figure 9 Larger themes, in which the interview nodes were also added

These limitations are recognised, however, their insights remain valuable, as they proved to reveal a diverse range of emotional reactions and some which were similar.

Overall, most observations revolved around tangible descriptions of the Cemetery, which could be seen as logical, given the architectural background of the students and the nature of the questions. The second most discussed category was the one addressing the body and experience. Several observations emerged when discussing emotions and wellbeing, as well as the poetic elements at the Cemetery.

3.4.2.2 Students' Observations

The recordings were transcribed at a later stage and inserted in NVivo for analysis. The themes that were formulated can be seen in Figure 10. The way that these observations were transcribed is by providing descriptions of what I noticed and verbatim the comments by the visitors. Overall, the following observations can be made: The students were engaged and attempting to interpret the space, with a sense of active curiosity and the discussions which were held oscillated from quiet and absorbed observations to loud and exciting opinion sharing. In terms of emotive reactions, there was laughter involved and interestingly, the concept of “effort” was also brought forth by students that were experiencing the space, as a prominent experiential element at the Cemetery. In total, thirty sets of students' observations were recorded and analysed.



Figure 10 Example of nodes from the data analysis of the students' observations in Nvivo

3.4.2.3 Conversation with Guido Pietropoli

From a similar process of analysis, as described in the previous subchapter in the students' interviews, the themes that emerged from the conversation with Guido Pietropoli can be seen in Figure 11.

3.4.3 Hermeneutical

3.4.3.1 Archives

At a later stage, the materials were documented and categorised into themes, in order to organise them. In this case, NVivo was used, and since the drawings are not textual, a precise

description was provided for them. For example: One of these examples can be seen in Figure 12.

Out of them, those which presented particular interest for this study were the ones showing human forms engaging with the architecture (Figure 13). Those relevant to the research themes were coded together with the texts found at the archives. Commentary that was excluded was anything not related to the research (for example, anything that was strictly referring to measurements or construction details).

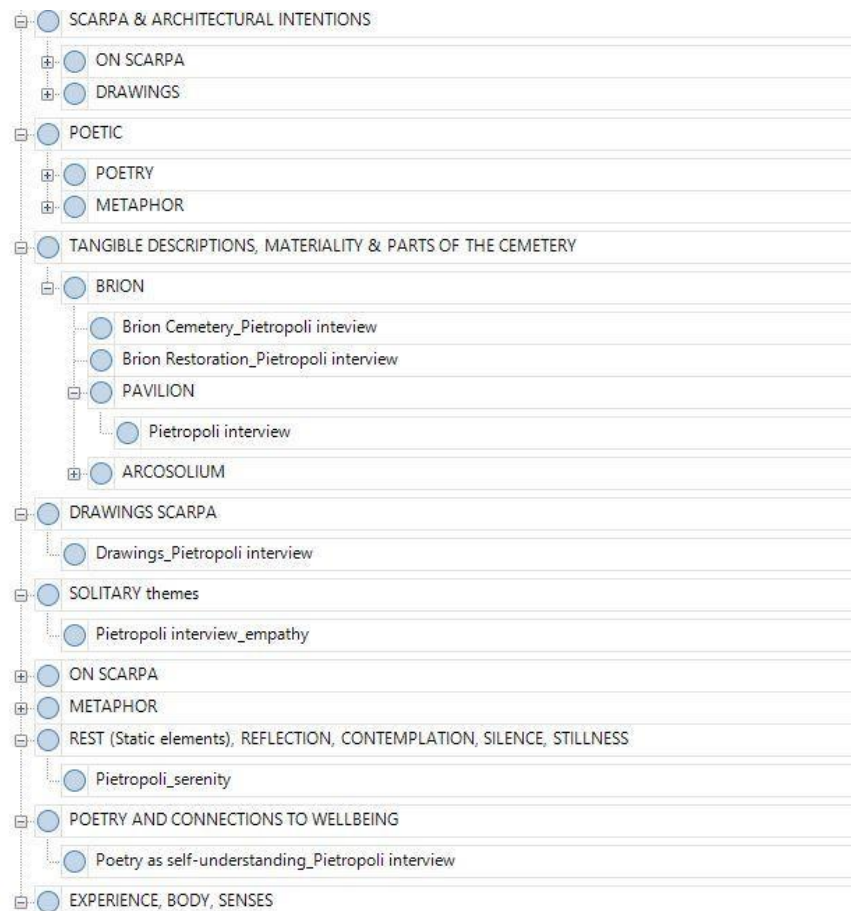


Figure 11 Example of Guido Pietropoli's codes and nodes in NVivo

All the materials were in Italian, except for a few statements, and then were translated in English by me, to include them in the research.

Archives_drawings_text_Rest
Archives_drawings_text_The Brions
Archives_drawings_text_Architectural Intentions
Archives_drawings_text_Natural elements
Archives_drawings_text_Memory
Archives_drawings_text_Poetry
Archives_drawings_text_Harmony
Archives_drawings_text_Time
Archives_drawings_text_Freedom and possibility
Archives_drawings_text_Art
Archives_drawings_text_Personal Reflections
Archives_drawings_text_Act of doing, dynamic element

Figure 12 Example of codes created for archival material in NVivo

It is the specific manner that human forms interact with the architecture that holds a special interest: the human forms are not placed indifferently or without characteristics next to the architecture. They often engage with the architecture in quite expressive ways as well as interacting between them (when found in groups) and in some cases manifest facial expressions. For the analysis, the drawings that presented an emotional reaction held a noteworthy value, as they could be translated into interpretations about the role of humans at the Cemetery and/or correlated with other primary materials (for example photography). The value of these drawings for the study lies not only in confirming the significance of the human element present at the Brion Cemetery, but also in becoming a vehicle for comparing human interactions that were witnessed by me, as the researcher. Lastly, they were an insight into the potential vividness and expressive versatility that Scarpa envisioned for that space.

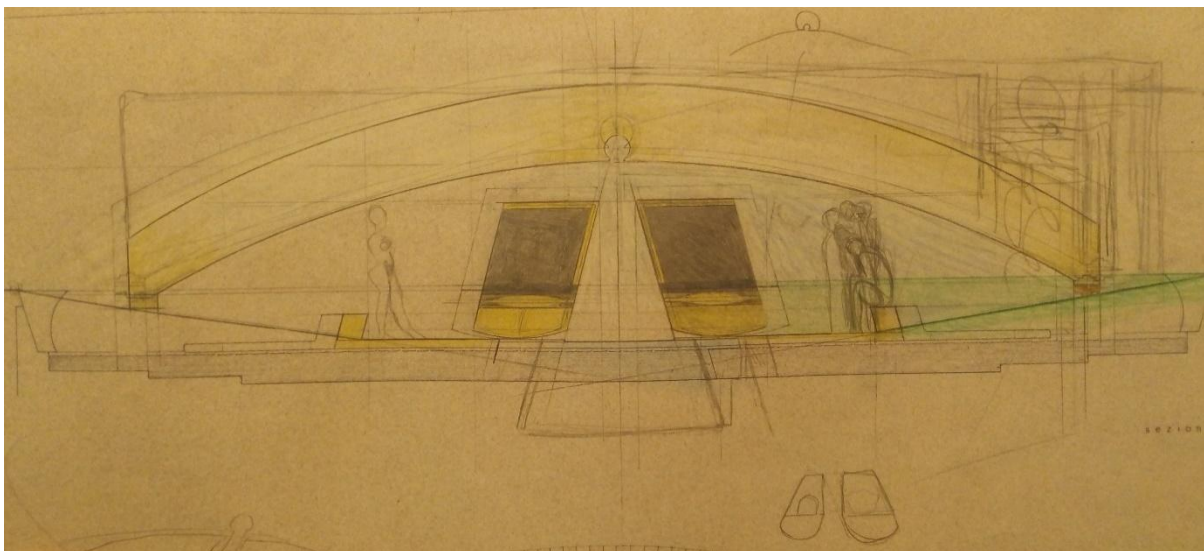


Figure 13 Excerpt of a drawing of the Arcosolium, with human figures

<Files\\Drawings Analysis> - 5 3 references coded [7.72% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 2.33% Coverage

-DWG_4196_H/H03_Woman mourning at a family tomb

Reference 2 - 2.38% Coverage

-DGW_2487_C/C03_Two figures at pavilion, one sad

Reference 3 - 3.02% Coverage

-DGW_3997_H/H03_Woman with sad expression sitting at pavilion

Figure 14 Excerpt from NVivo, example of how drawings were transcribed – from visual to textual

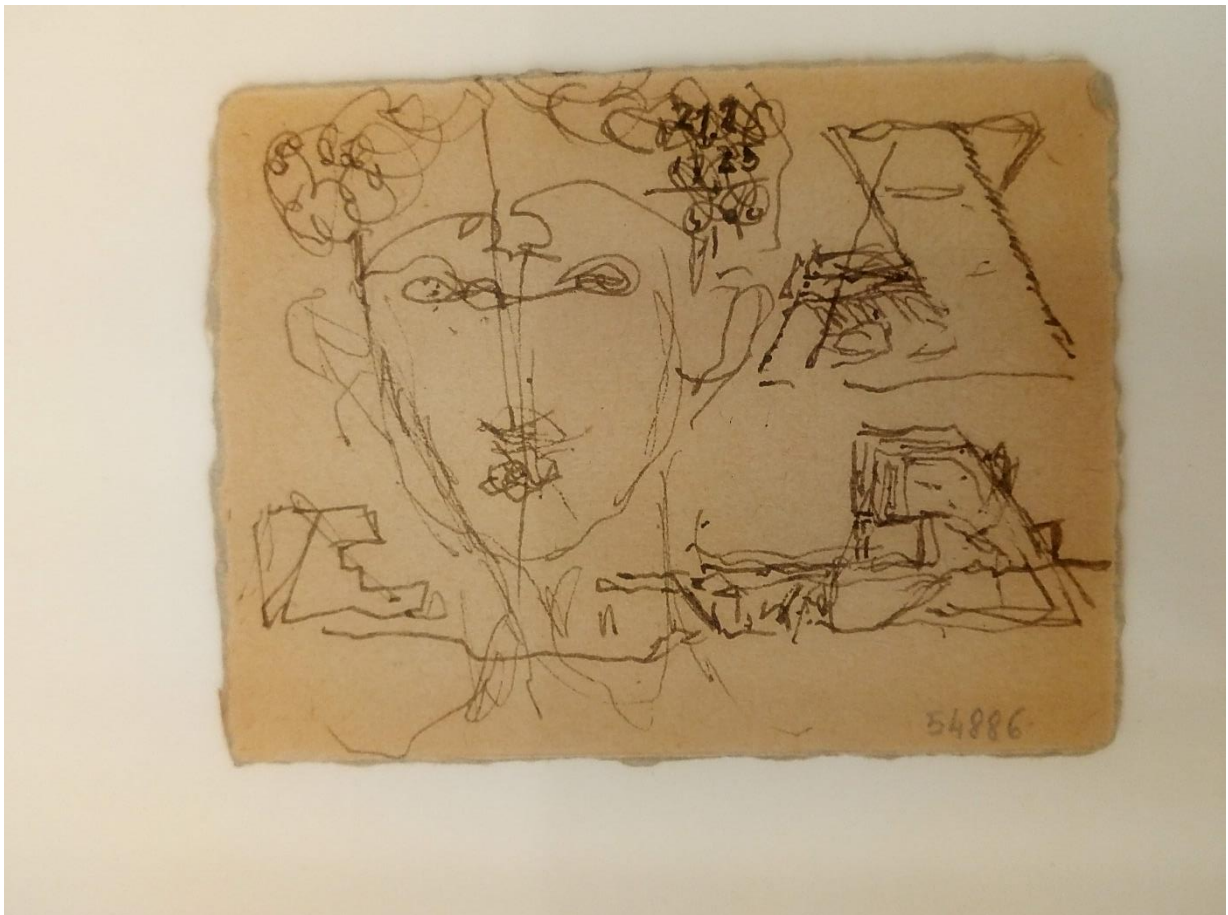


Figure 15 Cigarette pack, by Carlo Scarpa, found at the archives

In total 154 total drawings were examined and 47 which included figures.

The following is the exact number of the drawings coded based on selecting human figures, for the three tangible examples which were chosen for the main analysis:

1. Propylaea 7
2. Pavilion 15
3. Arcosolium 6

These will be further analysed in the respective chapters (Chapter 4, Chapter 5, and Chapter 6).

Lastly, I would say, that the extensive use of human figures in his anthropomorphic drawings shows, at least, an interest in evaluating architecture by how it relates to people, generally.

3.4.3.2 Visitors' Guestbook

After the collection of the primary materials, the guestbook was documented and transcribed into a Word document to categorise the material. Some first observations emerged during that stage, from looking at the primary materials:

- Most comments (48) were words of appreciation. This could be either interpreted as a reaction stemming from the primary materials or a normative process, common to all guestbooks regardless of the site. It is not possible to be completely certain. However, from the observation of the commentary, one thing which should not be overlooked is the perceived excitement in the descriptions, and sometimes in the wording of the comments, which ,could be argued , show a genuine appreciation.
- Several comments (21) relate to an intentional will to return to the Cemetery and/or, in some cases, bring others to see it. This could not be indicative of the value of the Cemetery per se, as it is assumed that many of the visitors are architects or have architectural interest and are aware of the space, prior to their visit. However, I would argue that the intention to revisit and, especially, the desire to bring others, displays an added layer of value to the place.
- One significant element was the repeated mention of emotions (28), either verbatim using the word, or suggesting emotional reactions. In fact, this element was crucial, during that phase of the research, because it helped concretise the importance of emotional reactions at the Brion Cemetery, during the first stage of analysis of the guestbook data.

- The guestbook presented vividness and a certain “messiness.”
- There were several group visits, meaning several names appearing under the same date. Usually, this only included the names of the participants, rather than a commentary.
- One cannot be sure how many of the visitors were architects, given that the Brion Cemetery is often the destination of architects or groups of them. However, one observation that emerged during the analysis of the primary materials is that the guestbook language was particularly emotive and expressive. One could speculate this might be because of the anonymity and lack of pressure to say “the right thing,” which perhaps is present in a more academic setting or an official research interview.
- The information gathered through Seamon's categorisations - recording first-hand experiences through diaries and photography; capturing existential experiences through on-site phenomenological observations of students, interviews with students, and documentation of an on-site guest book; hermeneutical textual and drawing documentation from archives and an interview with Scarpa's collaborator - formed a basis for the triangulation of data.

Overall, 445 writings were introduced to NVivo. Codes were formulated based on either a) specific words/exact keywords e.g.: experience, beauty etc. or b) a clear topic emerging from the statement, as visualised in Figures 1 (NVivo) and Figure 2. Both text and drawings were included in the codes. For the drawings to be coded, a description of each drawing was created to allow for inclusion in NVivo coding. Where appropriate, statements which contained several themes were grouped across several codes.

The codes were then added to other groupings of codes. These groupings were created based on the three tangible moments that the thesis examines: the Propylaea, the Water Pavilion and the Arcosolium. As mentioned previously, during the first writings of chapters, the statements from the guestbook were used strategically, as quotations, to reinforce a specific point made and they were always placed in relation to other data.

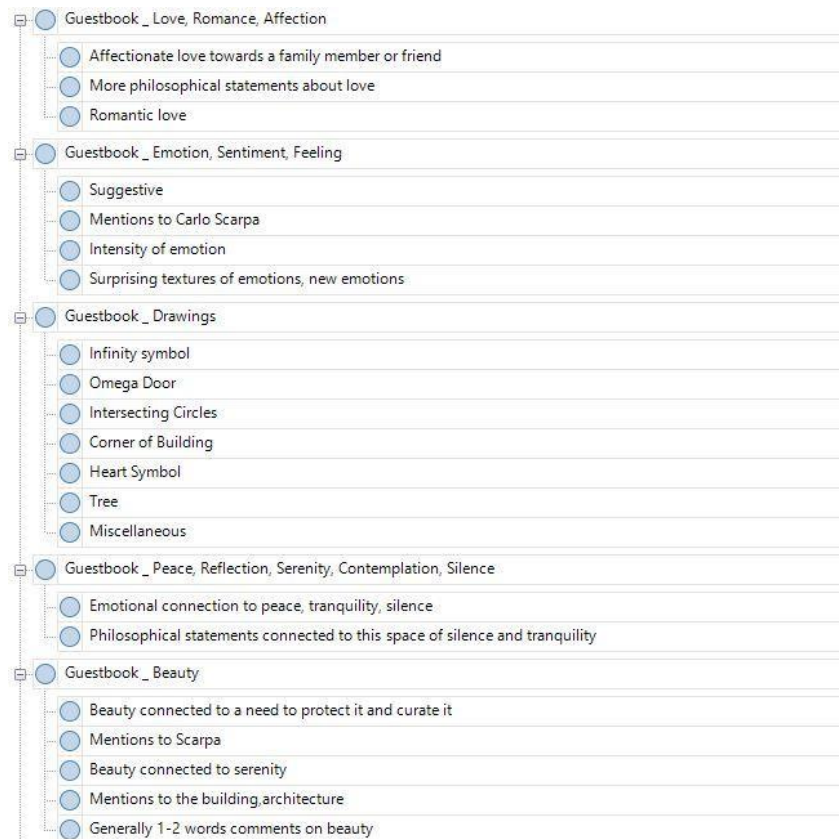


Figure 16 Example of codes and nodes from the analysis of the visitors' guestbook, as processed in NVivo

The categorisation of primary materials for the guestbook follows an overall thematic analysis, which includes the steps as described by Braun ,Clarke and Weate:²⁴¹Some observations that emerged from this stage of the analysis are that :

- The concept of emotion comes up in several instances and is connected to many statements that the visitors made.
- Philosophical (more general) and personal (more focused) observations are often two diverse ways in which the statements are categorised.
- There are not many observations made with regards to the architectural aspects of the Cemetery, going into strictly spatial descriptions, compared to other observations which relate to the experience of the space.

²⁴¹ Virginia Braun, Victoria Clarke, and Paul Weate, 'Using Thematic Analysis in Sport and Exercise Research', in *Routledge Handbook of Qualitative Research in Sport and Exercise*, ed. by Brett Smith and Andrew C. Sparkes (London: Routledge, 2016), pp. 191-205, p. 8.

3.5 CORRELATION OF DATA & TRIANGULATION

Stepping into the focused analysis of the three readings in space at the core of the thesis analysis (The Propylaea, the Water Pavilion, and the Arcosolium), a triangulation was conducted in order to be able to provide insights of depth, and increase the credibility and validity of the research.²⁴²Triangulation has been previously used in phenomenological research, in the context of improving credibility. Frances Maggs-Rapport explains:

The author suggests that methodological triangulation may be the key to telling a credible story whilst at the same time convincing the audience that data collection and analysis are carried out in a thorough and unprejudiced manner.²⁴³

Triangulation is categorized in five main categories: Methods, theory, analysis, unit of analysis, data triangulation.²⁴⁴It is defined as ‘the practice of viewing things from more than one perspective’²⁴⁵Denscombe argues. The approach the thesis takes falls into the methods triangulation type. Fu-Jin Shih explains:

Methods triangulation involves the use of more than one research method or data collection techniques (e.g. structured instruments, observations and interviews which are selected because each taps a different aspect or dimension of the problem studied.²⁴⁶

²⁴² Anita Bans-Akutey and Benjamin Makimilua Tiimub, *Triangulation in Research*, *Research Gate*, 2021 https://www.researchgate.net/publication/355425953_Triangulation_in_Research[accessed 15 December 2023].

²⁴³ Frances Maggs-Rapport, 'Combining methodological approaches in research: ethnography and interpretive phenomenology', *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 31(1), (2000), 219–225, p.215.

²⁴⁴ Fu-Jin Shih, 'Triangulation in Nursing Research: Issues of Conceptual Clarity and Purpose', *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 28.3 (1998), 631-64, p. 634.

²⁴⁵ Martyn Denscombe, *The Good Research Guide: For Small-Scale Social Research Projects* (UK: McGraw-Hill Education, 2014), p. 347.

²⁴⁶ Fu-Jin Shih, 'Triangulation in Nursing Research: Issues of Conceptual Clarity and Purpose', *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 28.3 (1998), 631-64, p. 634.

In this case, insights are found by corroborating data from different methods and the aim is to achieve ‘improved accuracy’²⁴⁷ of the findings. The results were, therefore, analysed in an interpretative manner, in relation to each other, so as to forge connections between all the primary materials that have emerged from the process and the research. Anita Bans-Akutey and Benjamin Makimilua Tiimub argue how triangulation gives the researcher the opportunity to explain the phenomenon at hand in more depth.²⁴⁸ They state:

Making use of multiple data sources reduces research biases in sampling, procedural bias as well as researcher biases thus increasing validity and credibility. Even in the case of conflicting findings during triangulation, the researcher is confident and can easily explain reasons for conflicting findings.²⁴⁹

The triangulation was carried out by using NVivo, in the same manner as described previously, and a thematic analysis was used, in order to identify key themes. The methods in this study work with each other. In fact, in this particular case, they complement each other and address the inherent difficulties in the subjectivity, which is present in phenomenological research, in what, as analysed previously, David Seamon describes as “commingling methods.”²⁵⁰ The detailed analysis of the triangulation will be seen in Chapters 4, 5, and 6, as part of the analysis of the three readings of the tangible examples of the study.

3.6 REFLECTIONS AND SUMMARY

The study, at all stages, aimed at maintaining the necessary openness (on my behalf as the researcher) and the flexibility to readjust the approach, based on the primary materials and realisations. It also aimed at keeping the balance between this process and providing a

²⁴⁷ Martyn Denscombe, *The Good Research Guide: For Small-Scale Social Research Projects* (UK: McGraw-Hill Education, 2014), p.348.

²⁴⁸ Anita Bans-Akutey and Benjamin Makimilua Tiimub, *Triangulation in Research*, *Research Gate*, 2021 https://www.researchgate.net/publication/355425953_Triangulation_in_Research [accessed 15 December 2023].

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

²⁵⁰ David Seamon, ‘A Way of Seeing People and Place’, in *Theoretical Perspectives in Environmental Behaviour Research* (2000), pp. 157–78, p.169.

replicable sequence of steps, a robust analysis and correlation between primary materials and an objective presentation and analysis of them. NVivo was used as an organizational tool for the primary materials, to facilitate the correlations between different sets of primary materials. However, the subjectivity became critical to provide an in-depth analysis (“thick”) and descriptions of the experiences, as phenomenological research requests. There was an inherent difficulty in maintaining this balance, without either falling into a dry analysis and clinical examination of primary materials, or into the subjective which would not be appropriate, robust and rigorous for an academic analysis. This difficulty stemmed from the need to respect the very nature of the study, which deals with poetic experience, and therefore qualitative qualities, which are difficult to measure, but can only be evaluated. Also, the interdisciplinary nature and novel approach of using Poetry Therapy as part of the analysis, meant that architectural methodologies needed to be adjusted and open to the parameters that this brought. Overall, this approach meant that the study does not offer a linear, preconceived course of action, but rather an exploratory one, tailored to the needs of the space, the research question, and the reflection upon them. In a way, this reflects Schon’s approach of the reflective practitioner (in this case, researcher), which presumes that decisions are made retrospectively, and the course of action is adjusted upon careful maturation of thoughts and reflection on the phenomenon examined. Furthermore, all the primary materials collection was completed in 2019, which is before the completion of the recent conservation of the Brion Cemetery. Therefore, all experiential narratives refer to that space, as it was experienced and documented in that specific moment in time. Lastly, regarding the original archival research and the guestbook, a specific number of documents was examined and one guestbook (found on site), rather than the totality of archival material and guestbooks available, respectively

CHAPTER 4: PROPYLAEA – ENTRANCE

4.1 INTRODUCTION

4.1.1 Aims and arguments

This chapter focuses on the first of the three tangible moments in space that the study explores at the Brion Cemetery: The Propylaea, as the main entrance to the Cemetery. More specifically it focuses on the entrance of the Cemetery and the two corridors leading to the Water Pavilion (up to the sliding door), and the garden of the Arcosolium. Returning to the main hypothesis of this thesis, this chapter sustains that the Propylaea supports wellbeing by evoking intense emotions and emotional identification. It applies intersections between three fields of knowledge -Architecture, Poetry, and Wellbeing - and the chapter demonstrates which themes connected to spatial experience are present and connected to wellbeing.

4.1.2 Main psychological theme explored

A specific and pivotal moment in the research process highlights the charged emotional qualities brought forward by a personal experience at the Propylaea. Subsequent analysis of the guestbook, interviews, photography, observations, and archival materials, supports the identification of emotions and emotional identification and release (catharsis) as a reaction to the sequence of spaces and motifs present at the Propylaea and their role in enabling a moment of emotional release.

4.1.3 Structure of chapter

The chapter begins with summarizing the methodology and presenting the analysis of primary research materials for the Propylaea. This is, then, contextualized within a subjective narrative presented, with reference to Bachelard and Jane Rendell's writings, as a 'thick' and 'intimate' description of a personal experience. Experiences and descriptions of the Propylaea from first-person, existential, and hermeneutical sources are compared to establish common

themes, forming the basis of the focus on Catharsis.

4.2 METHODS

4.2.1 Theoretical framework, data collection and data analysis

David Seamon's categorizations of first-person, existential, and hermeneutical²⁵¹ phenomenological research methodology is applied to collate first-hand experiences, shared experiences, and original Scarpa archival materials. The arguments that the primary materials used for this analysis are excerpts from interviews with architectural students, following a visit to the Cemetery, excerpts from an interview with Pietropoli, drawings and notes from the Centro Carlo Scarpa archives, writings from the Cemetery visitors' guestbook, personal observations following a visit to the Cemetery, and personal photography of it.

Triangulated through NVivo, these observations and documentations are analysed through the lens of Poetry Therapy and insights from Mental Health and Psychology fields, with reference to Mazza, Furman, Leah Olson-McBride, Freshwater, and Diana Hedge.

4.2.2 Writing

The personal and subjective tone of writing in accompanying narrative sections draws on the Architecture Writing approach, demonstrated in Rendell's *Architecture Writing*. Rendell explains:

My research produces sites of interdisciplinary exchange, following what I now recognise as a spatial pattern. From architectural history to feminist theory, from architectural design to conceptual art practice, and now from art criticism to writing, I move outside the discipline in which I am located, in order to find a place from which to reflect upon its mechanisms of operation, before returning in order to suggest new modes of enquiry'

[...]

²⁵¹ David Wang and Linda N. Groat, *Architectural Research Methods* (Hoboken: J. Wiley, 2013), p.228.

Architecture-writing suggests that the objects and writers of architectural criticism may come from beyond architecture. Certainly, the conference welcomed wonderful papers by artists, film-makers, writers, poets and philosophers as well as architectural historians, theorists and critics'.²⁵²

[...]

At times I have used the spatial form of a walk through a building, exhibition or a work to structure the writing, at other times I have used the dialogue to bring in other voices. For some essays I have drawn on memory and imagination to construct alternative sites from which to consider art works, and in others I have adopted different voices and subject pronouns, as well as the integration of found words, in order to produce site writings, texts that are spatially constructed in relation to the works I have been asked to 'critique' or 'write about'.²⁵³

This approach facilitates the reconciliation between different fields of knowledge of my thesis, but also allows for writing that draws on the subjective and the remembered, which in some cases is critical. One example is the on-site anecdotes and spontaneous encounters which are part of the narration, without being part of the primary materials collection and analysis.

Referencing the phenomenological approach in *Poetics of Space*, poetic experience is described by sometimes inserting textual and poetic excerpts are brought into the writing, whenever it is deemed as appropriate and useful for the articulation of the concepts analysed.

²⁵² Jane Rendell, 'Architecture-Writing', *The Journal of Architecture*, 10.3 (2005), 255-264, p. 261.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, p.258.



Figure 17 Intersecting circles at the Propylaea, on a rainy day

4.3 FIRST-PERSON EXPERIENCE

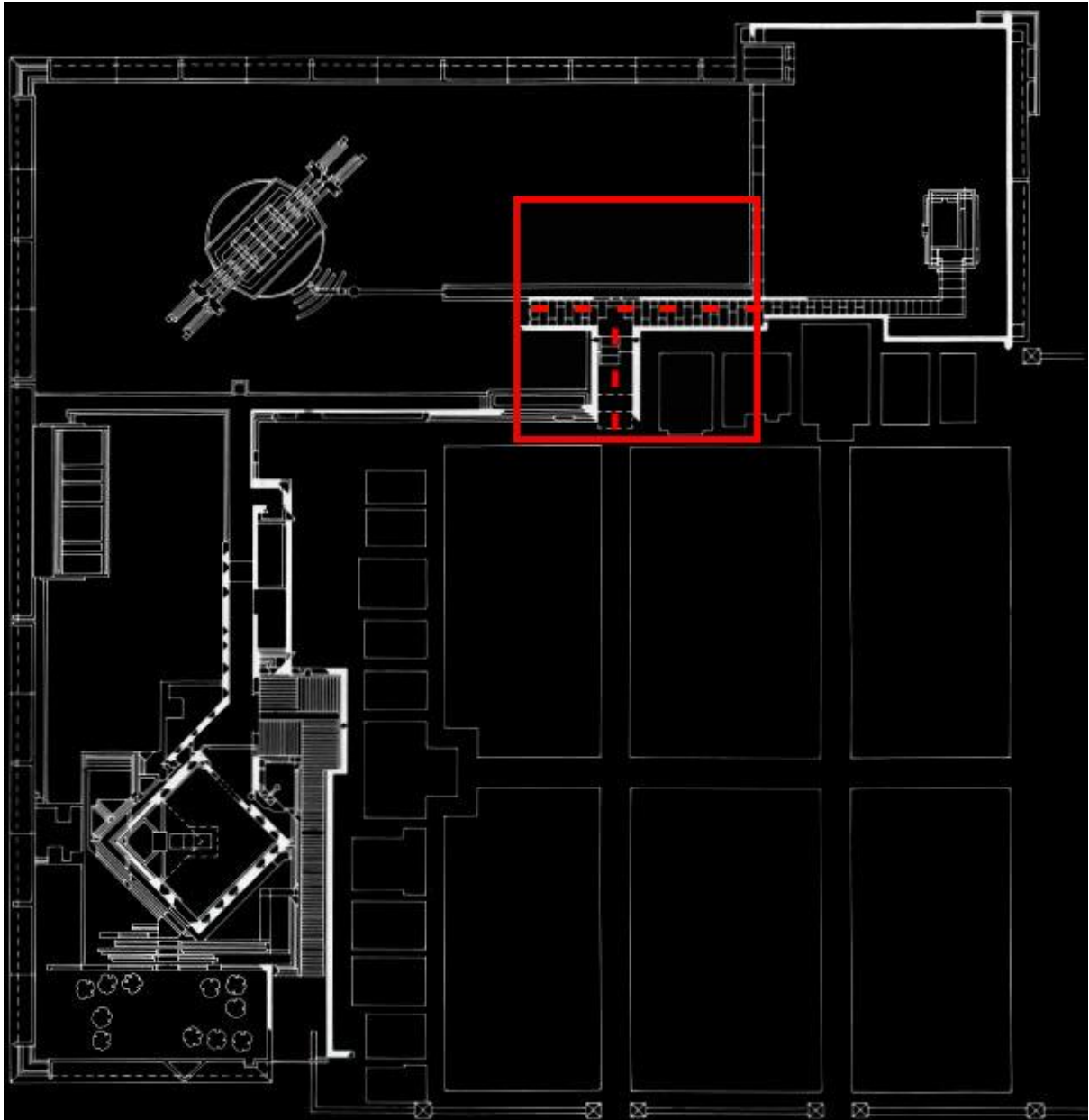
4.3.1 An autumn visit

Let us visit the Brion Cemetery, this time on a cold autumn rainy day.

An inevitable fear arises in me, that, given the nature of the project that I am about to visit - an open-air cemetery, the appreciation of the space and of the landscape would be hindered by these 'unfortunate' weather conditions. On arriving at the site, the rain has stopped, with perhaps a few breaks of drizzling in the couple of hours of our stay there. Before entering the Cemetery through the main entrance, I remain in the parking space outside.

4.3.2 Tombs of strangers

The cemetery site is located in the middle of a vast agricultural field. The outside looks like a fortress, with tall concrete walls which do not allow the eye to trespass and look inside. The walls lean in, towards the interior of the Cemetery, making one feel even more excluded, at least seemingly, from the outside. This effect is present, even on a sunny day. However, this time, these walls look grimmer under the dark sky, and the rain which has been absorbed renders their texture even heavier. As I take the decision to proceed, I find myself walking through an old metal door at the entrance of the old cemetery and begin my walk towards the main entrance of the Brion Cemetery. I must walk on a long straight path among tombs of strangers, with my eyes inevitably fixed on the entrance of the Cemetery by Scarpa, which becomes more and more intriguing as one approaches. What I see is a tall rectangular, concrete sheltered structure, of a certain complexity, with intricate details and intended repeated patterns. Nature has made its contribution to the overall effect: trees and plants have embraced this entrance, giving it an organic look, and complementing its mysterious effect.



*Figure 18 Map of the Brion Cemetery. The square highlights the location of the Propylaea. The dashed line highlights the path trail described. Digitally edited version, by author, based on the Brion Cemetery map by Peter Buchanan, in "Garden of Death and Dreams," *Architectural Review*, 179 (1985), 54-59*



Figure 19 Looking at the Propylaea, the entrance of the Brion Cemetery, standing in the axial path which connects the community cemetery with the Brion Cemetery



Figure 20 Approaching the Propylaea, while still being inside the community cemetery

4.3.3 Harsh welcome

Inside the entrance space and at the extension of the path in front of me, I discern a set of stairs, which are slightly offset towards the left, leading to a peculiar symbolism: two circles intertwined. Behind them, and at a distance, stands the perimeter wall of the Cemetery, forming a thin line for the visual horizon. "What is this?" one might ask themselves.

Questions arise. Tobia Scarpa, Scarpa's son, states, while describing Scarpa's work taking as an example the Querini Stampalia, that: 'The interest lies in the difficulty of grasping everything at first glance, you enter this building and ask yourself "what is this? why is it like this'?'²⁵⁴

As we will see, this is just the beginning of an extraordinarily long questioning process, but it is significant because it is the first time it happens, after the "harsh welcome" of the perimeter walls.

It is hard to perceive and fully grasp the layers of this space from afar. The eyes start to focus, while the overall silent atmosphere of the old cemetery helps create an almost ritualistic effect, as I am walking. As if by respect to the tombs and their relatives, I am pulled towards silence. It could be argued that there is a preparation of spirit, here.

4.3.4 Threshold

I leave the smooth paving that I was walking on and step on gravel. I hear my steps (Figure20). If I turn my head slightly to the left, I get a glimpse of the tombs, behind an interruption of the wall dividing the community cemetery from the Brion Cemetery (Figure21) In front of me, I come across a tree which drops its branches over to the entrance. I might have to push the branches to the side to proceed.

²⁵⁴ FAIchannel, *Hortus Conclusus. Carlo Scarpa E La Querini Stampalia (Estratto)*, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S3q4qPvAgBI&t=115s>[accessed on 15 December 2023].

4.3.5 Anticipation

My body perceives the space in an intense kinaesthetic manner: movement becomes intertwined with senses. My senses become engaged-sound, vision- as if merged in a moment: in the threshold of the entrance. I feel the effect of that passage and threshold deeply and I am put in a certain mood of not knowing what to expect or what is possible. The promise-glimpse both of the Brion tombs and of the two intersecting circles sharpen my curiosity about what is inside.

I am placed in a mode of anticipation: my creative spirit has already been activated through the displacement of the meaning of a simple entrance, the re-inventing of what a passage can be. Here ,Scarpa could have placed a simpler entrance. But here I am asked to leave behind expectations, and follow a path where, with every step, I will have to actively forge and construct meanings. Throughout the Cemetery, one will witness an intense embodied experience.

4.3.6 Embodied perspective

As I proceed on walking under this intriguing entrance, I further hear my steps reflected in echoes, as the space assumes a certain height above me. Even on a rainy day, light seeps through the circles on the wall in front of me and from openings at the roof of the structure, creating reflections on the floor and on the polished surfaces which are integrated in the concrete walls at my sides.

Here, I am sheltered. If it is rainy, I can stay dry. If it is warm, there is a sense of breeze. My skin feels the difference of temperature here, it becomes a sensitive receptor. I step on the concrete steps, full of curiosity of what might occur. The periodic showers of rain only accentuate the beauty of how well thought-out this space is. The water drips from openings from above, from precise cuts of the concrete ceiling, towards an elaborate drainage system. In an interview, Scarpa states that the Propylaea help in the participation of the visitor 'if the weather doesn't help'.²⁵⁵

²⁵⁵ RAI, *Un'ora Con... CARLO SCARPA (Eng Sub)*, YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sp_uEis5Erk [accessed 15 December 2023].



Figure 21 Looking at the Arcosolium through the perimeter wall of the Cemetery, adjacent to the Propylaea, before entering the Cemetery



Figure 22 Standing inside the Propylaea, observing textures on the walls, looking outside towards the community cemetery

4.3.7 Tears

At this point, as described in the Introduction Chapter, I would like to further elaborate on the specific personal incident that occurred during a visit in the following months, the third catalytic experience (Figure 23). I have found no better judge than tears. Tears that take you by surprise, tears uninvited, yet much needed. But how can one measure architecture by tears? It seems impossible. Tears cannot be placed in any architectural brief, as a prerequisite - and if they were to be placed, it would probably sound pretentious, to say the least. Tears have that very ineffable quality, hard to grasp, impossible to recreate, anarchic in their very existence.

It seemed to me, however, that there was something significant to water running from the eyes, and it was impossible to shake the feeling of the surprise that the Cemetery had managed to move so deeply. How was it that this moment, this arrangement of architecture, could bring me to tears? Tears are a reaction connected to emotional release connected to the emotions & emotional release that the chapter analyses.

4.4 DATA ANALYSIS

4.4.1 Introduction

In the previous section the subjective experience at the Propylaea and the intersecting circles was analysed. In this section the analysis of each data set is presented. This includes, according to Seamon's phenomenological methodological categorization: a. first-person (personal photography & photography), b. existential (interviews with architectural students, on-site observations of architectural students, and an interview with Pietropoli), and c. hermeneutical (archival material and on-site visitors' guestbook). The analysis of all the primary materials highlight the intersecting circles and emotions as the primary focus of the analysis, as well as the involvement of the body, senses, materiality, and natural elements. The last four themes will be further analysed in Chapter 7 (Discussion Chapter), along with insights of the same themes from the other two tangible moments in space at the Cemetery (Water Pavilion and Arcosolium).



Figure 23 Reflections of the intersecting circles on the floor, at the Propylaea, on a rainy day

4.4.2 First-person

4.4.2.1 Photography

Photography was taken in-situ as a spontaneous process of documenting locations of interest, as part of engaging with the phenomenon observed in as many ways as possible. As the study progressed the photographs were used strategically as part of the chapter writing to evidence changes of moods/emotions, to highlight specific viewpoints and/or to highlight thresholds of interest. They became increasingly important as the subjective view began to direct the analysis.

As mentioned previously, the dates of visit were 27th& 28th of October, 2018 and 27th& 29th March ,2019,and the photographs were taken in different weather conditions, with/without rain, in the Autumn/early Spring.

The process of analysing the photography is based on a visual content analysis, where each photograph represents a code. The codes were created by providing textual descriptions of the content in the image, with a focus on what was seen and the point of view of the camera. The photography was a spontaneous need to capture anything that was happening on-site and was deemed important at that moment. The following themes emerged at the Propylaea:

- Natural elements (trees/plants/grass, rain): (61)
- Architectural Details/Materiality/Close ups: (55)
- Circles: (44)
- Walls of the Propylaea: (44)
- Perimeter wall: (33)
- Internal Stairs: (21)
- Community cemetery & Brion: (19)
- Human figures interacting: (12)
- Corridor & Door (6)
- Ceiling: (21)
- Floor: (5)

The majority of photography focused on the architecture and natural elements, with a special focus on the intersecting circles.

4.4.2.2 Personal observations

In-situ observations took place at the Cemetery in different periods, and I was the observer. A first-person phenomenological method followed in order to enhance my own experiential interpretation of the place. These recorded observations took place only on the 29th of March, 2019.

I used my phone video recorder to document myself as I was walking without, however, having the intention of focusing on the video, for lack of better recording equipment at that moment. The walk was an attempt to look at the space with new “eyes” and distance myself from any knowledge and preconceived notions. Overall, on-site observations were analysed and coded. Below are the themes that were identified:

- Natural elements (9)
- Body involvement & senses (6)
- Architectural elements (5)
- Focus, attention drawn (4)
- Inviting, not scary (3)
- Curiosity (2)
- Protected (2)
- Metaphors about life & other – acropolis (2)
- Hope (1)
- Ambiguity (1)
- Design (1)
- Human scale revealed by figure in between (1)
- Interesting symbol (1)
- Organic (1)
- Part of the landscape (1)
- Wonderful (1)
- Peace (1)
- Resting on circles (1)
- Poetic (1)
- Emotional/ I got moved (1)
- Standing at the circles, taking in beauty (1)

- Temple feel (1)
- Considerations / thoughts (1)

The personal observations, focused mostly on natural elements and the engagement of the body. It is worth noting that rain was also present during certain visits.

4.4.3 Existential

An existential phenomenological method, as presented in Chapter 3, focuses on ‘the specific experiences of specific individuals or groups in actual situations or places’²⁵⁶ and was applied to interviews to document the shared experience of others on site. As mentioned previously, in October ,2018, a visit on-site with students from the Welsh School of Architecture took place and eight of them out of ten were able to participate in the semi-structured interviews which took place over the course of the following couple of months.

4.4.3.1 Students’ interviews

The interviews’ full list of questions can be seen in Chapter 3. They were transcribed and analysed using a Thematic Analysis approach in Nvivo and identifying common themes/patterns as described above, which stemmed from the interviews and aimed at categorising the statements made by students by thematic content. These patterns/codes were either terminologies that interviewees used (e.g., “calmness”), or the overall theme of a specific question (e.g., how the value of the space was described).

Overall, from the 8 interviews with students, the following themes emerged, as relevant to the Propylaea space.

Themes from Student interviews

- First thing you see (2)
- Unique (2)
- Interesting use of circles (1)

²⁵⁶ David Wang and Linda N. Groat, *Architectural Research Methods* (Hoboken: J. Wiley, 2013), p.228.

- Body (sight) (1)
- Romantic symbolism for life and death (1)
- Symbolism (1)
- Dramatic (1)
- Puts you in really quickly (1)
- Colours (1)
- Densest story (1)
- Entrance makes the Cemetery welcoming (1)
- Not directional, free, because you can move left or right (1)

For the Propylaea, the interviews focus on experiential observations, and reflections around the architecture, the symbolism and what one sees.

4.4.3.2 Students' observations:

As mentioned in Chapter 3, the third category was designed from the beginning and included the observation, recording and documentation of architectural students on site, during our visit in 2018 (27 October, 2018). This was conducted by following all ethical procedures and eliciting informed consent from the participants. As mentioned previously, the process was as follows: The students were left to wander on their own at the Cemetery and I was at the background, not interfering or commenting, simply recording, and observing them, while they were absorbed and interacting in their observations. Overall, 11 architectural students were observed, and the observation included moments where students were on their own or in groups. The following themes were observed:

- Body (2)
- Struggle, Motivation, Surprise & Curiosity (2)
- Circles (1)

A heavy engagement of the body emerges from the students' observations at the Propylaea.

4.4.3.3 Interview with Guido Pietropoli

As mentioned in Chapter 3, the conversation with Pietropoli took place in August ,2019, at his home/office, in Rovigo, Italy, and lasted approximately 2,5 -3 hours. In the conversation with Pietropoli, two important moments emerged, in relation to the Propylaea:

Themes from Pietropoli conversation:

- Architectural elements (4) – one of them being the intersecting circles
- Emotional effect (2)
- Emotional, experiential effect (1)
- Emotional, symbolism effects (1)
- Natural elements (discussion around tree) (1)
- Senses involved (1)

For the Propylaea, a significant part of the conversation revolved around either the experiential or emotional effects. The entrance seems charged with intense sensations.

4.4.4 Hermeneutical

4.4.4.1 Archival Material

As mentioned in Chapter 3, archival research took place, at the end of March ,2019 and the beginning of April, 2019 to view original material by Scarpa. Several visits took place, to the MAXXI museum in Rome, Castelvecchio Museum in Verona, and the Carlo Scarpa Centre at Treviso. During this process, around two thousand (available in 2019) original drawings for the Brion Cemetery were examined as well as the following folders: 1. Poetic Texts 2. Cigarette Packs 3. All Documents- 3 files 4. Correspondence 1+1/4. Most of the material was in the Italian language.

Material relating to the Brion Cemetery was documented and later categorised into themes, in order to organise it. The drawings were exclusively focused on the Brion Cemetery(at the Centro Carlo Scarpa), while the letters, notes, texts etc., were a combination of documents on the Cemetery and more general material of Scarpa's work. Only drawings with human figures

were chosen, since that is the main focus of the analysis, and any potential emotional expression of the figures was sought. Texts, found in drawings and archival materials, provided a direct insight into the architects' intentions, including statements specific to the role of poetry and how human figures interact with the space and the architecture.

Overall, out of the archival materials, the following themes were identified:

Archive texts

- Poetic qualities (1)
- Garden (1)
- Meaningful entrance (1)
- Symbolism, symbolic motif (1)

Archive drawings

- Architecture/Materiality/Details/Textures (6)
- Circles (3)
- Plants/Nature (1)

Both in the drawings and the texts there is an emphasis on the intersecting circles and their symbolism.

4.4.4.2 Guestbook

During my visit in March, 2019, the visitors' guestbook, found in the chapel of the Cemetery, was photographed in-situ from the first to the last page, documenting entries from 1-11-2018 to 24-3-2019.

Limitations of the guest book material included:

- As mentioned previously, the precise sample of people who visited the Cemetery in that period is not necessarily connected to the number of comments in the guestbook, and therefore not necessarily indicative of the traffic at the place.
- Some comments were not strictly referring to the Propylaea (i.e., the Propylaea was not explicitly mentioned), however, the topics that were touched on were highly relevant to the Propylaea (for example, the presence of water).

Analysis of guestbook comments and the drawings, found in the visitors' guestbook, produced the following categories and themes:

Drawings:

- a. fourteen circles drawn (most drawn figure)
- b. Imaginative, symbolic sketch of circles

Text & drawings:

- Emotional (1)
- The architecture (1)
- Thanks to Scarpa (1)
- Two names written inside the circles (emotion) (1)

Text:

- Emotions (1)
- Tree (natural element) (1)
- Mention of circles (1)

For the Propylaea, what stood out was that the intersecting circles motif, present at the Propylaea, are the most drawn.

4.4.5 Sum of Data – Triangulation

Collating all the materials from first-person, existential, and hermeneutical sources of experiences and documents of the Propylaea, the following common themes emerge as the most frequent:

- Architecture/Materiality/Textures (295)

- Circles (with symbolism) (76)
- Landscape/Natural elements with photography (74)
- Senses/Body (44)
- Emotions (12)

Out of these themes, the intersecting circles and emotions are chosen for the chapter's analysis, as the ones that are unique for this chapter. The other three are analysed in the discussion chapter (Chapter 7) in more detail, as they are part of a common thread of themes which run through all the three tangible moments in space (Propylaea, Water Pavilion, Arcosolium). The materials identify the motif of the intersecting circles as the most discussed point at the Propylaea. Following that, emotions are described as the second most discussed theme, and this will become the focus of the psychological core theme. To anchor the psychological reaction to a specific experience, the personal is presented as an example, referring to the pivotal moment in the research. The circles and their role in evoking intense emotions are analysed in the next section, presenting an argument that the spatial sequence of the Propylaea - including elements of symbolism, intense bodily experience, and natural landscape - evokes a sense of catharsis. Other themes which emerged from the triangulation of primary materials (the body and senses and natural elements and the landscape) are discussed in the following Discussion Chapter, as they are common in all the three tangible examples.

4.5 TANGIBLE FOCUS AT THE PROPYLAEA

4.5.1 The first thing you see

The Entrance, and its motif of two intersecting circles, is a focal point. It is the first thing one sees as they walk in the straight axis which connects the entrance of the community cemetery to the entry point of the Brion Cemetery. It is a powerful first image that the eyes meet (Fig 19) as the gaze aligns itself with the body, in the axial trajectory towards the entrance. In the visitors' guestbook, fourteen sketches of the intersecting circles were found. Giuseppe Zambonini remembers: 'When asked by Walter Rossetto, Scarpa's youngest collaborator of

his last days, if the two intersecting rings had any special meaning to him, Scarpa replied enigmatically: "It is a leit-motiv of my life".²⁵⁷

The circles constitute the most drawn part of the Cemetery found in the guestbook. The entrance provides a variety of opportunities where attention is centered; from the intersecting circles and the tree at the entrance (Fig 20) to the internal stairs, leading up to the main level of the Cemetery (Fig 16).

4.5.2 Poetry as a mechanism to enhance focus

Freshwater, discussing the poetics of space within the therapeutic space, states: 'Whilst space as a concept is a non-entity, when observed with focused attention and internal alertness, it has the power to convey meaning within a relationship'.²⁵⁸ At the Propylaea, there is a relationship between the visitor and the architecture. The Propylaea grabs one's attention. One student observed:

Even though it's harsh, it's welcoming at the same time, purely down to the entrance sequence I'd say, and the way you move around, so it's not directional. You're free. When you go towards those circles, you go right you go left, [...].²⁵⁹

4.5.3 Considerations around the design of the Propylaea

The materiality of the Propylaea sets the tone in creating a relationship between the visitor and architecture, by using devices of asymmetry, concealment, and orientation to short and long views, to be part of a journey which takes the visitor through a range of emotions. Pietropoli, notices how, in his view, the design of the stairs at the Propylaea was not completely coincidental. He observes how, despite the totality of the Propylaea being completely axial and symmetrical, the stairs differ, in that they are placed towards the left.

²⁵⁷ Giuseppe Zambonini, 'Process and Theme in The Work of Carlo Scarpa', *Perspecta*, 20 (1983), 21-42, p.40.

²⁵⁸ Dawn Freshwater, 'The Poetics of Space: Researching the Concept of Spatiality Through Relationality', *Psychodynamic Practice*, 11.2 (2005), 177-188, p. 178.

²⁵⁹ Interview with a student, 2019.



Figure 24 Inside the Propylaea, stairs, walls, and textures



Figure 25 The Propylaea corridor, looking towards the garden and the Arcosolium, with a view of the intersecting circles



Figure 26 Detail of the intersecting circles at the Propylaea, colourful tiles, and materiality

That, he argues, was an observation he made early on, a long time ago. This meant that the stairs subtly move the visitor towards the more extraverted space of the Cemetery (the garden), rather than, as he describes it, the more solitary and difficult path (towards the Water Pavilion).²⁶⁰

Another observation he makes is highlighting how the position of the Propylaea, at the perimeter of the Cemetery was intentional. He explains that, in his opinion, this decision was made as an outcome of considerations, after he (Pietropoli) realised (through a sequence of drawings) that the position of the path changed, throughout the course of different drawings. Once again, Scarpa is enhancing the experience, by creating paths for the visitor to use, for their bodies to explore the space in a manner that helps enhance his intentions. In the case of the Propylaea, Pietropoli observes, the corridor hides the visitors from the view of the Water Pavilion, to leave the view unobstructed, from the Water Pavilion towards the Cemetery and the Arcosolium, and to not disrupt the peaceful element of the Water Pavilion.²⁶¹ In that manner, the visitor can take in all the landscape, feel the water in front of them, gaze at the garden and view the open sky and the mountain hills as the backdrop.

4.6 PSYCHOLOGICAL CORE THEME: CATHARSIS

4.6.1 Introduction

This section will discuss the concept of catharsis, as an emotional reaction to the entrance. It will also focus on the intersecting circles as a main focus.

4.6.2 Catharsis

The emotional instance which took place at the entrance and is described in subchapter 1.2 and in more detail in subchapter 4.8.3 and eventually became a catalytic moment for the thesis, was unraveled months later and after my return from the field trip. That was the moment when I realised something which lies at the basis of the concept of “emotion.”

²⁶⁰ Conversation with Guido Pietropoli, 2019.

²⁶¹ Ibid.

This realization, besides being triggered by my personal reaction and retrospective reflection on the incident, also stemmed from a thorough analysis of the visitors' guestbook, where emotional reactions and testimonies at the Brion Cemetery were documented. A new pattern, that of the evoking of intense emotions, was emerging in my understanding of the Cemetery. Stemming from the French "émouvoir", the word "emotion" is based on the Latin word "emovere", which is composed by the words "out" and "movere" meaning to "move".²⁶² The focus on the emotional aspect in interpreting Scarpa's approach at the Propylaea emphasizes a deep sense of emotional release, as expressed through the concept of "catharsis." Catharsis etymologically deriving from the Greek word "katharsis" from "kathairein" meaning to "cleanse", means 'the process of releasing, and thereby providing relief from, strong or repressed emotions'²⁶³ as mentioned in the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

Aristotle, in his *Poetics*, makes a connection between the function of poetry and catharsis towards emotional release.²⁶⁴ Mazza explains that catharsis, whose principal factor is emotional identification, is considered even today as an especially essential element in the therapeutic world, from psychotherapy to group psychotherapy to psychodrama'.²⁶⁵

4.6.3 An entrance with significance

When I was looking into original material by the Carlo Scarpa archives, I came across a piece of writing by Scarpa, describing the brief to the Brion Cemetery: "Onorina Brion commissions a work (full of poetic qualities, a garden of vast dimensions) [...] an entrance with significance".²⁶⁶ To return to the initial instance, a few days prior to the day that I read that excerpt, I had found myself sitting and resting my body against that entrance with significance at those intersecting circles. The incident, which is described as a catalyst in the previous chapter, contributed to internal and unexpected motions. David Whyte observes how 'poetry is language against which we have no defenses'. If that is true, I could personally attest to a lack of defenses. I felt completely unprepared for the unexpected tears at the place,

²⁶² Angus Stevenson and Maurice Waite, *Oxford Dictionary of English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

²⁶³ Ibid.

²⁶⁴ Nicholas Mazza, *Poetry Therapy: Theory and Practice* (Florence: Taylor and Francis, 2016), p.5.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ MAXXI Museo nazionale delle arti del XXI secolo, Roma. Collezione MAXXI Architettura. Archivio Carlo Scarpa.

to the point of not knowing what to do with the video that I was recording. Furman comments on poetry and its use in a therapeutic context: ‘Poetry is not based upon linear cause and effect logic; a poem does not need to “make sense.” In this manner, the poem may be a particularly valuable means of exploring emotions’. Comments by visitors in the guestbook included statements describing the emotion present at the Propylaea and, in some cases, connected to the entrance. “I have just entered, but I am already very emotional”. Patrizia Piccirini remarks about the Cemetery:

Moving to the point of being overwhelming, it first fills the eyes with a thousand sensations and then overflows into head and heart, stirring doubts, kindling hopes, and providing answers that are lost in the sound of flowing water and in the light that penetrates from the apertures carved in the concrete. There are those who read the word "end" and those who hope that this is only the beginning. Scarpa sends signals but leaves the interpretation free .²⁶⁷

4.6.4 Transactions between body, emotion, and environment

Pallasmaa writes: ‘Creative work calls for a bodily and mental identification, empathy and compassion’.²⁶⁸ Through the active triggering and participation of one’s imagination and body, the poetic function is set in motion. Drawings found at the archives reflect that intimate relationship between the circles and the body. In Figure 28 the drawing presents three figures – the one at the center stands precisely where I was standing, looking out, as I was looking out. Orietta Lanzarini observes how a constant element in Scarpa’s work is the human figure.²⁶⁹ Alex T. Anderson writes:

The figures in the drawings of Carlo Scarpa, on the other hand, show that elements of architecture can respond actively to human gesture, that spaces shape themselves to

²⁶⁷ Patrizia Piccinini, *CARLO SCARPA : Beyond Matter*, (S.L.: Rizzoli, 2021), p. 152.

²⁶⁸ Juhani Pallasmaa, *The Eyes of The Skin*, (Chichester: Wiley, 1996), p. 13.

²⁶⁹ Orietta Lanzarini, ‘Carlo Scarpa e il disegno’, *DISEGNARECON*, (2009), p.9.

affect sensations in particular ways, and that the human body is a direct agent of architectural composition.²⁷⁰

One student observed:

I thought that it was very interesting that he used the circles. So, it was the first thing that you saw when you entered the Cemetery and it was very unique because he was about to be for the dead and then he used this romantic symbolism, to create life and death.²⁷¹

Mazza writes: ‘Poetry Therapy is defined as the use of language, symbols, and stories in therapeutic, growth, educational, and community-building capacities’.²⁷² Carter observes: ‘Visiting Scarpa’s buildings is a transformative experience, one that makes us acutely aware of the laminated nature of place, which reveals human history as it is inscribed into things – things we can know only because people like us made them’.²⁷³ At the Propylaea, I found myself “writing my own poem,” my own “cathartic verses.” Hovie and others argue:

When someone writes a healing poem, there is an abundance of sincerity and emotional influence in it, and as such these verses are best understood from the motivation behind them. Structure, technicality, and poetic tradition become secondary to the process of expressing one’s experience and emotions for a primarily cathartic purpose.²⁷⁴

At the Propylaea, one of the mechanisms that is identified by visitors is the powerful imagery of the circles. The circles and the intersecting space formulated between them can represent many things. The space in the intersection of the circles has also been found in many

²⁷⁰ Alex T. Anderson, ‘On the Human Figure in Architectural Representation’, *Journal of Architectural Education*, 55.4 (2002), 238-246, p. 243.

²⁷¹ Interview with a student, 2018.

²⁷² Nicholas Mazza, *Poetry Therapy : Theory and Practice* (Florence: Taylor and Francis, 2016), p.17.

²⁷³ Robert McCarter, *Carlo Scarpa* (London: Phaidon Press, 2013), p. 237.

²⁷⁴ Richard Hovey, Bruce Khayat, Valerie Curro, Eugene Feig, ‘Cathartic Poetry: Healing Through Narrative’, *The Permanente Journal/Perm*, 22 (2018), p. 18.

representations, throughout history, characterized as the ‘Vesica Piscis’. Javier Barrallo, Francisco Gonzales-Quintial and Santiago Sanchez-Beitia explain:

The origin of the Vesica Piscis is uncertain, but it can be found in different cultures throughout many historical periods. The Christian religion was most likely responsible for its spread, first as a fish symbol, then as an architectural niche surrounding sculptures and drawings of Christ, and finally as the Gothic pointed arch.²⁷⁵

These enable the metaphorical function throughout the Brion Cemetery. Olsberg writes, on Scarpa’s architecture:

At the same time, he reopened the possibility of an architecture constructed like painting or poetry around questions of memory, allegory, narrative, and metaphor. Together, these innovations helped to liberate younger architects from the rationalist severity of their modernist training, to generate a new historical sensibility that lay outside the sentimental agendas of restoration and revival, and to reawaken architecture to its lyric potential - its capacity to write, on the ground, a sort of civic poetry.²⁷⁶

Through the active use of symbolism and their metaphorical use, one can project what is on their minds. That, in return, could have beneficial/therapeutic effects on the person. As Pallasmaa reflects on, in *Stairways of the Mind*, echoing E. E Edinger’s words:

²⁷⁵ Javier Barrallo, Francisco Gonzales-Quintial, Santiago Sanchez-Beitia, ‘An introduction to the Vesica Piscis, the Reuleaux Triangle and Related Geometric Construction in Modern Architecture’, *Nexus Netw J*, 17 (2015), 671-684, p.671.

²⁷⁶ Nicholas Olsberg and Guido Guidi, *Carlo Scarpa Architect* (Montréal, Québec: The Canadian Centre for Architecture, 1999), p. 9.

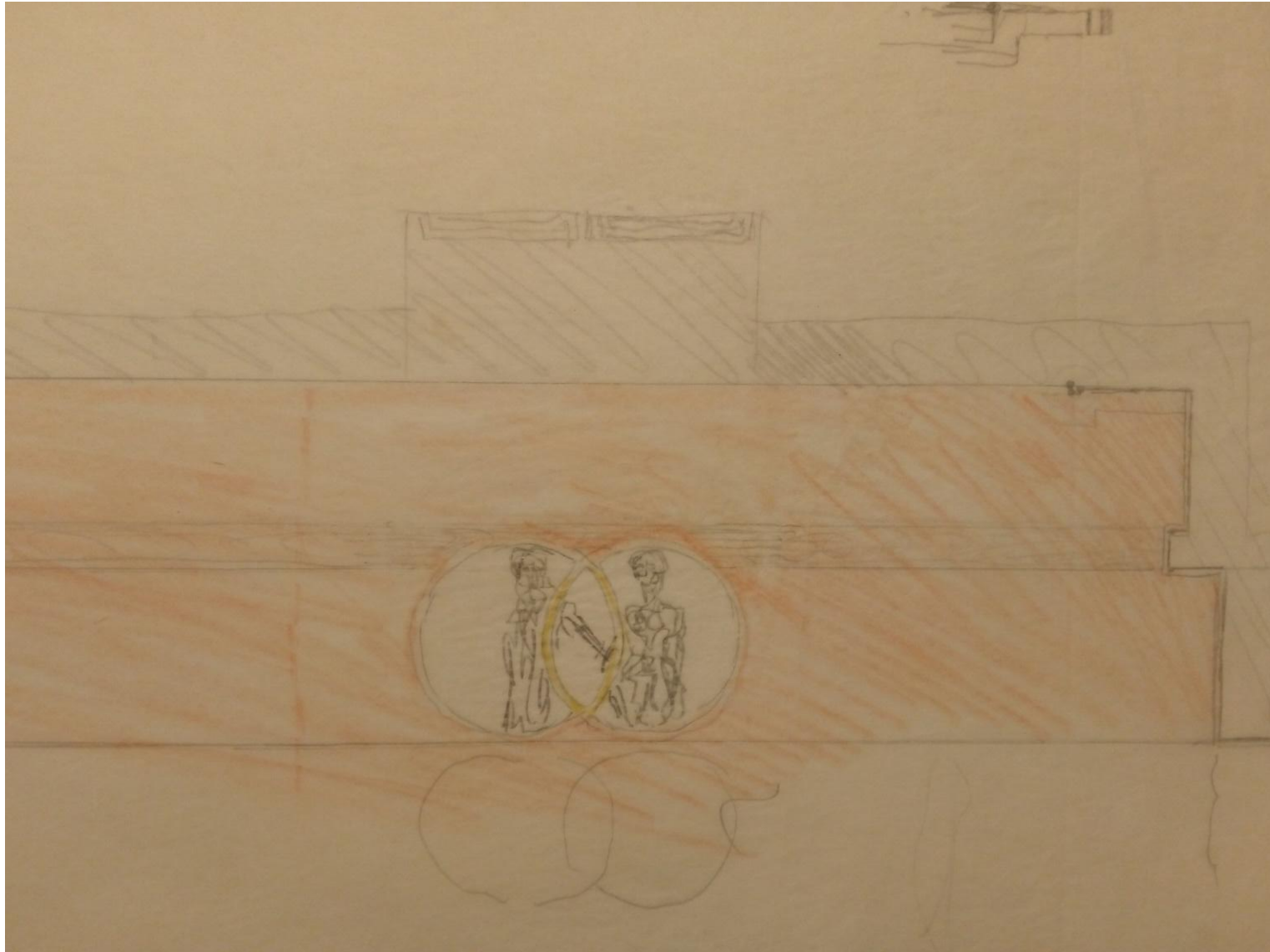


Figure 27 Drawing of two figures interacting, at the intersecting circles at the Propylaea

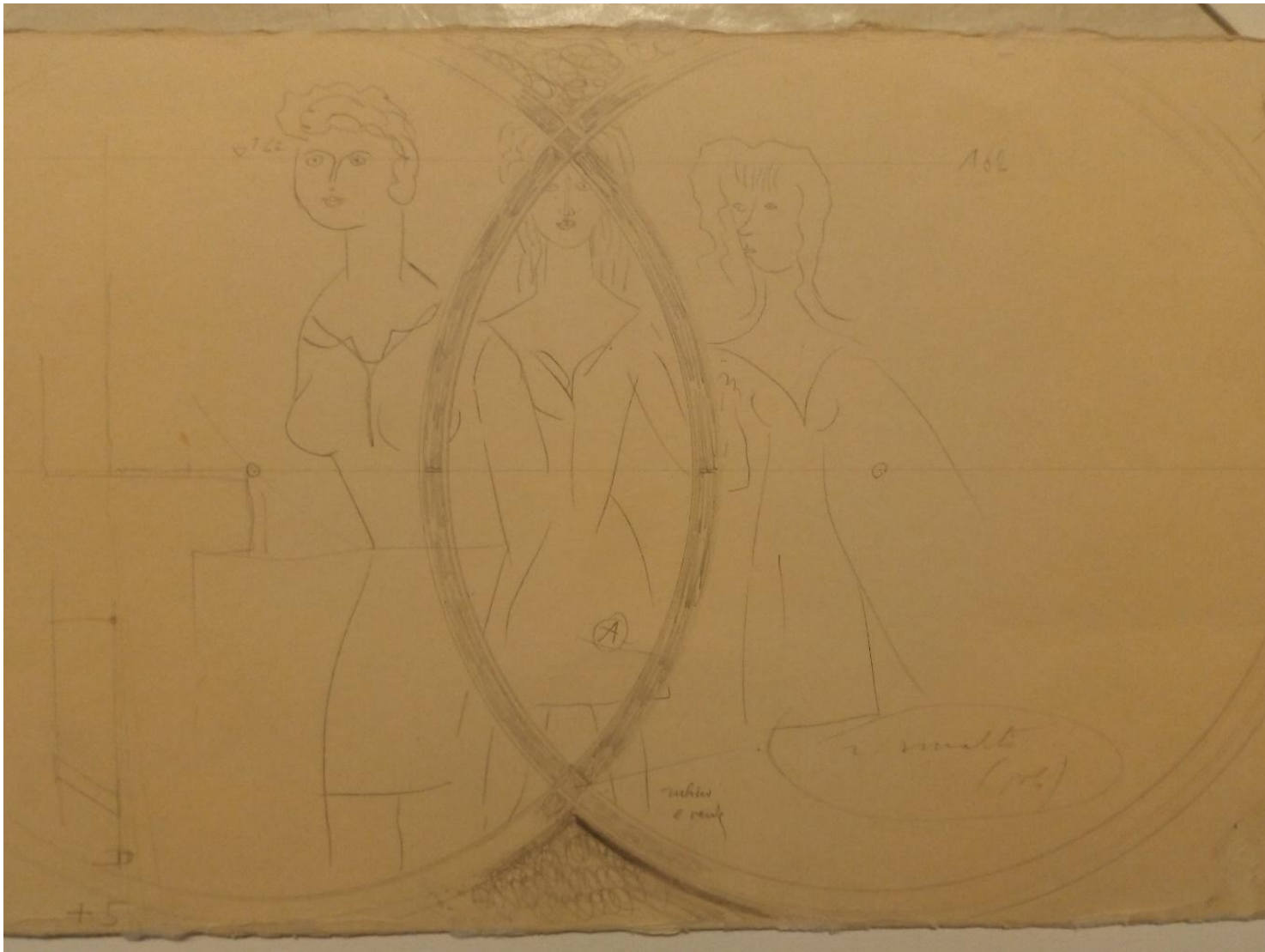


Figure 28 Excerpt of drawing of three figures interacting with the intersecting circles, at the Propylaea

One of the symptoms of alienation in the modern age is the widespread sense of meaninglessness. Modern man's most urgent need is to discover the reality and value of the inner subjective world, to discover the symbolic life. The symbolic life in some form is a prerequisite for psychic health.²⁷⁷

Through the symbols and strong imagery of intersecting circles present at the Propylaea, it is possible to say that Scarpa constructs a space where imagination is evoked. Guido Pietropoli suggests that these circles can be found in several cultures and religions, and that it can represent the union of two people.²⁷⁸

Within the context of Poetry Therapy, catharsis is also connected to a sense of emotional identification with a human experience, as Furman highlights.²⁷⁹ Emotional identification also connects with a notion of empathy. Empathy, which means ‘the ability to understand and share the feelings of another’, originates from the Greek word “empathia” (from em- ‘in’ + pathos ‘feeling’).²⁸⁰ As the *Oxford Dictionary of English* clarifies:

People often confuse the words empathy and sympathy. Empathy means ‘the ability to understand and share the feelings of another (as in both authors have the skill to make you feel empathy with their heroines;),’ whereas sympathy means ‘feelings of pity and sorrow for someone else's misfortune’ (as in they had great sympathy for the flood victims).²⁸¹

Every time I visited the Cemetery, I could sense that shared “space” of emotion. During my interview with Pietropoli, the conversation at some point moved towards the importance of empathy. We were specifically discussing on the manner that Scarpa used to teach, and his own empathetic stance; more specifically, how the course of his thoughts would change (or more specifically the thought-paths he followed to reach his point), sometimes depending on

²⁷⁷ Juhani Pallasmaa, ‘Stairways of the Mind’, *International Forum of Psychoanalysis*, 9.1-2 (2000), 7–18, p.17.

²⁷⁸ Conversation with Guido Pietropoli, 2019.

²⁷⁹ Rich Furman, ‘Poetry and Narrative as Qualitative Data: Explorations into Existential Theory’, *Indo-Pacific Journal of Phenomenology*, 7.1 (2007), p. 2

²⁸⁰ A.Stevenson, *Oxford dictionary of English* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

²⁸¹ Ibid.

the expressions on the faces of the students that he had in front of him. He recounts stories of Scarpa's teaching at the IUAV in Venice:

[...] The poet sees in the other not just any person but 'the person'. That is, we are talking now but the conversation with another person would be different. And there is only this possibility, right now that we are talking to each other. But this moment is just this moment. And the poet understands the truth of this, which is different from another truth of another time. When Scarpa says "I teach the lesson but my lesson changes because I look outside and I don't look at my brain" it means that he says "I am connected" connected, with the experience of that moment.²⁸²

The poetic experience which is possible at the Brion Cemetery holds a multi-dimensional value. It is filled with emotion, which potentially allows emotional identification, through shared human experiences, and a deeper understanding of the person's psychological state.

4.7 CONCLUSION

To conclude, this chapter has argued that the sense of wellbeing that is evoked at the Propylaea through the analysis of first-person, existential, and hermeneutical material related to the Propylaea -Guido Pietropoli's interview, students' interviews, archival material, personal observations, guestbook -connects to the psychological theme of catharsis.

The chapter focused on the specifics of the Propylaea as the first of the three tangible moments in space, that the thesis analyses -the Propylaea, the Water Pavilion and the Arcosolium- and connects the insights to the broader context of Architecture, Poetry and Wellbeing. Poetry Therapy and insights from the Mental Health and Psychology fields and the potential role of poetry are brought into the analysis. At the Propylaea, the intersecting circles become the center of the focus and a powerful architectural poetic vehicle through which to express and identify with potentially strong emotions.

The chapter specifically analyses the idea of emotional identification and release, as catharsis, as part of a therapeutic experience. The chapter has given an overview of different primary

²⁸² Conversation with Guido Pietropoli, 2019.

materials, common themes that emerge and how they are connected. Other key themes ,the involvement of the senses, materiality, and natural elements, which were identified in the primary materials analysis are analysed in the Discussion chapter as part of common themes across all three tangible moments. In the next chapter, the second tangible example of the analysis of this thesis ,the Water Pavilion ,will be examined in a similar way .

CHAPTER 5: THE WATER PAVILION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

5.1.1 Aims and arguments

This chapter focuses on the second of the three tangible examples that the thesis explores at the Brion Cemetery(after the exploration of the Propylaea) if one turns to the right and follows the path, having passed the sliding door in the corridor: The Water Pavilion. The chapter aligns itself with the main hypothesis of the thesis, which is that the Water Pavilion supports wellbeing by providing a space that allows and encourages the expression and realisation of the self: self-awareness. Similarly with the previous chapter, it also applies intersections between three fields of knowledge -Architecture, Poetry, and Wellbeing - and demonstrates which themes connected to spatial experience are present and how they are connected to wellbeing.

5.1.2 Main psychological theme explored

The chapter sustains that the Water Pavilion is at the center of a psychological experience. This proposal is correlated by examining first-person, existential, and hermeneutical material related to the Water Pavilion, and focuses on the notion of self-awareness, which leads to self-understanding, as a psychological reaction. It is supported by analysis of primary materials (the guestbook, interviews, photography, observations, and archival material).



Figure 29 View of the landscape and the Arcosolium from the Water Pavilion

5.1.3 Chapter Structure

The chapter begins with a summary of the thesis methodology and presents a triangulation of first-person, experiential, and hermeneutical material for analysis. As mentioned in Chapter 4, this is followed by a subjective narrative with reference to Bachelard and Rendell's writings. Lastly, in line with all the chapter of the three tangible moments in space (Chapter 4,5, and 6), experiences and descriptions of the Water Pavilion from first-person, existential, and hermeneutical sources are compared, to establish common themes, forming the basis of the focus on self-awareness.

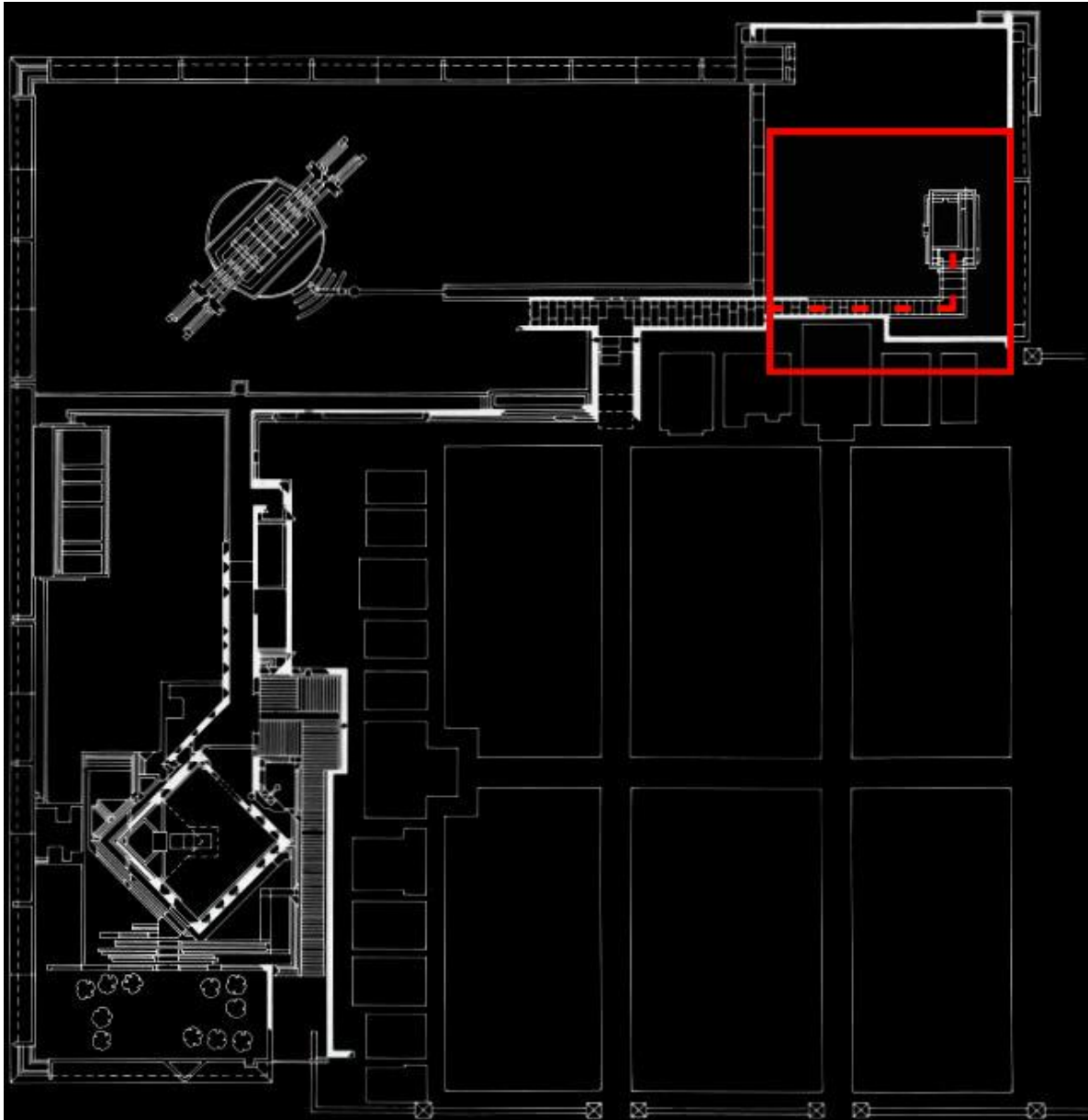
5.2 METHODS

5.2.1 Theoretical framework, data collection and data analysis

The approach is in line with the first-person, existential, and hermeneutical²⁸³ phenomenological research methodology, proposed by David Seamon.

The effects of the Water Pavilion as perceived through the first-hand experience, shared experiences, and the hermeneutics of interpreting original Scarpa archival material, is analysed through the lens of Poetry Therapy and insights from Mental Health and Psychology fields. Existential material used for this analysis comprises excerpts from interviews with architectural students, following a visit to the Cemetery, on-site students' observations, and excerpts from an interview with Pietropoli. Hermeneutical material comprises drawings and notes from the Centro Carlo Scarpa archives, and writings from the Brion Cemetery visitors' guestbook. First-hand material include personal observations following a visit the place, and personal photography. As with other chapters, NVivo was used as an organisational tool and for the triangulation of data for the Water Pavilion.

²⁸³ David Wang and Linda N. Groat, *Architectural Research Methods* (Hoboken: J. Wiley, 2013), p.228.



*Figure 30 Map of the Brion Cemetery. The square highlights the location of the Water Pavilion. The dashed line highlights the path trail described. Digitally edited version, by author, based on the Brion Cemetery map by Peter Buchanan, in "Garden of Death and Dreams," *Architectural Review*, 179 (1985), 54-59*

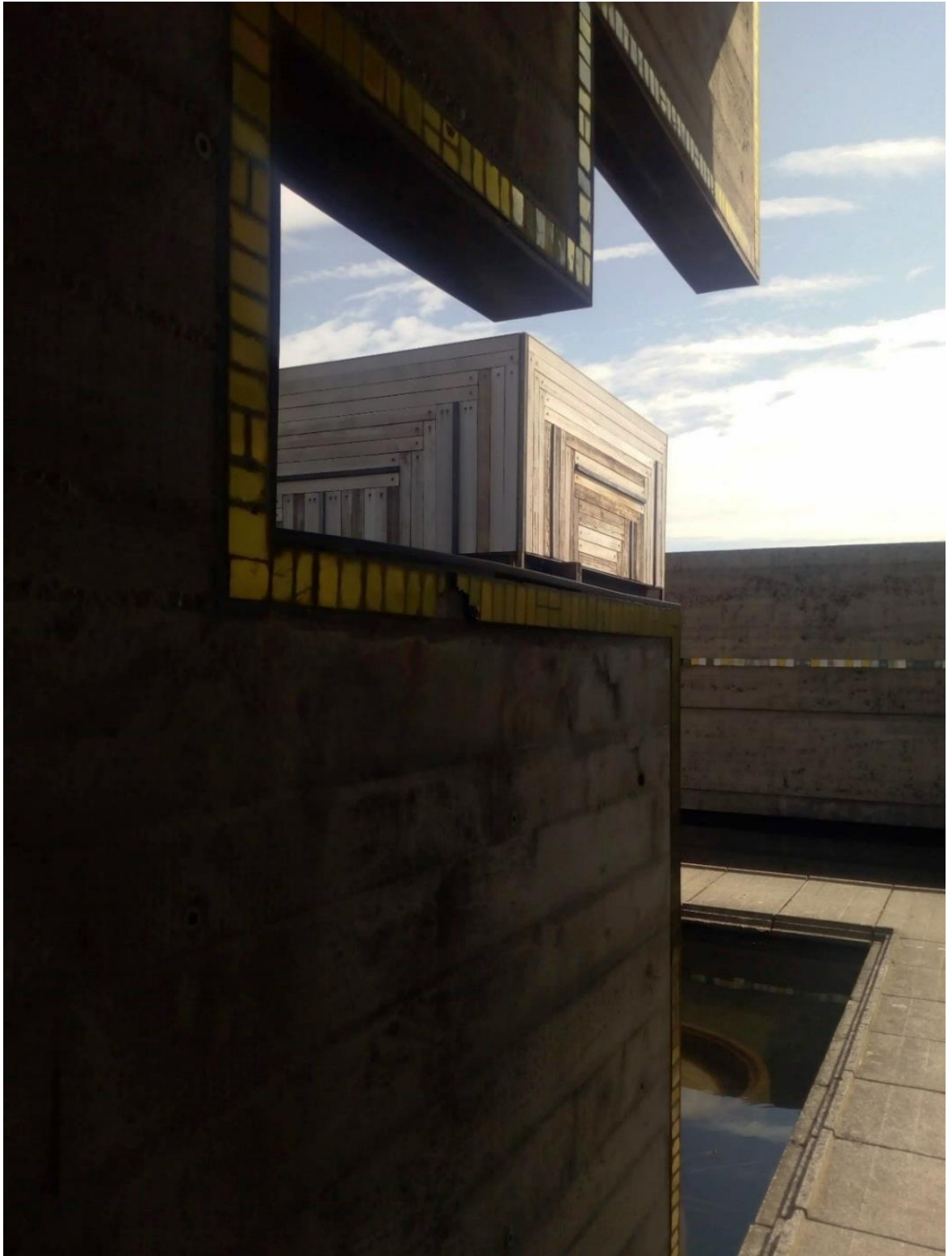


Figure 31 Walking along the corridor which leads to the Water Pavilion from the Propylaea, looking at the path ahead and the 90-degree angle found in the corner of the Cemetery

5.2.2 Writing

The personal and subjective tone of writing draws on Rendell's *Writing Architecture*, and poetic analysis references Bachelard's phenomenological approach in *Poetics of Space* in which poetic excerpts and/or quotations are brought into the writing, whenever they are considered appropriate, to express something which is difficult to be expressed otherwise. Further analysis is provided in Chapter 4, as the approach is identical in the all three tangible examples (Chapter 4, 5, and 6).

5.3 FIRST-PERSON EXPERIENCE

5.3.1 Walking to the Water Pavilion

The walk starts just before I get to see the Water Pavilion (Fig 32), I am still on the path towards the Pavilion but have no visual contact with it. I am standing in a long, narrow, dark corridor, and in front of me there is a path, which begins with some slabs that intentionally move and make noise as one steps on them.

The Water Pavilion is more private, more intimate. Its scale and location restrict the experience to fewer people, creating a more solitary path, one that invites opportunities for personal reflections, growth, contemplation. The path leading towards it is narrower, compared to the one leading to the rest of the Brion Cemetery. Also, there are moments of disruption which potentially require effort (such as the glass door which one needs to push down and towards the water to proceed). This feels like an activating moment, I have to be present and engaging with the architecture, in order to proceed. Whatever one chooses to do with their time at the Water Pavilion (they can either choose to briefly wonder or take a sit and observe), it is always a pleasure to go back to it. At the Water Pavilion I have experienced moments of immense privilege: I have been alone with the space, with no people around, or at the Cemetery, at midday, on a sunny and quiet day, in complete silence.

This constructed "island" is a dot at the end of a path. A pause. A blurry image that comes to focus. The Water Pavilion is also the only place where you can observe a landscape – the

tombs and behind them the San Vito D' Altivole village. It is the only place where you can sit and observe things from such a distance.

A few metres from where I am standing, the path makes a 90 degree turn towards the Water Pavilion. I cannot yet see the Water Pavilion. I take a few more steps and the wall on my side starts to disintegrate: a solid rectangular shape which loses its edges, while the edge itself is decorated with a series of colourful tiles (Figure 31). As I walk, the Water Pavilion starts to appear in front of me, on my left. I feel the need to stop for a moment to appreciate the beauty of this compelling experience that sits peacefully ahead of me: A Water Pavilion, sits like an island, on a concrete base, surrounded by water.

5.3.2 A sense of a ritual

*I continue and more of the landscape is revealed. Before I turn my body to follow the curve the path makes, I notice the brightly coloured tiles integrated into a horizontal thin line in the middle of the perimeter walls around. This detail adds to a sense of wonder, sparks my curiosity, and turns a heavy concrete surface into a canvas for my eyes to wonder (Fig 33). I walk around the narrow path, taking in the landscape which is slowly being revealed. I get a sense of a ritual, of a preparation of the spirit, as encountered earlier at the entrance. I can see that the pond is filled with plants and fish, and I can feel the breeze of the temperature of the water on my skin. Pallasmaa writes in *Eyes of the Skin*:*

It is evident that 'life-enhancing' architecture has to address all the senses simultaneously and fuse our image of self with our experience of the world. The essential mental task of architecture is accommodation and integration. Architecture articulates the experiences of being-in-the-world and strengthens our sense of reality and self; it does not make us inhabit worlds of mere fabrication and fantasy.²⁸⁴

During my earlier visits on sunny days, the Water Pavilion's colours shone brightly, with reflections everywhere. Today, a rainy day, the surfaces seem completely immersed in an aquatic quality.

²⁸⁴ Juhani Pallasmaa, *The Eyes of The Skin* (Chichester:Wiley,2005), p.11.

5.3.3 The Water Pavilion

As mentioned previously, the Water Pavilion stands like a secluded oasis, overlooking the landscape of the Cemetery. It is a metaphor for the eyes. Turning right from the Propylaea, the main entrance which we encountered in the previous chapter, the Water Pavilion is located at the one end of the L-shaped site of the Brion Cemetery. Immersed in water, it contributes to the overall vision of it. Scarpa wrote: 'This is the only private [place in the garden] – all the rest is for the public, for the playing of children. ...The Pavilion I made for myself. I go there frequently and meditate'.²⁸⁵ The Pavilion is made up of a simple but intricate iron and wooden structure and is supported by four thin metallic pillars, which extend to the water underneath. I move around; my body follows the path and as I proceed the landscape opens back out, as if it were the first time, from the moment that I entered, that I can see the landscape in its totality, uninterrupted. I see more of the Cemetery, the water pond and the perimeter walls.

5.3.4 Experiential effects of the Water Pavilion, the kinesthetic aspect, and the call to being present

The Water Pavilion screen lowers, and I feel as if I have to lower my head, aware of the panel above me while simultaneously paying attention to a small water-filled gap below me, dividing the concrete path from the Water Pavilion concrete floor. This breakage and lowering requires me to be present, engaged, as I enter the Water Pavilion. Inside it, I admire the intricacy of the roof above, and of the structure (Fig 35). In the middle, there is something which looks like a peculiar concrete bench, placed next to a tree. The tree becomes part of the Water Pavilion and of the pond, at the same time. The bench invites me to sit. As I sit and look back, along the length of the space, the landscape opens up, once again, in front of my eyes. This feels like the space for contemplation, reflection, and meditation that Scarpa describes. I can see the Cemetery, the tombs of the couple, the landscape behind it, the village, and the mountains. The longer I stay seated, the more I feel immersed in the experience. The sound of the water, of the fish swimming and occasionally emerging out of the water, and the plants positioned inside the pond relax me. The multitude of sensorial

²⁸⁵ George Dodds and Robert Tavernor, *Body and Building* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2005), p.251.

stimuli draws the attention, ask to be observed, I would argue. They pull my mind out of its thoughts, ask me to be present, with a heightened awareness of the experience that is unfolding.

5.3.5 Immersed in the interiority of the Water Pavilion

The small sitting area made from concrete at the Water Pavilion is the only space in the Cemetery where one is invited to sit. I feel like I can pause, slow down, and think. This becomes a place for a dialogue between what is present, what is potentially implied and what each one of us can project and eventually make of this poetic act of extension. I eventually may or may not engage in such a process, but I am given a chance to do so; a metaphorical space within a literal space opens for me, to do so, while I am left in a state of peace. From the outside to the inside of the space I find myself immersed in an almost parallel world. From the moment I stepped into the entrance, I kept leaving behind, with every step I took, what I had seen outside. The sequence of arrival at the Propylaea, the narrowness and darkness of the corridor, the bright tiles ahead, the plants, water and fish, the pausing at the entrance, the bench located so as to give a broad view back along the full length of the Cemetery and beyond to fields and mountains, invite to a continuous shifting of perspective, and engagement of imagination. It can constitute a deeply detailed invitation towards a dialogue about what each one can consider as definite, and, therefore, spark an appetite towards an extension beyond what one knows, and potentially, towards transformation, I would say. The noise from the outside world fade, the horizon can be seen uninterrupted, and the narrative of the space can now unfold.

5.3.6 A moment of personal self-awareness and reflection

Stillness is a strange thing. It is not always peaceful. Sometimes, it brings to the forefront storms happening at the back of someone's mind. Stillness, quietness...they can create a space of horizontal openness, where mental wars can be unleashed, and there is no barrier to stop them.



Figure 32 Path leading to Water Pavilion, immersed in water, with withering plants around it. The visitor is asked to change their course in a 90 degree turn to the right. The perimeter walls are visible with a line of colourful tiles running through them, in approximately the middle of their overall height



Figure 33 A moment of sunlight reflecting on dark water as you cross over the gap, walking from the path that leads to the Water Pavilion into the Pavilion itself

5.3.7 A catalytic moment

I can remember that during a quiet evening at the Cemetery, after I had wandered around, documenting and collecting primary materials, I sat at the Water Pavilion to absorb the emotions that would come up. Usually, this was a peaceful experience that would quiet my mind. But on that occasion, I felt alone, at the edge of the world, isolated.

Stillness has an uncanny way of acting like still waters; when the agitation stops, the dirt settles, and you can see the bottom. You may or may not like what you see. I felt all my anxieties creeping up on me, irrelevant anxieties of daily life, of my next trip back to Venice and of travel disruptions. Thoughts were presenting themselves like unwanted visitors, as if they had a voice to speak in that almost sacred silence. I was not prepared for the space to look back at me with such intensity. All attention was on me, alone in that marvelous space, in the company of a landscape which spoke to me in every way but had stopped and was sitting in silence. If it were a person, it would be staring me in the eyes saying nothing, without expectations – even more terrifying.

Like the waters around you, as you sit at that Water Pavilion - reflections everywhere, mirrors everywhere. I felt the tension of that space, as I was thrown off balance. I was not prepared to speak, nor willing to reveal anything, not even to myself. “Bad research evening “I thought- something which didn’t help much. The more I resisted the more I could hear my thoughts. I sat there, looking at the fish in the water tank in front of me, thinking that I should be having a more engaged experience than this, rather than being completely wrapped up in my own head, unable to relax. The setting was the same, but I was different, I was there with expectations, I was there with a mission: collect data, understand the place, listen to the genius loci, and many other ambitious and great expectations. Expectations are not a great facilitator when it comes to allowing the moment to unfold. Ironically, what I



Figure 34 Inside the Water Pavilion, looking at the bench, the structure, and the panels above our heads

had not realised then was that I was very much engaged, despite my mind feeling scattered; it was the space that was reflecting back to me my state of mind.

*Funnily enough, it was the koi fish, swimming in front of me, that got me distracted and alleviated some of that discomfort. They made me feel less alone, and I was distracted temporarily. Again, the elements present at the Water Pavilion provided a “break” in perception, a moment of distraction and of recalibration. There is a gentle tenderness in nature and animals, enough to remind you that behind the stillness, everything is still moving, is alive. I remember, in retrospect, the poem by Wendell Berry, *The Peace of Wild Things*:*

When despair for the world grows in me
and I wake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children’s lives may be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting with their light. For a time
I rest in the grace of the world and am free²⁸⁶

Furman argues: ‘Further, through the device of imagery, a poem can convey the essence of an emotion by evoking images which often transcend the schism between the experience of an emotion and its expression in language’.²⁸⁷

²⁸⁶ Scottish Poetry Library, *The Peace of Wild Things* by Wendell Berry,
<https://www.scottishpoetrylibrary.org.uk/poem/peace-wild-things-0/> [accessed on 15 December 2023]

²⁸⁷ Rich Furman, ‘Poetry and Narrative as Qualitative Data: Explorations into Existential Theory’,
Indo-Pacific Journal of Phenomenology, 7(1), 1-9, (2007), p.2.

5.3.8 Reflections and conclusions

As I have completed the “journey” to and within the Water Pavilion and reflecting upon it, the highlight lies in the fact of the radical awareness that was creeping up on me at that moment, and an experience which did not integrate self-awareness in a pleasant manner, but, looking back, in a valuable one. What matters to me is that the opportunity was there for me. Did the space contribute positively? Yes, it did.

The Water Pavilion can be a place of absolute peace or a place which brings things to the surface. In this part of the section, I will recount some of them, again, bringing to the forefront the subjective, the memory, what is left from the experiences in a visceral level. This peaceful setting is a rare oasis where one can recollect their thoughts and be able to experience them. At that space, I am protected and not pressured, I can relax. Even when more people are present at the Cemetery, if one sits at the Water Pavilion for long enough, they can still feel its serenity. Any movement can become part of the landscape, in a way. So, what did I restore? My self-awareness, more than anything and a sense of profound stillness. Like the gap before entering the Water Pavilion which forces you to stay present, the Water Pavilion forces you to listen to your thoughts, which, I would argue, is valuable when one tries to make sense of the world. This, potentially, can give way to the generalisable.

Overall, I feel the importance of self-awareness and stillness becomes critical at the Water Pavilion. That is the gift the architect has bestowed upon the visitor, and that is the opportunity the visitor can use for their own self-reflection, as Pietropoli will also observe later.

5.4 DATA ANALYSIS

5.4.1 Introduction

In this subchapter the analysis of each data set is presented. This is in line with the structure of Chapter 4 and follows the exact same rationale, therefore, to avoid repetition, the thesis will be referring to Chapter 4 for the specifics and analysis of each method and will be only including the analysis of the primary materials.



Figure 35 Looking at the water pond, ahead of and around the Water Pavilion

In the previous section the subjective experience at the Water Pavilion was analysed. In this section the analysis of each data set is presented. As mentioned before, this includes, according to Seamon's phenomenological methodological categorization: a. first-person (personal photography & photography), b. existential (interviews with architectural students, on-site observations of architectural students, and an interview with Pietropoli), and c. hermeneutical (archival materials and on-site visitors' guestbook).

The analysis of all the primary materials has highlighted themes which revolve around self-awareness as the primary focus of the analysis, as well as the involvement of the body, senses, materiality, and natural elements. The last two themes will be further analysed in Chapter 7 (Discussion Chapter), along with insights of the same themes from the other two tangible moments in space at the Brion (Propylaea and Arcosolium).

5.4.2 First - hand

5.4.2.1 Photography:

From my own photography of the Water Pavilion, the following themes emerged:

- Natural Elements: (14)
- Water Pavilion itself & materiality: (45)
- Path towards Water Pavilion: (11)

5.4.2.2 Personal observations

Below are the themes that were identified, from personal observations:

- Natural elements: (7)
- Materiality & Architectural Elements: (4)
- Peace & Calmness: (4)
- Senses: (3)
- Contemplation & Observations of landscape and Cemetery: (3)



Figure 36 View, from the Water Pavilion, of the landscape, pond, garden ahead, perimeter walls, the Arcosolium and the Propylaea, on a sunny day

- Beauty: (2)
- Play: (1)
- Sadness: (1)
- Wonder & Awe: (1)
- Meditation: (1)
- Symbolism: (1)
- Protected: (1)

5.4.3 Existential

5.4.3.1 Students' Interviews

Themes from students' interviews:

- Materiality and Architectural Elements: (6)
- Senses/use of body: (3)
- Materiality and Architecture: (2)
- Water: (2)
- Atmosphere: (1)
- Water Element: (1)
- Peaceful & Calming: (1)
- Relaxing: (1)
- Beautiful: (1)
- Awareness: (1)
- Senses: (1)
- Poetic: (1)
- Landscape and Natural elements: (1)
- Senses & Materiality: (1)
- Calm: (1)

5.4.3.2 Students' Observations:

- Body: (2)
- Corridor: (1)
- Importance of awareness and being present: (1)

The following themes were observed:

5.4.4.2 Interview with Guido Pietropoli

Themes from Pietropoli conversation:

- Human figures: (2)
- Awareness and meeting of oneself: (1)
- Body: (1)
- Emotion through figures: (1)
- Solitary path: (1)
- The Brions: (1)
- Connection of body to the mind: (1)
- Poet: (1)
- Path to Water Pavilion and Solitary Elements & Personal: (1)
- Silence: (1)
- Materiality & Restoration: (1)
- Serenity: (1)
- Positioning of Water Pavilion in strategic position, in order to allow peace & serenity & guide visitors: (1)
- Connection with Arcosolium (initial thought): (1)

5.4.4 Hermeneutical

5.4.5.1 Archival material

Out of the archival materials, overall, the following themes were identified:

Archive text

- No data were identified from the material that was examined.

Archive drawings

- Plants & Natural elements (6)
- Emotion: (1)
- Materiality, details, architecture: (14)

5.4.5.2 Guestbook

For the Water Pavilion, the following themes were identified:

- Natural Elements: (5)
- Silence: (2)
- Meditation: (2)
- Words of admiration: (1)
- Harmony: (1)
- Geometry: (1)
- Words of thanks: (1)
- Eternity: (1)

5.4.5 Sum of Data - Triangulation

Collating all the materials from first-person, existential, and hermeneutical sources of experiences and documents of the Water Pavilion, the following common themes emerge as the most frequent:

- Natural Elements, Landscape (90)
- Body, Senses and Human Figures: (24)
- Peace and Calmness, Serenity, Relaxing: (9)
- Contemplation, Meditation, Awareness: (9)
- Emotional reactions: (4)
- Silence: (3)

Out of these the most mentioned connected to emotional or psychological reactions were the ones around conditions which facilitate a sense of reflection and self-awareness (silence, peace, calmness, relaxation, meditation, awareness). Other prominent themes related to the Water Pavilion which emerged from the triangulation of primary materials (the body and senses, and natural elements and the landscape) are discussed in the following Discussion Chapter, as they are common in all the three tangible examples.

5.5 CORE PSYCHOLOGICAL THEME: SELF-AWARENESS

5.5.1 Introduction

The primary materials' analysis has evidenced the presence of the aforementioned themes. At this point, stemming from the personal analysis and the analysis of all primary materials, the core theme of self-awareness will be further explained, through a correlation of all materials and selection of examples of data, in connection with the literature. Self-awareness is a core element of psychotherapy.²⁸⁸ Anna Sutton writes:

²⁸⁸ A. Sutton, 'Measuring the Effects of Self-Awareness: Construction of the Self-Awareness Outcomes Questionnaire', *Eur J Psychol* (2016), p. 645.

Dispositional self-awareness is conceptualized in several different ways, including insight, reflection, rumination and mindfulness, with the latter in particular attracting extensive attention in recent research. While self-awareness is generally associated with positive psychological well-being, these different conceptualizations are also each associated with a range of unique outcomes as a core value of living.²⁸⁹

She continues:

Self-awareness has long been seen by practitioners and researchers as both a primary means of alleviating psychological distress and the path of self-development for psychologically healthy individuals. Four decades ago, Fenigstein et al. wrote that “increased awareness of the self is both a tool and a goal”.²⁹⁰

5.5.2 Serenity

Out of the synthesis and grouping of primary materials one of the two main themes that emerges is a sense of psychological awareness, which becomes sharpened at the Brion Cemetery. This is enhanced by the intense presence of silence and calmness. The Water Pavilion becomes a place for reflection. In the interview with Pietropoli, the concept of serenity was brought up. Serenity is a theme which emerged from the primary materials as well, along with the themes of peace and calmness. Pietropoli observes that the word “serenity” etymologically stems from the Latin word “serenus”, which means “dry”.²⁹¹ Indeed, in Italian when someone is describing a sunny day, with cloudless sky, one way to describe the weather is as “serene”. He reflects on how ‘the most wet city in the world, had the name of “the most serene”.⁷⁷ We discussed about this potential oxymoron, to which he added that in his opinion: “Venice is serene, because it is full of love”.²⁹² He mentions the love and passion of the Venetian Republic for the arts and its

²⁸⁹ A. Sutton, ‘Measuring the Effects of Self-Awareness: Construction of the Self-Awareness Outcomes Questionnaire’, *Eur J Psychol* (2016), p.646.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 645.

²⁹¹ Conversation with Guido Pietropoli, 2019.

²⁹² *Ibid.*

citizens, as an explanation for this statement. Concerning the Brion Cemetery, he observes: “I believe that Scarpa’s architecture is serene. In my opinion, its hidden quality is that you feel “serene” inside”.²⁹³ In a similar statement, Patrizia Piccinini states:

“You can't think of doing something poetic. Poetic architecture develops if whoever does it has this nature," maintained Scarpa in 1976. Certainly, he possessed such a nature, because he was able to see further, to make of a detail a whole, to sing nature with notes set in concrete and gaze deeply into the human soul. The small Meditation Pavilion set on water is all this and perhaps even more. Viewed from a distance, it appears as a slender architectural episode, suspended on a concrete island level with the water. A small iron and wood structure, it creates an unexpected contrast compared to the more "practical" concrete buildings that compose the whole complex. But to find the serenity of contemplating that magical place, you need to walk a narrow path in perfect solitude.²⁹⁴

The Water Pavilion, as well as the path towards it, prepares the body, the mind, and the heart for an encounter with the self.

5.5.3 The personal

During my subjective experiences at the Water Pavilion, several moments of realisations emerged, connected to that sense of stillness. In all cases, I was brought to a radical interiority and a sense of crisp self-awareness. I was very much inside my own body and emotions, as if the veil between the outside space and the internal space had been lifted. Scarpa, in his drawings, envisioned this interaction and several drawings in the archives confirm that. Human figures are often placed to interact with architecture, to dwell in it. In the interview with Pietropoli, he observes how Scarpa loved designing the people in his drawings, because he was interested in seeing his architecture inhabited, lived.²⁹⁵

Furthermore, the poetic element here is seen under the light of possibilities that allow a space

²⁹³ Ibid.

²⁹⁴ Patrizia Piccinini, *CARLO SCARPA : Beyond Matter* (S.L.: Rizzoli, 2021), p. 165.

²⁹⁵ Conversation with Guido Pietropoli, 2019.

to open up and be balanced enough to contain emotions.

5.5.4 The self at the center of the experience

Plummer highlights the overlooked significance of the sensorial aspects of spaces and how it potentially evokes a sense of self-empowerment : ‘One of the most crucial, if overlooked aspects of architecture is the capacity of buildings to either support or diminish the spontaneous powers of human beings to act in space’.²⁹⁶ George Dodds observes on the Brion Cemetery: ‘The visitor’s apprehension of the Brion garden involves both the construction of specific views and the absence of others; it involves both a conceptual body and the physical body of the visitor’.²⁹⁷ It may almost be the case that architecture here speaks to the visitor, as if there is a one-on-one intimate dialogue and care. This element also gives the visitor a sense of active participation. Pallasmaa observes:

Works of art are of an infinite solitude.” Great paintings and works of architecture also arise from and create silence. A powerful architectural experience eliminates noise and turns our consciousness to ourselves, into our existential experience and sense of being. The church interiors of Alvar Aalto and Juha Leiviskä, for instance, are cast in a benevolent silence. The innate silence of an experience of profound architecture arises from the manner in which it focuses our attention on our own existential experience—I am listening to my own existence. The language of architecture is the drama of tranquility. Great buildings are silence turned into matter.²⁹⁸

5.5.5 Amplified experience

At the Water Pavilion, silence is welcome and amplified. One can reflect, contemplate, and breathe: dynamic but peaceful, a space for smiles but also tears and one in which

²⁹⁶ Henry Plummer, *The Experience of Architecture* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2016), p.7.

²⁹⁷ George Dodds and Robert Tavernor, *Body and Building* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2005), p.255.

²⁹⁸ Pallasmaa, Juhani, *Voices of Tranquility: Silence in Art and in Architecture* <https://civilengineerkey.com/voices-of-tranquillity-silence-in-art-and-architecture/> [accessed 15 December 2023].

you feel exposed and, yet, protected. It also engages the person in an active manner, as it requires their participation, to be completed and interpreted. Such interpretations could help us understand why metaphor is a powerful tool towards a sense of wellbeing in the architectural realm. Furman observes: ‘At its best, poetry honours the subjective experience of the individual, and presents it in a manner that is “metaphorically generalizable” [...] The reader recognises him or herself in the poem and learns to view him or herself in a novel way’.²⁹⁹ Olberg argues: ‘In thus reconceiving preservation as a dialogue between what is there and what might be the architect could set up what Scarpa called a “speculative tension” in which anticipation was as important as memory’.

5.5.6 Architecture towards self-understanding

Considerations of death and life were brought forth in the same fashion by visitors on the guestbook. One visitor wrote (Figure 37):

Here – Every detail speaks – And makes one ponder- What is the meaning of death-
Perhaps life and death – Are held in this place – In an eternal embrace
reminding – One cannot really exist without the other.³⁰⁰

And what value could such an experience carry for the human psyche? Spaces like these contain valuable powers, as Plummer writes, with regards to what he calls ‘ambiguous spaces’. He states:

Ambiguous space implies a degree of uncertainty and doubt, making room for humans whereas this disappears in forms that are overthought or narrowly defined. It also suggests, by its reduction of outward display and exhibitionism, a measure of restraint on the part of its maker. The sad news for architects who care about these matters is that in order to invest buildings with fluctuating chances for improvised action by other people must be willing to temper their own presence as a controlling force in the

²⁹⁹ Nicholas Olberg and Guidi Guido, *Carlo Scarpa Architect: Intervening with History* (Montréal, Québec: The Canadian Centre for Architecture, 1999), p.14.

³⁰⁰ Comment by a visitor in the Brion visitors’ guestbook, 2019.

finished work. This does not imply tedious or undistinguished form, as architects from Bernini and Jefferson Kahn and Scarpa have demonstrated, but it does require that a generous portion of the creative powers instilled in a building are bequeathed to others, rather than fully expressed, and used up in the making.³⁰¹

On one of his cigarette packs, found at the archival collection (Figure 38), Scarpa writes: “I think that it is ART (art, meaning poetry) that makes us understand the reality of the world: it is the effort that human has made from the origins, in order to clarify, with forms, to themselves their existence /on things, animals, structures, architecture [...]”³⁰² On a similar note, during our conversation, Pietropoli observes: “Poetry is important, I believe. Poetry means art, architecture, painting”.³⁰³ The beneficial poetic function of the Water Pavilion could be described as a deeply existential, all-encompassing experience, which is connected to a sense of understanding of the self and of the world and potentially enables healing .

5.5.7 A space full of possibilities

Freshwater, in an article in which she analyses the ‘poetics of space’ within the therapeutic space as she characterises it, comments: ‘to give a subject poetic space is to give it more space that it has subjectivity; it is vital energetic space’.³⁰⁴ This potential opening of a dynamic, energetic space that allows dialogue and freedom, is what interests this study. Then metaphor can become the vehicle to something beyond our common experience, something energetic, dynamic, open.

Marco Frascari, Carlo Scarpa’s student ,is ‘convinced that this Venetian architect worked entirely through a synesthetic process that entailed, on the same pages of sketches, different colors and styles of drawing with different media’³⁰⁵

³⁰¹ Henry Plummer, *The Experience of Architecture* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2016), p.122.

³⁰² MAXXI Museo nazionale delle arti del XXI secolo, Roma. Collezione MAXXI Architettura. Archivio Carlo Scarpa.

³⁰³ Conversation with Guido Pietropoli, 2019.

³⁰⁴ Dawn Freshwater, ‘The Poetics of Space: Researching the Concept of Spatiality Through Relationality’, *Psychodynamic Practice*, 11.2 (2015), p. 186.

³⁰⁵ Harry Francis Mallgrave, *The Architect's Brain* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell,2011), p.175.

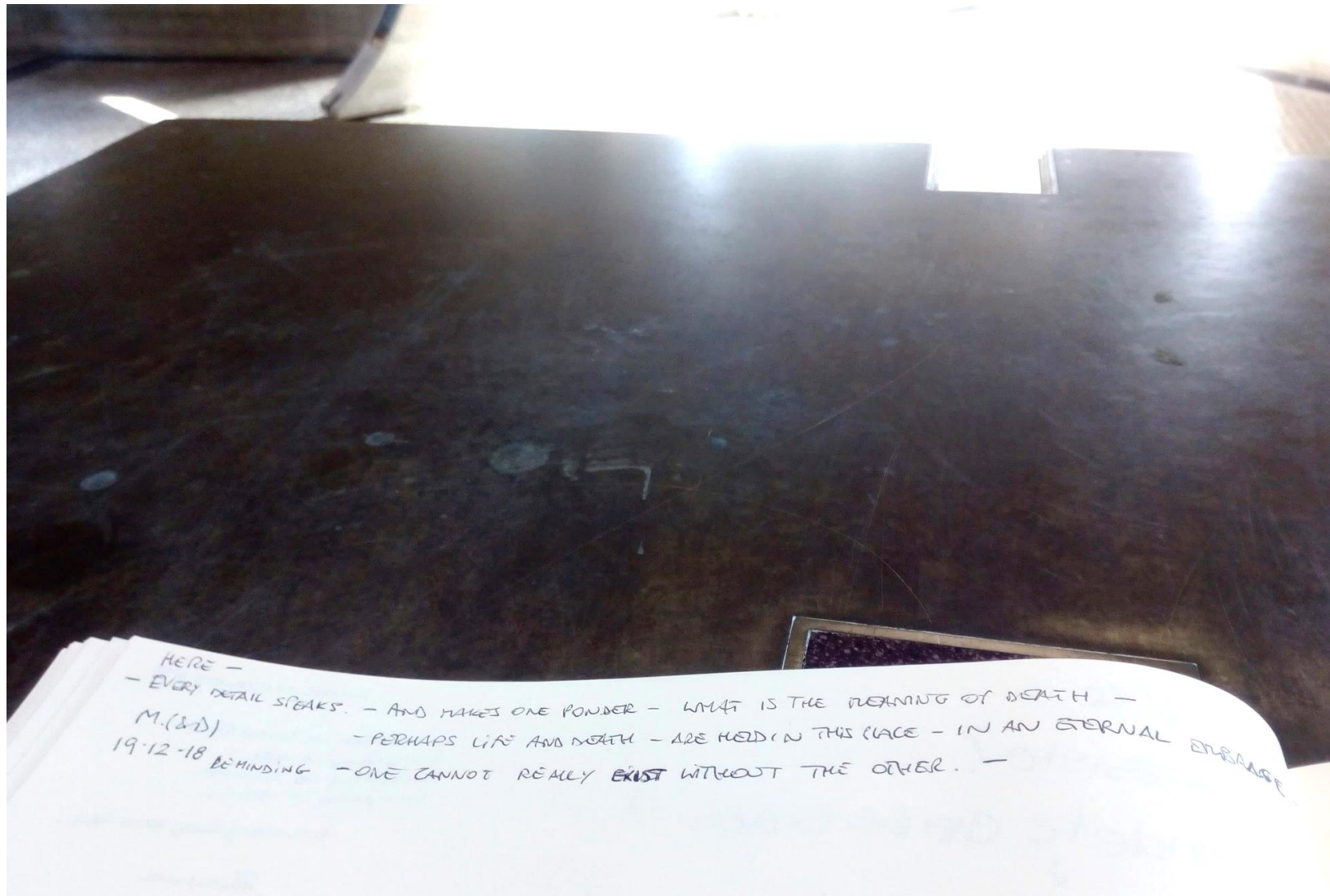


Figure 37 Comment in the visitors' guestbook, inside the Chapel of the Brion Cemetery

Frascardi also believes that ‘Architectural drawings then became metaphors, not in the literal meaning, but factually they are a metaphorein, a carry over, a moving of sensory information from one modality to another modality, from one emotion to another emotion’.³⁰⁶ This concept of “intertwined sensory perception” as well as the “carry over” concept is, once again, highlighted in the method of Scarpa. My study is interested in understanding how this synesthetic element, which can be present both in the architect’s method as well as in the experience of architecture, can help inform these two fields of investigation.

The visitors of the Brion Cemetery had several comments regarding the overall sense of peace. Some of them wrote in the guestbook: “Emotional. Vibrant. Pacifying”,³⁰⁷ “Poetic place, charged with silence”,³⁰⁸ “The return to quietness”,³⁰⁹ “Place where one reflects on the sense of life”.³¹⁰ The connections between a silent tangible space, a poetic vehicle and the psychosomatic benefits attached to it can be subtle, but significant.

Pietropoli and Anne-Catrin Schultz remark on the Water Pavilion: ‘This small building, like the entire Brion Memorial, can be considered an ideal machine for the mourning process. It does not provide solutions but offers the opportunity to search for them’. They continue: ‘Scarpa’s design exploration for the Water Pavilion is driven by the desire to suggest behaviors that lead to a heightened awareness of ourselves and our experiences free from external interference’.³¹¹ The Water Pavilion, emerges as a space for possibilities, and, if that includes mourning, that is also compatible with this space.

5.5.8 Silence and the possibility of encountering oneself

When discussing the Water Pavilion and Scarpa’s architecture, Pietropoli comments:

To give the possibility to someone who visits a work of architecture to be aware of their own experience is a gift that you (the architect) give to whoever visits your

³⁰⁶ Harry Francis Mallgrave, *The Architect's Brain* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), p.175.

³⁰⁷ Comment by a visitor on the Brion visitors’ guestbook, 2019.

³⁰⁸ Ibid.

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

³¹⁰ Guido Pietropoli and Anne-Catrin Schultz, ‘Standing or Sitting: The Water Pavilion at Carlo Scarpa’s Brion Memorial and its Restoration’, *Technology|Architecture + Design*, 6.1 (2022), 33-41, p. 39.

³¹¹ Ibid., p. 40.

architecture. Meaning, the moment that someone visits your architecture, they realise that they sit at the pavilion, and they can listen to their own breath” [...] Because the silence, the vision, the serenity has given them this possibility. This is a gift that was given by the architect. Therefore, the poet has gifted this possibility - for the person to encounter themselves.³¹²

Federica Goffi observes, while arguing for a connection between presence, slowness, and silence, in Scarpa’s work: ‘Silence is not “absence” of sound. It is a way to enhance “listening”. Silence is presence. Scarpa’s voids are also indicative of presence’.³¹³ She continues: ‘In Venice you can’t travel quickly you have to walk or take the boat [...] you need much more time [...] and it is a very slow time [...]’.³¹⁴ In the Brion Cemetery specifically, these concepts are present in specific parts of the project. The Water Pavilion is one of them. As mentioned previously, Scarpa explains... ‘The Pavilion I made for myself. I go there frequently and meditate’.³¹⁵ Dodds continues: ‘In the *Memoriæ Causa*, the absence of any photographs taken from or of the island further demonstrates the degree to which Scarpa personally identified with this locus and his desire for it to remain private’.³¹⁶ Stickley and Freshwater emphasize the importance of being in a therapeutic context and how it affects the person’s relation to self-awareness:

Everyone responds to silence in a different way. While some prefer silence for stillness, peacefulness, meditation or prayer, others fill their days with noise using a variety of media to provide a sense of companionship, such as telephones, conversation, and music. Some people crave silence, but others may feel discomforted by it. Our relationship with silence therefore will inevitably affect the way we treat silence in our relationships. While ‘noisy’ workers seek to fill every moment of their

³¹² Dawn Freshwater, ‘The Poetics of Space: Researching the Concept of Spatiality Through Relationality’, *Psychodynamic Practice*, 11.2 (2015), p. 186.

³¹³ Federica Goffi, ‘Carlo Scarpa and the Eternal Canvas of Silence’, *Architectural Research Quarterly*, 10.3-4 (2006), 291-300, p.295.

³¹⁴ Ibid.

³¹⁵ George Dodds and Robert Tavernor, *Body and Building* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2005), p.251.

³¹⁶ Ibid.

work with people, perhaps fearing the consequences of silence, ‘peaceful’ workers may strive to create tranquility and calm in their relationships.³¹⁷

During the interviews, one student noted that the Brion Cemetery is “Poetic, calm, quiet [...] Maybe a romantic as well” ,whereas, in the visitors’ guestbook, one visitor wrote: “A place of silence, meditation, stupendous work”.³¹⁸ I would say that the Water Pavilion, through its poetic qualities ,contributes to the above mentioned effect and assessments of space.

It can have an intense effect while holding a safe space. Silence and mechanisms which elicit presence contribute to the creation of an emancipatory and empowering poetic architectural experience towards self-awareness.

At this point, I would like to bring to the surface two separate moments that capture the possibility of reflection at the Water Pavilion: one photographic, and one from the drawings of the archives. The two were produced with a distance of four decades. However, it was a beautiful moment in the study for me, in terms of symbolism.

Even though there are apparent differences (in the drawing there are two figures, in the photograph only one), and the interpreted emotion is slightly different, what was of significance to me is observing the human figure sitting , embracing their own thoughts, at the Water Pavilion. Lost in their thoughts, in a space that allows those emotions to unfold, uninterruptedly. In Scarpa’s drawing (Figure 40), the figure has her head down, arms crossed, and a feeling of sadness on the face-perhaps mourning. In the photograph (Figure 39), which was taken by me, during an on-site visit with students, the student was sitting quietly, not moving, gazing across the Water Pavilion, through the water, towards the landscape, which, from that point of view, encapsulates the couple’s tombs.

The Water Pavilion, specifically, with its direct relation and exposure to natural elements and its strategic positioning in the Brion Cemetery, alludes to connections between a silent tangible space, a poetic vehicle and the psychosomatic benefits attached to it.

³¹⁷ Theodore Stickley and Dawn Freshwater, ‘The Concept of Space in the Context of the Therapeutic Relationship’, *Mental Health Practice*, 12.6 (2009), 28-30, p. 28.

³¹⁸ Interview with a student, 2018.

Io credo che sia l'ARTE
 che si fa origine in
 Realtà del mondo ~
 è lo sforzo del nuovo dalle
 origini a fatto di dare con le
 forme a se stesso il suo
 esistere.

gli animali - la struttura
 gli architetti - la forma
 onde de via e l'istesso

arte
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Figure 38 Note by Carlo Scarpa



Figure 39 Student sitting inside the Water Pavilion

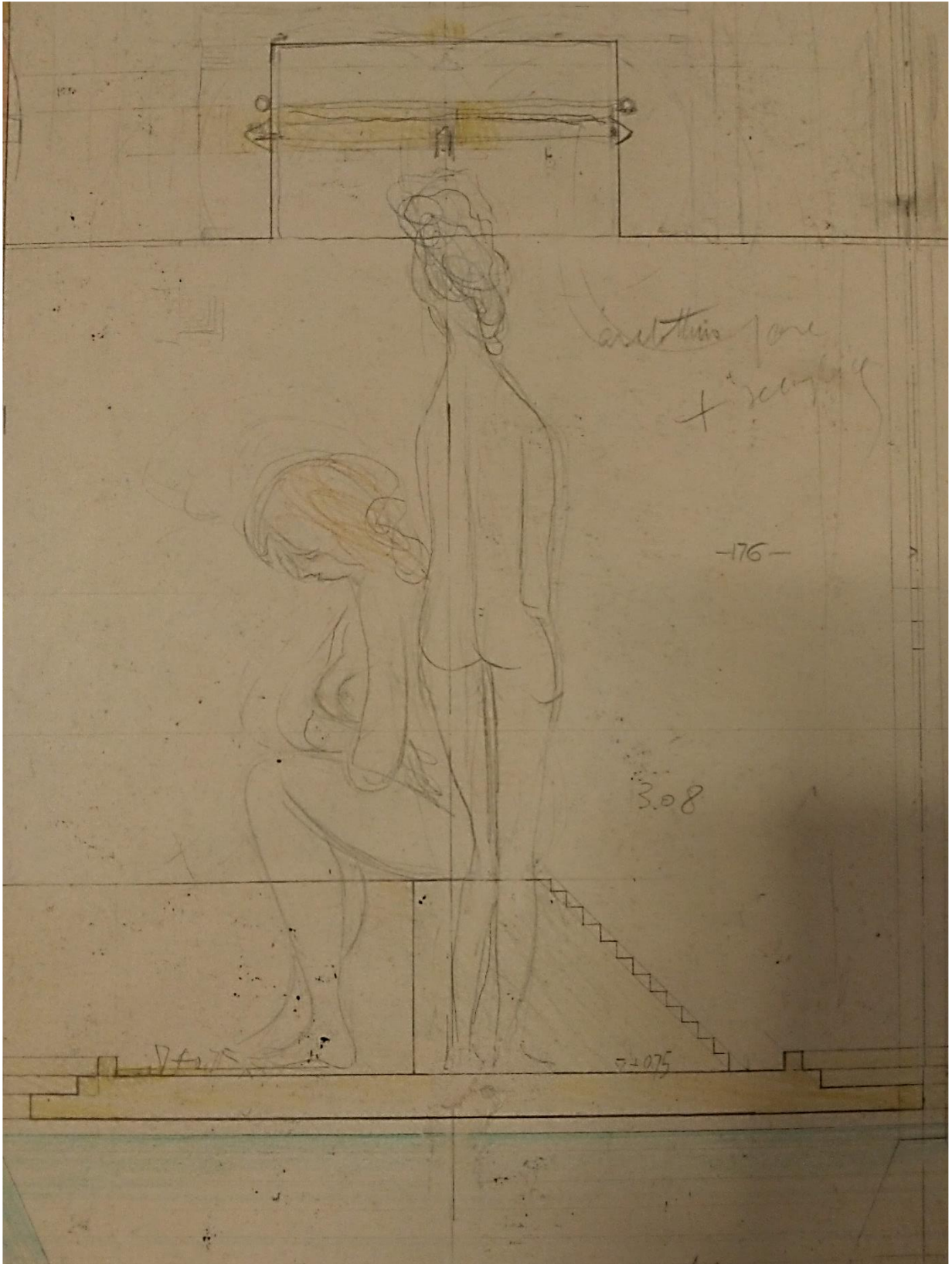


Figure 40 Excerpt from drawing found at archives: Two figures at the Pavilion, one standing and one sitting and having a sad expression

5.6 CONCLUSION

To conclude, the Water Pavilion at the Brion Cemetery stands as an oasis of pause. Yet the serenity present at the Brion, holds a space for the visitor. It is vibrant and still, at the same time ,yet full of possibilities. As one sits at the Water Pavilion their bodies, minds and hearts are allowed to shift from a visual prose to visual verse. From my own experience of the Brion Cemetery, the students' interviews and observations, the archival material and visitors' guestbook, as well as the interview with Pietropoli, it becomes clear how the Water Pavilion supports a sense of self-awareness.

In this sense, the Water Pavilion is poetic and can assist in a sense of wellbeing. Jack Leedy comments, as part of his insights on Poetry Therapy:

Poetic work, thanks to its beauty, in which therapeutic power resides, as well as through deep and torrid aesthetic emotions caused by reading or writing the poetry, leads to self-understanding as well as understanding of other people and subsequently enables autopsychotherapy³¹⁹

CHAPTER 6: ARCOSOLIUM

6.1 INTRODUCTION

6.1.1 Aims and arguments

This chapter focuses on the third and last of the three tangible examples that the thesis explores at the Brion Cemetery. After the exploration of the Water Pavilion if one turns to their left and after entering the Propylaea there is the Arcosolium. The chapter aligns with the main hypothesis of the thesis, which is that the Arcosolium supports wellbeing by providing a space that supports the concept of reframing.

³¹⁹ Wiktor Czernianin, 'Catharsis in Poetry Therapy', *Polish Journal of Applied Psychology*, 12 (2013), 25-38, p.29.



Figure 41 Plants inside the water pond, at the Water Pavilion

Similarly with the previous chapter, it also applies intersections between the three fields of knowledge -Architecture, Poetry, and Wellbeing - demonstrates which themes connected to spatial experience are present and connects them to wellbeing.

6.1.2 Main psychological theme explored

The chapter argues that the Arcosolium is at the center of reframing as a psychological experience. This proposal is correlated by examining first-person, existential, and hermeneutical material related to the Arcosolium, and focuses on transformative elements in the spatial experience which lead to reframing as a psychological reaction. The other key emerging themes (death and love as universal experiences and emotions) will be explored under this theme, as subthemes. All of them will be referred to the main event which takes place at the Arcosolium: the death of the Brion couple. The proposal is supported by analysis of primary materials (the guestbook, interviews, photography, observations, and archival material).

6.1.3 Chapter structure

The chapter begins with a summary of the thesis' methodology and presents a triangulation of first-person, existential and hermeneutical material for analysis. As mentioned in Chapter 4, this is followed by a subjective narrative with reference to Gaston Bachelard and Jane Rendell's writings. Lastly, in line with all the chapters of the three tangible moments in space (Chapter 4,5, and 6) experiences and descriptions of the Arcosolium from first-person, existential, and hermeneutical sources are compared to establish common themes, forming the basis of the focus on reframing.

6.2 METHODS

6.2.1 Theoretical framework, data collection and data analysis

The approach is always in line with the first-person, existential, and hermeneutical³²⁰ phenomenological research methodology, proposed by David Seamon, in the same manner that it is used for the Propylaea and the Water Pavilion.

The effects of the Arcosolium, as perceived through the first-hand experience, shared experiences, and the hermeneutics of interpreting original Scarpa archival material, is analysed through the lens of Poetry Therapy and insights from Mental Health and Psychology fields. First-hand material include personal observations, following a visit to the Cemetery, and personal photography of the Cemetery. Existential materials used for this analysis comprise excerpts from interviews with architectural students, following a visit to the Cemetery, and excerpts from an interview with Guido Pietropoli (Carlo Scarpa's assistant). Hermeneutical materials comprise drawings and notes from the Centro Carlo Scarpa archives, writings by visitors in the Brion Cemetery visitors' guestbook. As with other chapters, NVivo was used as an organisational tool and out of the triangulation of data for the Arcosolium.

6.2.2 Writing

The personal and subjective tone of writing draws on Jane Rendell's *Writing Architecture*, and poetic analysis references the phenomenological approach by Gaston Bachelard in *Poetics of Space*. Also, in line with the phenomenological approach in Gaston Bachelard's *Poetics of Space*, poetic excerpts and/or quotations are brought into the writing, whenever they are considered appropriate, to express something which is difficult to be expressed otherwise. Further analysis is provided in Chapter 4, as the approach is identical in all three tangible examples (Chapter 4,5, and 6).

³²⁰ David Wang and Linda N. Groat, *Architectural Research Methods* (Hoboken: J. Wiley, 2013), p.228.

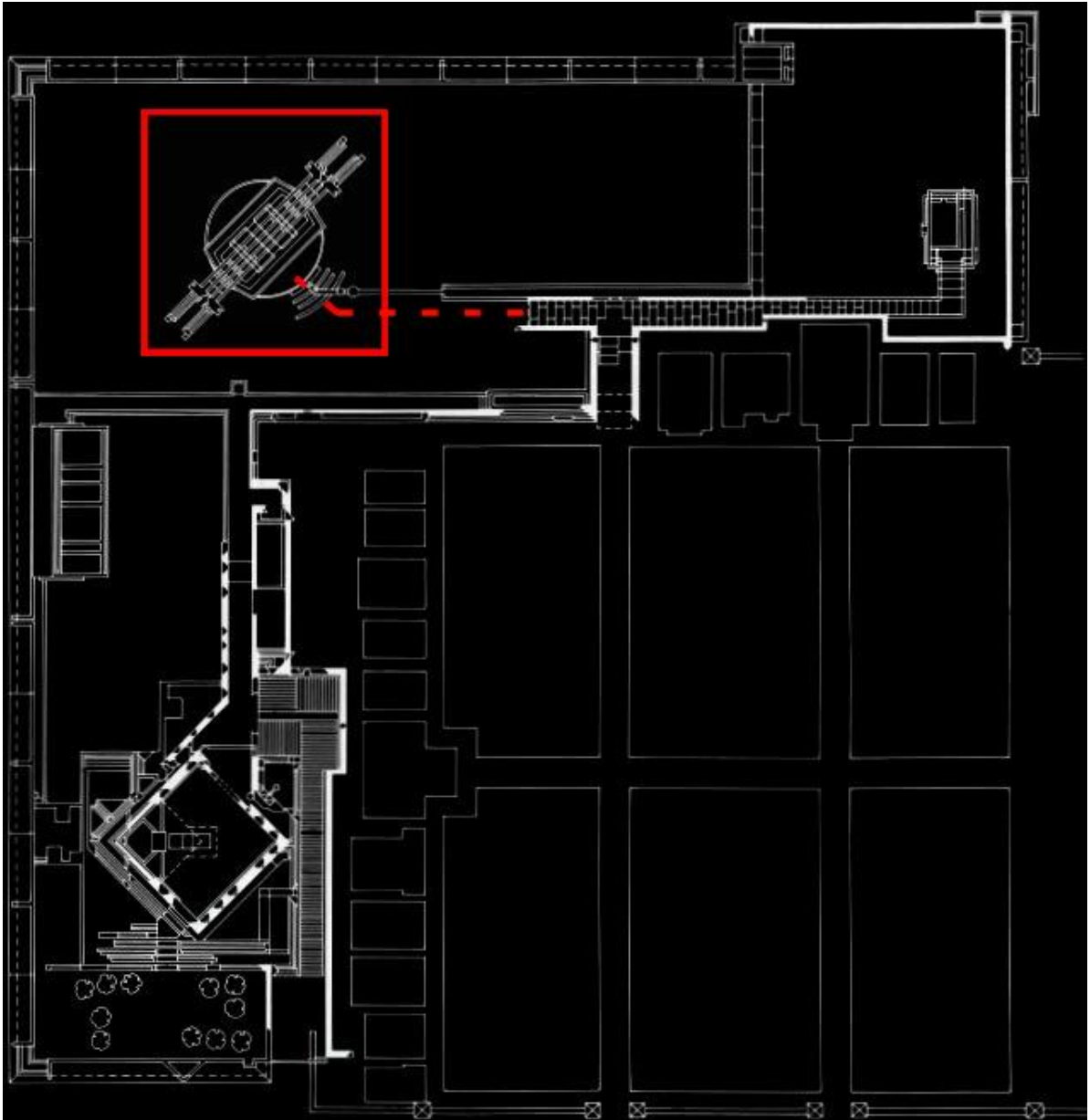


Figure 42 Map of the Brion Cemetery. The square highlights the location of the Arcosolium. The dashed line highlights the path trail described. Digitally edited version, by author, based on the Brion Cemetery map by Peter Buchanan, in "Garden of Death and Dreams," Architectural Review, 179 (1985), 54-59

6.3 FIRST-PERSON EXPERIENCE

6.3.1 From the shadow of the Propylaea to the openness of the garden

Poets have revealed themselves and have analysed (the human) condition long before human behaviour was conceptualised as a science. The poet entices participation. In effect, he says, ‘Here are my sorrows and my joys, my hopes, and my fears. It pleases me to share them with you. If you see yourself in the mirror of my art and feel comforted or strengthened, follow me.’³²¹

In this spirit of participation, let’s participate and start our walk towards the Arcosolium, i.e., the burial space, where the sarcophagi, the tombs of Onorina and Giuseppe Brion, are placed. The Arcosolium, named by Scarpa, refers to the ancient Roman catacombs, and burial places.

As I leave the entrance of the Propylaea, from the sheltered, and more introverted space where the intersecting circles are found (Figure 44), I am confronted with a revealing landscape. Even on a rainy day, devoid of sunlight, the garden opening in front of me, provides a feeling of openness. My eyes receive a generous portion of the sky, and, suddenly there in one of the corners, stands the couple’s burial space. Leaving the Propylaea, the vision sharpens. There is a change of paving as I step out of the sheltered space of the entrance, and I walk into the grass. I get the feeling I can move around in any direction. As I approach the couple’s burial space, I see a place which is slightly immersed in the ground; attention is immediately drawn to the structure where the couple lies. Like in an amphitheatre, I can walk and descend through a gradual lowering of the ground, in a step-like manner- to reach a circular platform where the two sarcophagi are placed, one next to the other.

³²¹ Diana Hedges, *Poetry, Therapy and Emotional Life* (CRC Press: 2015), p. 63.



Figure 43 Standing in the corridor of the Propylaea, looking towards the garden and the Arcosolium

6.3.2 Memories and first impressions

The first time I set my eyes on the Arcosolium, in real life (not in books), was in 2015. When it comes to the Arcosolium, I can only recall one picture, clearly from memory, as a landscape painting: standing in the garden and looking at the Arcosolium, at a distance of 5 m approximately. As the day was sunny and pleasant and I was in company, it was overall a less focused experience. There was observation, but also distractions and discussions. However, the taste that the experience left me with was the same with the following visits: the couple's sarcophagi were an experience which somehow "resolved" the emotion of death, its sadness. The theme of this reframing of the experience is examined throughout the thesis. It felt like a completion, an ending of a circle. Death didn't seem tragic, despite its heaviness. The experience felt like a reconciliation of this wound of reality. The couple seems content, for they are together now. In fact, it almost seems like they are welcoming the visitor, as if to say: "Come, see what we see. Come rest, enjoy the garden, sit with us for a while". I didn't feel that I had to respect death, my emotions were not stiffened in endless formality. Death is around me, right in front of my eyes in fact, but in its most gentle presence. There is more life in this Cemetery than in most spaces created for the living these days – a strange emotion to witness as a person and an architect. The two sarcophagi are leaning towards each other (Figure 45) - it is hard not to soften or smile at this sight, and it was difficult for me not to feel a warmth in my heart. I felt the pull between the two - they are in conversation, and if one wants, they can join them, but if not, it seems to me that they will "not mind". I didn't feel death pushed on me, as a narrative - a paradox. The presentation is very raw, two sarcophagi, not buried in the ground, but in front of the visitor, yet the emotions are peaceful. This theme of peace and rest is one that will also be discussed throughout the chapter.



Figure 44 The Arcosolium, as viewed from the garden ahead of it

6.3.3 The Brion Couple

The Arcosolium is a monumental sight, one that stops me and makes me want to observe. This sight becomes defined by both its materiality but also its form; a concrete arch, embracing a circular enclosure which surrounds the two sarcophagi. The sarcophagi positioned together, sheltered, and standing in the centre. Yet, in its monumentality, there is a note, which plays off tune, given the a priori sad purpose of its existence: here, in the cradle of death, there is humour, playfulness, tenderness, and most importantly, perhaps, a celebration. The couple's love and connection also become a vehicle for the message. I can walk around them and in the in-between space between the sarcophagi. I can see their names written on the sarcophagi.

"So why the leaning towards one another"? I am thinking. This is where the poetic starts. Poetry is not prose, it is not a literal representation of reality and if it were, it would lose all its power. Poetry is the opening of a space where possibilities can be explored, as well as the emotions and the realisations attached to them, the memories, and the joint humanity, which unites people. It is a vehicle towards something, and not the destination. It is the adventure, the exploration that sets the mind towards new lands and mental landscapes. This space is not only a reminder of death, but also of life's length as well as of the encounters within it and its potential. And if one is careful enough, they will notice: on the wooden surface of both the sarcophagi, there it is again; the symbol that I see as the first thing upon entering the Cemetery: two small intersecting circles – once again, a reminder of the couples' love and intertwined fates. I walk around, in a circle. Then, in one of my visits, looking up, I notice the pattern of colourful tiles that decorate the roof of the Arcosolium: again, one can touch them. Beautiful (and at that time, partly destroyed revealing their texture) tiles. I raise my fingers to trace the surface. Ranalli remarks: 'There is almost a primal desire to touch the surface. We are moved first to our senses rather than our intellect.'³²²

It is one of the many details. I observe how I feel protected here, as I move around the two strangers. To me it always felt like a personal experience. I am not sure why I feel so comfortable here. But I do. The humour helps. Interestingly, there is no one to guard this place. And despite the heavy flow of visitors on some days, there are many times when one might find themselves completely alone. The space, despite its beautiful architecture and use

³²² G. Ranalli, 'Brion-Vega Cemetery, San Vito di Altivole', *Progressive Architecture* (1981), p.30.

of precious materials, can feel very informal. One of my observations focuses on the fact that the warmth of the wood at the sarcophagi is giving off a natural element, as if they are brought back to life, metaphorically. Near the tombs I record myself feeling emotional. I am witnessing a couple's death and I feel part of their narrative, connected to them, even if I do not know them personally. I can imagine or project thoughts, I can absorb a bit of their sadness but also their joy. I feel psychologically protected here. Ultimately, when I find myself in the space, I cannot help but be involved, once again in the visceral experience of being so close to something so unknown and yet known to humanity. It can be an emotional experience, but also a joyful or peaceful one. Perhaps one that can help integrate parts of the subconscious.

6.3.4 The tree as a participant

Another memory I have is one which relates to the tree behind the Arcosolium (Figure 46). It is positioned behind the Arcosolium, and I find out there is an opening behind its heavy leaves, when I move the branches. It is almost like a cave, where one cannot be seen easily from the outside, and I feel protected. There, I stand in solitude, and more protected than any other place in the Cemetery: strangely, not an architectural creation. I remember sitting there, almost in the company of the couple, but in a more intimate way, silent and almost like sharing a secret. They are not there in the flesh, and I am "not there", at least not seen by anyone else. But I feel connected in a way, two strangers and their story becomes my way of accessing and being emboldened to think of certain issues, away from the noise of everyday spaces which chip away from one's individuality, day by day, and away from sacred and celebrated places which always demand something from us.



Figure 45 View of the back of the Arcosolium from the tree behind it

6.3.5 Poetic viewpoint and reflections

If one stands behind the tombs, in the corner of the Cemetery behind the Arcosolium, they can also see the totality of it. I notice how my attention becomes more scattered here, I notice things around, there is a lot to observe, as a landscape. In one of my recordings, as I observe this view, instinctively mutter to myself: “this is a poem”.

There are plenty of instances when the architect is grasping my attention with incomprehensible patterns. For example, there is a group of symbols, on top of the Arcosolium, which seems quite peculiar (Figure 51). I do not know what it is, and the significant part is that not knowing does not change anything for me. The symbols and the forms become so expressive in a way that they become metaphors, riddles for the visitor to solve. Again, like a poem, it is not necessary to know what the poet means.

6.3.6 Young visitors

During one of my personal visits, in April, 2019, I had a chance encounter with another very young visitor, who appeared out of nowhere and was immersed in their own little bubble of thoughts. While I was standing in the garden, in front of the sarcophagi, taking photographs, on a quiet sunny afternoon, I noticed a fast-moving figure entering the Cemetery from the secondary entrance and moving towards the area where I was standing. I stopped, turned, and looked. What I saw was a young child, holding a mobile phone and walking towards the Arcosolium. She almost did not look around at all and seemed that she knew the space very well. The child quickly walked past me, casually hopped over the water line/pond, (stemming from the Water Pavilion and ending at the sarcophagi) and disappeared behind the Arcosolium, perhaps to sit in a corner in peace to look at her phone.

During another sunny afternoon visit, and while the Cemetery was quiet, a child with their dog came to visit the Brion Cemetery. The dog was a playful puppy that played in the grass. I chatted with the child for a while. After a brief talk about the puppy, I left them to their walk. It was a sunny day and the whole space felt like a good place to come to, for a walk with a dog. Ultimately, it has the potential to be a space for learning, reflection, rest, but also, perhaps...laugh and play.

6.3.7 Personal realisations throughout the years

My experience at the Brion Cemetery (from the 2015 pre-PhD visit, to my last one during my studies) suggests that Scarpa's approach to the design of the Arcosolium supports wellbeing by presenting itself as accessible, and by presenting human events in a manner that feels fresh, surprising, and tender. Overall, my continuous perception of being there was that those emotions (sometimes charged and difficult— such as those surrounding death), are not only expressed through the architecture but encouraged to be expressed by the visitor. The next section introduces the collection and analysis of primary materials through interviews, observations, archival material, and visitors' guestbook to demonstrate the effects that the Arcosolium has on visitors. An explanation of the methods that were used and the outcomes of the analysis for the Arcosolium are presented.

6.4 DATA ANALYSIS

6.4.1 Introduction

In this subchapter the analysis of each data set is presented. This is in line with the structure of Chapter 4 and follows the exact same rationale. Therefore, to avoid repetition, the thesis will be referring to Chapter 4 for the specifics and analysis of each method and will be only including the analysis of the primary materials. In the previous section the subjective experience at the Arcosolium was analysed. As mentioned previously, this one includes, according to Seamon's phenomenological methodological categorization, presented in Chapter four: a. first-person (personal photography & photography), b. existential (interviews with architectural students, on-site observations of architectural students, and conversation with Pietropoli) and c. hermeneutical (archival material and on-site visitors' guestbook).



Figure 46 Standing between the two sarcophagi of the couple, at the Arcosolium

The analysis of all the primary materials has highlighted themes which revolve around a transformational element as a core psychological theme, love and death and emotions, as well as the involvement of the body, senses, materiality, and natural elements. The last two themes will be further analysed in Chapter 7 (Discussion Chapter), along with insights of the same themes from the other two tangible moments in the space: (Propylaea and Arcosolium).

6.4.2 First - hand

6.4.2.1 Photography:

From my own photography of the Arcosolium, the following themes have emerged:

- Architectural Details/Materiality of the Arcosolium: (44)
- Landscape and garden (35)
- Perimeter wall: (25)
- Natural elements (trees/plants, rain, water): (25)
- Human figures interacting: (4)

6.4.2.2 Personal observations

Below are the themes that were identified, from personal observations:

- Viewpoint of Arcosolium: (3)
- Symbolism: (2)
- Love: (1)
- Protection: (1)
- Poetry: (1)
- Warmth: (1)
- Emotion – sadness: (1)

6.4.3 Existential

6.4.3.1 Students' Interviews

Themes from students' interviews:

- Shift in expectations: (5)
- Couple mentions: (4)
- Celebration: (2)
- Love: (1)
- Sense of comfort: (1)
- Senses: (1)
- Reflections on death: (1)
- Symbolism: (1)
- Uplift: (1)
- Connection: (1)
- Heaviness of emotion: (1)
- Sense of monument (1)
- Poetic: (1)
- Emotionally moving: (1)

6.4.3.2 Students' Observations:

- From the collected data, no relevant information was present

6.4.4 Interview with Guido Pietropoli

Themes from Pietropoli conversation:

- Role of natural elements (plants) in mourning – expressiveness: (1)
- Arcosolium as a preview of the Cemetery in the entrance: (1)

- In relation to Water Pavilion – path connecting and its purpose, in service of serenity: (1)

6.4.5 Hermeneutical

6.4.5.1 Archival material

Out of the archival materials, overall, the following themes were identified:

Archive text

- Rest: (1)
- Transformative: (1)

Archive drawings

- Materiality, details, architecture: (5)
- Plants: (2)
- Expression of emotion: (1)

6.4.5.2 Guestbook

For the Arcosolium, the following themes were identified:

- From sad to uplifting, celebratory, or healing nature of the Cemetery, connected to death, goodbye and loss: (4)
- Love: (3)
- Homage to the Brions: (3)
- Death: (2)
- Beauty: (2)
- Mentions of eternity: (2)

- Materiality and architectural observations: (2)
- Memory: (1)
- Rest: (1)
- Silence: (1)
- Reflection: (1)
- Observations about weather and natural elements: (1)
- Thank you messages: (1)

6.4.6 Sum of Data – Triangulation

Collating all the materials from first-person, existential, and hermeneutical sources of experiences and documents of the Arcosolium, the following common themes emerge as the most frequent (mentioned above five times) :

- Architectural/Tangible (77)
- Plants & Natural Elements (64)
- Transformative / Shift – change in perception: (10)
- Universal experiences – Love & Death: (8)
- Body / Senses (6)
- Emotions: (6)

From the correlation of the primary research, the most mentioned themes connected to emotional or psychological reactions were the ones relating to transformational elements, which evoke shifts in perception. Following this, love and death emerged as key themes and universal life experiences and emotions.

The thesis makes a clear distinction between the specificities of an experience and the universality of an experience as a concept. More specifically, it looks into themes that are universal, such as death, life, love.

These are universal realities of life. The specificities of the interpretation of these concepts depend mainly on context. At the Arcosolium all three themes are present and the space offers itself to relevant explorations.

Other prominent themes related to the Arcosolium which emerged from the triangulation of primary data (the body & senses, and natural elements & the landscape) are discussed in the following Discussion Chapter, as they are common in all the three tangible examples. The chapter analyses the three first categories, as separate sections, which are considered to be related to each other and they all refer to the core psychological theme, which is the concept of reframing.

6.5 CORE PSYCHOLOGICAL THEME: REFRAMING

6.5.1 Context: Death at the Brion Cemetery

6.5.1.1 Death and burial places

When discussing cemeteries, inevitably one subject comes to mind: death. Death is a subject that has concerned human beings for millennia. From neolithic burial structures to the Pharaonic pyramids, to the 20th century cemeteries one might encounter in Italy, where the Brion Cemetery is found, humans have been building edifices to hold space for the event of death. From ancient myths in several cultures, Gods representing death, across cultures and religions, there is a fascination with the topic. However, the interpretations, customs and traditions vary. Lewis Mumford writes:

Early man's respect for the dead, itself an expression of fascination with his powerful images of daylight fantasy and nightly dream, perhaps had an even greater role than more practical needs in causing him to seek a fixed meeting place and eventually a continuous settlement. Mid the uneasy wanderings of paleolithic man, the dead were the first to have a permanent dwelling: a cavern, a mound marked by a cairn, a collective barrow. These were the landmarks to which the living probably returned at intervals, to commune with or placate the ancestral spirits³²³.

³²³ Paul L. Alt, 'Sacred Space and the Healing Journey', *Annals of Palliative Medicine*, 6.3 (2017), 284-296, p. 288.

There is no one-fits-all philosophy around what death is, whether there is an afterlife or not, and how it should be viewed. The only thing one knows for sure, as mortal creatures, is that death is an event that, in a biological sense, they will all experience. One not specific to the human species - animals, plants and all living organisms experience it. The thesis makes a premise to explore the common experience and the relation one might have with it, through an architectural experience, but neither does it claim to offer an answer, nor does it embrace a specific philosophy around the matter. This would be outside of the scope and not related to the research question of the study. As with other aspects of the thesis, the phenomenological theoretical framework that is being followed does not claim to evidence commonalities as to the “why,” but rather to the “what”. On the contrary, it aims to evidence that a variety of experiences is possible at the Brion Cemetery, based on the contextual background of each visitor and their own psychological make up. This leaves the necessary room for interpretation, which is needed, as it is visited by people of all ages, backgrounds and cultures from all over the world. The study focuses on the Cemetery as a burial place for death. It does not refer to memorials which hold a severe historical significance such as crimes against humanity. Lastly, at the Brion Cemetery, and more specifically at the Arcosolium, it is not only death that is being addressed, but also life and love, too.

6.5.1.2 Context for the Brion Cemetery

To understand the historical and cultural context of when and where the Cemetery was built, one must investigate the Italian tradition of cemeteries. Hannah Malone describes:

The construction of large, public burial grounds on the outskirts of many Italian cities coincided with a redistribution of power from religious to public authorities, which resulted partly from Napoleonic legislation of the early 1800s prohibiting burial within urban boundaries. From the early nineteenth century, monumental cemeteries emerged across Italy that were radically different from earlier graveyards in that they were secular and publicly owned, and embodied a substantial architectural framework that was funded by public investment³²⁴.

³²⁴ Hannah Malone, 'Secularisation, Anticlericalism and Cremation within Italian Cemeteries of the Nineteenth Century', *Modern Italy*, 19.4 (2014), 385-403, p. 385.

Furthermore, it is significant to understand the context in which Scarpa operates, and how closely the Brion Cemetery is tied to one tradition and, at the same time, to an eclectic selection of elements from different traditions. The Cemetery, built at the San Vito D' Altivole, a small village in northern Italy, near Venice, in the Veneto region, is located next to and engulfs the community cemetery.

In her article *The Italian Way of Death*, Linda J. Cook discusses the Brion Cemetery in the context of Italian cemeteries, as two examples of funerary architecture created by world renowned Italian Architects: Aldo Rossi and Carlo Scarpa.³²⁵ Different in philosophy, yet both share a monumentality. Scarpa gave up the commission for the Modena Cemetery, which was then materialized by Rossi.³²⁶ She observes:

In the last 15 years, numerous significant new cemeteries have been built, among them Parabita, in Puglia, designed by Anselmi and Chiatante of Studio G.R.A.U.; Altilia, in Calabria, also by Anselmi; and new city burial grounds in Mantova, Pisa, Rome, Venice and Milan. The two projects that have garnered the most attention, however, are the addition to the Cemetery of San Cataldo in Modena by Aldo Rossi, and the addition of the Brion family tombs to the town cemetery in San Vito D'Altivole by Carlo Scarpa.³²⁷

However, Venice is home to a cemetery which, I would say, most definitely played a role, even subconsciously, in Scarpa's modus operandi at the Brion: the Cemetery of the San Michele island, which emerged in 1835, when the San Cristoforo della Pace and the San Michele island were joined and has been the central space where the dead are buried.³²⁸ Beverly Frank observes:

³²⁵ Linda J. Cook, 'The Italian Way of Death', *Landscape Architecture Magazine*, 81.2 (1991), 66-69, p. 66.

³²⁶ P. L. Nicolini, 'La Sua Opera Più Importante. Carlo Scarpa: Cimitero-Tomba a S. Vito d'Altivole', *Lotus International*, 38 (1983), p. 45.

³²⁷ Linda J. Cook, 'The Italian Way of Death', *Landscape Architecture Magazine*, 81.2 (1991), 66-69, p. 66.

³²⁸ David Navarro Moreno, Maria Jose Muñoz Mora, and Stefano Zaggia, 'Silent Cities Visualization. The Case Study of the Main Cemetery of Padua the Cemetery Island of San Michele in Venice: Preliminary Reflections', *Advanced Technologies for Historical Cities Visualisation*, 11.21 (2018), p. 4.9.



Figure 47 Colourful tiles on the ceiling of the Arcosolium



Figure 48 The Arcosolium on a sunny day, surrounded by plants and flowers. In the background, there is the skyline of the San Vito D' Altivole village and the mountains behind

Having designed tombs in the cemetery island of San Michele, Scarpa was aware of the allegorical significance of crossing the water after death and, especially, its ritual significance in the funeral rites of Venice. These concepts are poetically articulated in his handling of a series of spaces where water alternates between reflective surface, path, submerged structure, and threshold³²⁹

The Brion Cemetery is characterized in various manners. It is indeed a cemetery, but it is also a monument, meaning it takes on sculptural, expressive elements and there is artistic license that manifests in it. Buchanan writes:

Architecture? Sculpture? Literature? The unclassifiable nature of Carlo Scarpa's cemetery for the Brion family and the fragmented, highly personal vocabulary of forms-led many architects and critics to admire it, yet simultaneously dismiss it as a beautiful but much too mannered irrelevance. Now, nearly a decade and a half after completion, its enchantments seem more potent and topical than ever. Instead of Modernism's abstract and immaterial concerns with concept and space, here is physical mess and sensual matter. And, without resorting to a figurative vocabulary, here is a powerful commemorative monument that is both a meditation on death and an evocation of a particular magical city, Venice, birthplace, and home of Scarpa.³³⁰

6.5.1.3 Scarpa's Cemetery

But where does Carlo Scarpa fit within the Italian tradition of architecture when he built it? It has been argued that it is particularly hard to characterise Scarpa's architecture and classify it in the architectural movements of the time. Michael Cadwell remarks:

His attentive detailing countered the banal expediences of late modernism and the superficial excesses of postmodernism. His delft interventions into historic buildings rebuked late modernism's self-righteous bulldozings and postmodernism's trite

³²⁹ L. Beverly Frank, 'Water Shapes: The Influence of Water on the Architectural Philosophy of Carlo Scarpa', *Seeking the City*, p. 916.

³³⁰ Peter Buchanan, 'Garden of Death and Dreams', *Architectural Review*, 179 (1985), 54-59, p.54.

panderings. His insistence upon the phenomenological countered the linguistic bias of prevailing architectural theory. Finally, his marginal professional status seemed to provide an authentic alternative to the corporate entanglements of the architectural status quo.³³¹

Venice holds a special place in Scarpa's heart and acts as a lifelong influence. A brief description of his lifelong relationship to the city is described by Dean Hawkes:

Carlo Scarpa (1906-4978) spent the whole of his working life in Venice, the city of his birth, or in the surrounding region of the Veneto. When he was two years old his family moved to Vicenza, the city of Palladio, where he came to know the countryside around the city, with its remarkable villas. Following the death of his mother in 1919, the family moved back to Venice, where Scarpa received his diploma at the Accademia Reale di Belle Arte in 1926. He remained in Venice until 1962, when he moved home and office to the beautiful hill town of Asolo, near Treviso, working both in architectural practice and as a teacher at the school of architecture, Istituto Universitario di Architettura di Venezia, where he became a full professor in 1964. In 1972, he became head of the architectural faculty and moved once more, this time again to Vicenza, where he lived and worked until his death while on a visit to Sandai in Japan in 1978.³³²

This relationship manifests itself in various manners and architectural details. Francesco Dal Co and Mazzariol state: 'The sensitivity Scarpa reveals in, for instance, his treatment of light and its handling of colour tones is the outcome of...his profound affinities with Venice'³³³

His vast historical influences are evident in several ways. Dal Co and Mazzariol observe:

No, he was a synthesis of attitudes of, as we have suggested, both an incredible antiquity, older than the Medieval, and incredible modernity (he was capable of condensing cities and epochs into a tomb in the Treviso countryside, into an

³³¹ Michael Cadwell, *Strange Details* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2007), p.4.

³³² Dean Hawkes, *Environmental Imagination* (London: Routledge, 2008), p. 111.

³³³ Francesco Dal Co and Giuseppe Mazzariol, *Carlo Scarpa* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), p. 112

architecture that is already in itself its own meta-architecture, the achieved analysis of its own text).³³⁴

Venice is a melt pot of cultures and influences. Furthermore, his long-standing admiration of Japanese architecture manifests at the Brion Cemetery as well, as several scholars have analysed. This includes Japanese art, calligraphy, and poetry.³³⁵ He once stated that Japan had ‘a strong influence’ on him.³³⁶ But not only that, influences came from other fields as well. George Dodds says:

In addition to the painterly undercurrent in Scarpa’s work, the design for the Brion project was also influenced by his study of literature. In commenting on the design process and the locale, he cited a number of key works of literature upon which he reflected while designing the project. These include the garden landscapes of Francesco Colonna’s *Hypernotomachia Poliphili*, where the chaste body of Polia is pursued in the dream of Poliphilo; the garden of Professor Canteral in Raymond Roussel’s *Locus Solus*, where preserved bodies float in a strange and magical watery substance called *acqua micans*; and the funereal landscapes of Edmondo De Amicis whose picturesque cemeteries are inhabited by young maidens eating and drinking (De Amicis 1896, 92-93 and 99). In all of these visual and textual narratives the body – typically the female body situated in a landscape or garden – figures prominently. This may help explain why the design drawings for the Brion sanctuary, more than any of Scarpa’s other projects, abound with images of nude females. Although these images often appear somewhat ghostlike, they reflect the manner in which Scarpa imagined the living body physically engaging the Brion sanctuary, both directly and as a site from which to view a distant idealized landscape.³³⁷

³³⁴ Francesco Dal Co and Giuseppe Mazzariol, *Carlo Scarpa* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), p. 10.

³³⁵ Stefano Baldassari, *Italia e Giappone a confronto: Cultura, Psicologia, Arti*, (Firenze: Angelo Pontecorboli Editore, 2016) p.35.

³³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

³³⁷ George Dodds and Robert Tavernor, *Body and Building* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2005), p.15.

Perhaps there is also a significance that this is his last work. Death is not a theme that Scarpa was not familiar with and had an intimate experience of. Scarpa lost his mother at the tender age of 13 years old.³³⁸ He once stated that he frequently went to cemeteries to make observations.³³⁹ What is more, Scarpa himself is buried in a corner between the community cemetery and the Brion Cemetery, in 'a no man's land'³⁴⁰ as he once said. Tadashi Yokoyama describes the Cemetery and observes:

It is only natural that his imagination manifested most beautifully at the Cemetery of Brion, giving an impression of somehow being a posthumous work of his. Such spirit can play most freely in the stage of a garden where light, water, stones, and green construct a pure and fantastic world completely free of functional aspects. The Cemetery of Brion was the most "genuine" garden among those he created in his lifetime. No classic harmony or symmetry exists in the Cemetery. Instead, out of different and contradictory things put together, a space was carved as if in enlightenment. Like a revelation, that is the presence thrown in front of us or the Garden of Eden in paradox.³⁴¹

Scarpa, I would say, creates a Cemetery where a multitude of influences exists. He had an eclectic, highly personal compass for selecting influences and combining references. In addition, he wants to propose something new, away from the Napoleonic law in Italy, concerning cemeteries, that he disagrees with. He wants to show a way of doing things, a method, an example. He observes:

From the town, one arrives through a special entrance, the church, the funeral, then the town cemetery, the chapel: this belongs to everyone, the land belongs to the state. The family has only the right to be buried. Here, a private lane leading to a little pavilion on the water, the only private object: this, in brief, is all. The place of the dead has the feeling of a garden- for that matter, the great American cemeteries of the nineteenth century in Chicago are so many great parks. This is not the cemetery of Napoleon-

³³⁸ Dean Hawkes, *Environmental Imagination* (London: Routledge, 2008), p. 111.

³³⁹ Franca Semi, *A Lezione con Carlo Scarpa* (Hoepli, 2019), p. 259.

³⁴⁰ Orietta Lanzarini, 'Carlo (Alberto) Scarpa', *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* (2018), p 360.

³⁴¹ S. Catitti, 'The Japanese Roots of Carlo Scarpa's Poetic Architecture', *Human Evolution*, 33.34 (2015), 163-180 P.211.

terrible! One can go there by car: there are some lovely tombs, some of them designed by Sullivan. Now, the cemeteries are made of piles of shoe-boxes, stacked mechanically. [...] I wanted, however, to render the natural sense of the concept of water and field, water, and earth: water is the source of life.³⁴²

A Cemetery as an educational example? Perhaps. As mentioned previously, Scarpa states:

This is the only work I go to look at with pleasure, because I feel I've captured the sense of the countryside, in the way the Brions wanted. Everyone is very happy to go there — the children play, the dogs run around — all cemeteries should be like this. In fact, I thought of one for Modena which was quite interesting.³⁴³

What was observed throughout the primary materials collection and analysis was a sense of surprise at this reimagining of things and the reframing of what this Cemetery offers. This idea of subverting what is often expected in a cemetery, as well as of encountering a multitude and polarities of emotional reactions leads to the main core psychological theme that this chapter analyses and will be discussed in the next subchapter.

6.5.2 Reframing

6.5.2.1 Reframing as a psychological concept

In a therapeutic context, the concept of redefining and recontextualising experiences is called 'reframing'.³⁴⁴ At the Arcosolium, there are observed instances, from personal experience and from the primary materials, where preconceived emotions, notions and expectations are often transmuted into something different.

³⁴² Francesco Dal Co and Giuseppe Mazzariol, *Carlo Scarpa: The complete works* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), p.90.

³⁴³ *Ibid.*, 286.

³⁴⁴ APA Dictionary of Psychology, American Psychological Association, <https://dictionary.apa.org/reframing>, [accessed on 15December 2023].



Figure 49 Looking at the Cemetery, the Propylaea, the Pavilion and the perimeter wall from the Arcosolium, next to the sarcophagi of the couple

My catalytic and very personal, first visit to the Brion Cemetery and the chain of events that took place, as described in the introduction chapter of the thesis, alluded to this element, although it was not apparent to me at the time. Despite that observation being a more general one and not necessarily referring to the Arcosolium, but at the Brion Cemetery in general, it finds ways to manifest here, too. The following subchapter will identify such instances and elaborate on their potential psychological value. During the interviews, one architectural student, remarked, when describing their experience at the Cemetery:

Weird, because I wasn't expecting anything like that because it's not like a normal cemetery, it was very... I wasn't feeling I was in a cemetery. It was more like a landscape, a narrative experience, a journey around.³⁴⁵

A type of reframing at the Arcosolium starts when one considers the people who are buried there and the type of space the visitor inhabits when relating to them. In most cases, the relation of a person who visits a cemetery to the people buried there is either one of direct emotional entanglement, or of emotional neutrality. In other words, there is either no distance from the event of death or too much distance. The Brion offers a rare, third opportunity: the possibility to relate to two strangers, at a comfortable distance. To me, it always presents the same experience, when it comes to the Arcosolium: It is intimate enough, without smothering you with demands.

6.5.2.2 Comfortable around sarcophagi

During one of the interviews with architectural students, one student observed:

... You feel very comfortable walking like especially into that tomb, and wandering around them and touching the things, and taking pictures and things. [...] Normally when you see a tomb, you stay away, you wanna be very respectful and whereas you don't [have that?] on your mind. And also, because they're quite rich as well, normally wealthy people are sort of kept away and above and don't really let, like you see these

³⁴⁵ Interview with a student, 2018.

tombs in the normal cemeteries and they're very closed off and you need a key to get in, but they just let everyone in, and you don't question it, you just [go in?]. [...] You're touching the tomb, and you don't feel sad.³⁴⁶

Both the engagement of the body and senses (touch), as well as the experience of comfort is brought up by the student. Architecturally speaking, the choice of materials and the proximity of the couple's tombs (sarcophagi) to the visitor are not a coincidence. I would argue that the architect seems to be acutely aware of the minefield that is trying to hold a conversation around death. And he also seems aware of how the message he had in mind could have been easily discarded or could enrage people. This is also where poetry is relevant, and the value of metaphor as described in previous chapters. Poetry acts as an intermediary, a messenger.

6.5.2.3 Poetry as a means for reframing

By using the idea of poetry as a vehicle, in terms of its metaphorical possibilities, Stephen Kite references John Ruskin's work *Stones in Venice* and reflects 'as buildings are to be read, texts are built' while arguing on the importance of metaphors in this analogy.³⁴⁷

In a lecture given at the IUAV, while discussing the Cemetery, Scarpa describes his attention to the psychological aspect of the Cemetery, and in some cases, connects it to the poetic element. He told students:

[...] I was more impressed by a verse by Paul Valery that says: 'Le don de vivre a passé dans les fleurs,' 'the gift of life is passed on through flowers,' meaning life continues in the flowers afterward. Foscolo says many beautiful things, more important, but also a bit rhetorical. In Valery, however, there is a way of teaching of how it would be possible of making serene and noble a thing that normally is sad or enraging.³⁴⁸

³⁴⁶ Interview with a student, 2018.

³⁴⁷ Stephen Kite, 'Building Texts + Reading Fabrics: Metaphor, Memory, and Material in John Ruskin's *Stones of Venice*', *LIBRARYTRENDS*, 61.2 (2012), p. 418.

³⁴⁸ Franca Semi, *A lezione con Carlo Scarpa* (Hoepli: 2019), p. 262.

6.5.2.4 Reinventing ways

Going back to the idea of psychological reframing, death itself as an idea is being reframed. This Cemetery can represent not only literal but also symbolic deaths in our lives, and losses of all forms. Loss is not an easy emotion to grapple with, and grief is not either. In his lectures, Scarpa often uses verses from a poet to express what he wants. Dodds and Frascari observe how Scarpa draws on both visual and textual sources of inspiration and among the poets he mostly mentions are Paul Valery and Ruskin.³⁴⁹ They write:

In his dialogue *Dance and the Soul*, Paul Valery observes through the character of Socrates, that like literature and poetry, dance is no less a language where in meaning is expressed by hands that speak and by feet that "seem to write". In the drawings of Valeriano Pastor and Carlo Scarpa, however, the meaning of the architectural events they project are not comprehended through the 'reading' of the building-as-text but are apprehended through mute images of the body.³⁵⁰

There is care and architectural detail in the Cemetery, which aims at expressing and showing diverse ways of perceiving death.

One could argue that Scarpa purposefully tries to lift the veil on the heaviness of the concept of death, to be able to examine it. Carter argues on Scarpa's architecture at the Brion Cemetery: '...in its many sizes, in the precise positions of the eye, in what is within reach of the hand to be touched - and his architecture comes to life only when we inhabit its spaces'.³⁵¹ In fact, the architect envisions people touching those graves, as seen in one of his drawings, found at the archive, showing a figure interacting with the sarcophagi, and touching the surface. In this undidactic manner, Scarpa manages to continue the gentle conversation.

³⁴⁹ George Dodds and Marco Frascari, 'Miming a Manner of building, Drawing as Story in the Work of Valeriano Pastor and Carlo Scarpa', 86th ACSA Annual Meeting and Technology Conference, p. 398.

³⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 401.

³⁵¹ Robert McCarter, *Carlo Scarpa* (London: Phaidon Press, 2013), p.31.

William Shakespeare wrote, in *Macbeth*: ‘Give sorrow words; the grief that does not speak whispers the oe’r fraught heart and bids it break’.³⁵² The idea here is to make sure the topic is approached but in a manner that is not triggering, but rather potentially stimulating, cathartic and healing.

In a letter directed to Scarpa, which I found at the archives, the following was written:

[...] It is perhaps easy, for us, who have been so close to you for years to appreciate your merits, your subtle personal and poetic ways of seeing and exploring again that which is true and has been concealed under those abused conventions. [...] in your lessons and from your example we can evoke a particular aspect of our architectural culture, and, therefore, human.³⁵³

In these words, I would say, the same concept of reframing is being revealed and new ways of seeing are being identified in Scarpa’s work, something observed also by his closest collaborators. In addition to this, these ways are characterised as ‘poetic’. One could almost call this a ‘poetic reframing’ and it becomes relevant at the Arcosolium, where death and love are presented in a manner where joy is also possible. In fact, the garden in front of the Arcosolium was described by Scarpa as a space where, potentially, children and dogs could run around and play.³⁵⁴ At the Brion Cemetery this shift of expectations has also been described by personal experiences in the literature. Itoh Tetsuo remembers:

It was the first time I had actually seen any of Scarpa's work and in the time it took me to get there, I had been imagining all kinds of things about his architecture. However, it turned out to be a tour de force of architectural composition beyond my expectations, both as an entire composition and in detail.³⁵⁵

³⁵² Diana Hedges, *Poetry, Therapy and Emotional Life* (CRC Press: 2015), p. 7.

³⁵³ MAXXI Museo nazionale delle arti del XXI secolo, Roma. Collezione MAXXI Architettura. Archivio Carlo Scarpa.

³⁵⁴ Francesco Dal Co and Giuseppe Mazzariol, *Carlo Scarpa* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), p. 286.

³⁵⁵ Itoh Tetsuo, ‘Brion Family Cemetery, Scenes in Sequence’, *A&U Architecture and Urbanism*, 184 (1986), p. 8-9.

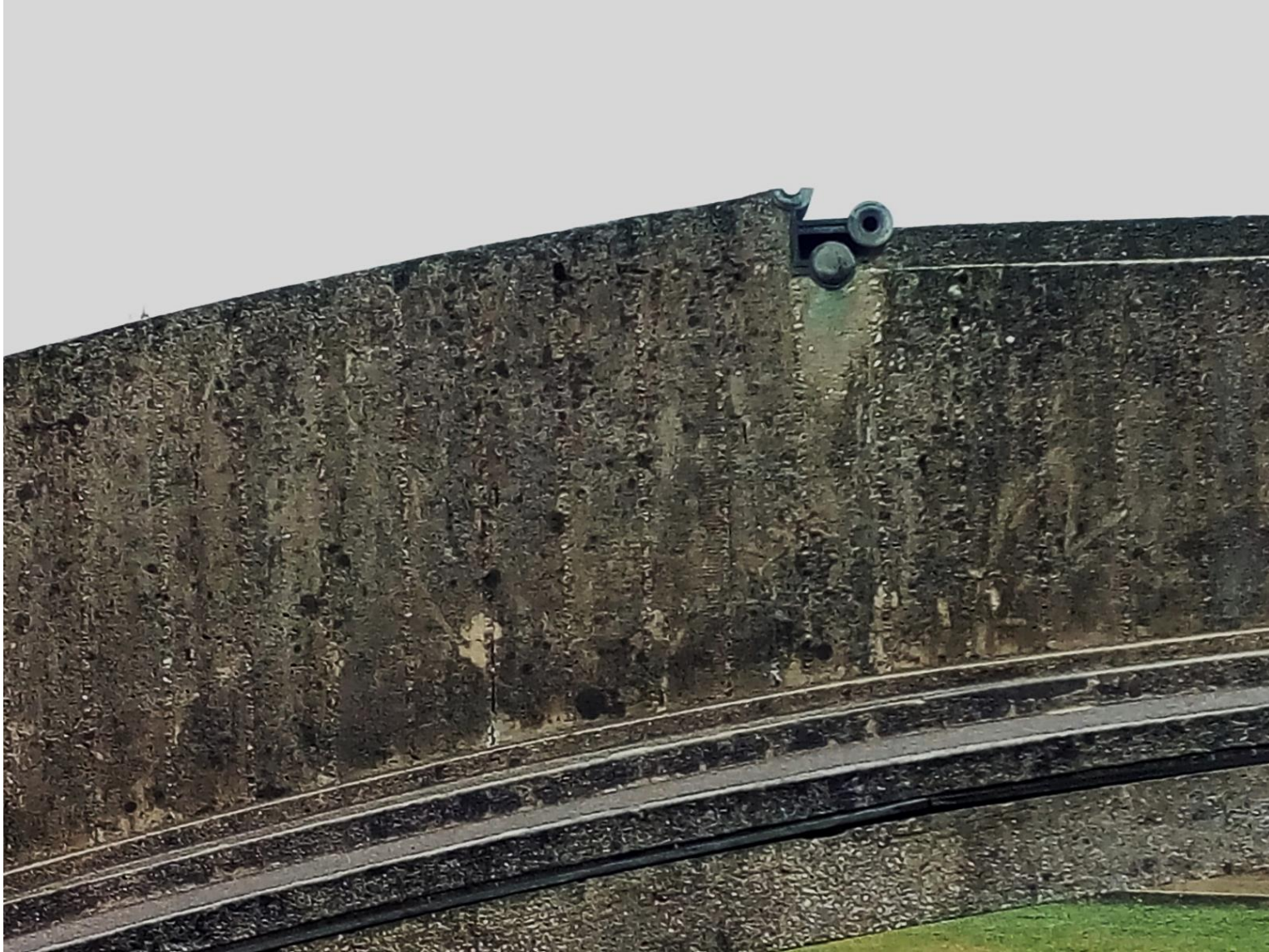


Figure 50 Detail of the top part of the Arcosolium

Similarly, Michael D. Kroll and others write:

Why were we going to a cemetery? After all, cemeteries throughout the Western world are all the same - large open spaces that contain marble headstones commemorating our relatives and friends who passed on. The Brion Funerary Garden quickly dismissed our narrow and pessimistic ideas.³⁵⁶

These descriptions bring to mind my initial first experience at the Brion Cemetery and the observations which emerged.

To conclude, the phenomenon of reframing, in order to reinterpret preconceived notions, expectations and/or experiences, emerges as potentially valuable at the Arcosolium towards a sense of wellbeing.

6.5.3 Emotional identification

6.5.3.1 Emotional reactions

Pérez-Gómez writes:

My point is that most crucial to works of architecture in the sense that I evoke is not the capacity to communicate a particular meaning through some formal syntax, but rather the possibility of recognizing ourselves as complete, in order to dwell poetically on earth and thus be wholly human. This recognition of wholeness is not merely one of semantic equivalence. Rather, it occurs in experience, and like in a poem, its meaning is inseparable from the experience of the poem itself. The moment of recognition is embedded in culture; it is playful by definition and is always circumstantial.³⁵⁷

³⁵⁶ Kroll, Michael D., Ralph J. D'Amato Jr., Larry W. H, 'Cemetery Design', *Landscape Architecture Magazine*, 81.1 (1991), p 10.

³⁵⁷ Alberto Pérez-Gómez, 'Built Upon Love: Towards Beauty and Justice in Architecture', *Mosaic: A Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature*, 44 (2011), 43-59, p 52.

In this section, I will analyse the significance of emotional reactions when it comes to the Arcosolium. Emotions and emotive statements are a common thread in the primary materials, appearing throughout the primary research as one of the most common themes, as described in the introduction. From validating emotions to unearthing emotions, the Brion Cemetery reminds the visitor of shared human experiences. At the Arcosolium, the visitor is exposed to two very intense human experiences, love, and death, and it is the closest anyone can get to the core and the reason of the Cemetery's existence.

One student observed: "You forget that architecture can be something so emotionally evocative. And it was really, I don't know, it was quite emotional"³⁵⁸ while another one said: "...There's that kind of heavy atmosphere around the tombs. [...] So there is that feeling of mass, weight. The fact that you have to bend down to get there. [...]".³⁵⁹ Lastly, another student argued: "I don't know, you appreciate the story of the two as well, a lot more, you feel connected, I think"³⁶⁰. Irvin Yalom states: 'Though the physicality of death destroys us, the idea of death may save us'³⁶¹. A visitor wrote in the Brion Cemetery guestbook : "A tomb that is not a place of goodbye to life, but that it ties to eternity!".³⁶² There are also mentions of love. Love is mentioned in various forms. Love as a philosophical concept, and/or love for a person: "Veni, vidi, amavi",³⁶³ "S. Valentine at the tombs".³⁶⁴ "If life leaves a gap, fill it with what you love".³⁶⁵ From mourning to falling in love, it is a spectrum of emotions. Looking at one of the drawings (Figure 52), there is one figure sitting on their own on one side, and a group of people on the other, standing together, almost in an embrace, with one of them sitting and having their shoulders hunched. In *Poetry, Therapy and Emotional Life*, Diana Hedges writes that:

³⁵⁸ Interview with a student, 2018.

³⁵⁹ Ibid.

³⁶⁰ Ibid.

³⁶¹ Irvin Yalom, *Existential Psychotherapy* (Basic Books:1980), p.159.

³⁶² Comment by a visitor in the Brion Cemetery visitors' guestbook, 2019.

³⁶³ Ibid.

³⁶⁴ Ibid.

³⁶⁵ Ibid.



Figure 51 The name of the wife, Onorina Brion, on her sarcophagi at the Arcosolium

We read poetry because the poets, like ourselves, have been haunted by the inescapable tyranny of time and death; have suffered the pain of loss, and the more wearing, continuous pain of frustration and failure; and have had moods of unlooked for release and peace. They have known and watched in themselves and others. [...] Poetry, then, can give us a sense of identity with the mood or thoughts or feelings of the poet. In addition, it broadens out our experience and helps us understand that some experiences, such as loss or making difficult moral choices, are not unique to us but are part of the human condition. It can feel helpful to have a sad, distressed, or troubled mood validated, but poetry also expresses affirmation and inspiration and offers hope'.³⁶⁶

6.5.3.2 From the subjective to the generalisable

Scarpa took the opportunity to hold a conversation around death and a conversation about the significance of life by presenting its joys as well. One does not have to know the story of the Brion couple, does not even have to believe in any sort of afterlife, or have religious beliefs to be confronted with the inevitability of death and loss and the experience that we all, as mortal creatures aware of their mortality, share. Therefore, 'the space becomes a dialectic one between what is subjective and potentially generalisable', as Furman states.³⁶⁷

6.5.3.3 Everyday life and an ode to the couple, at the Brion Cemetery

In Poetry Therapy, emotional identification, which plays a critical role in catharsis (a deep sense of emotional release), is considered part of the therapeutic process.³⁶⁸ One cannot predict whether someone would feel a sense of emotional identification at the Arcosolium. In fact, this is highly dependent on the subjective experience. Yet, in one way or the other, what is laid out for the world to see is a very human experience. The Sarcophagi are leaning

³⁶⁶ Diana Hedges, *Poetry, Therapy and Emotional Life* (CRC Press, 2015), p.4.

³⁶⁷ Rich Furman, 'Poetry and Narrative as Qualitative Data: Explorations into Existential Theory', *Indo-Pacific Journal of Phenomenology*, 7.1 (2007), p. 1.

³⁶⁸ Nicholas Mazza, *Poetry Therapy* (New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2017), p.7.

towards each other, because Scarpa thinks it would be beautiful for a couple who had loved each other during life, to greet each other after death. He states: 'It is wonderful that two people who had loved each other during their lives on earth should bend one towards the other so as to be able to greet one another, after death'.³⁶⁹ He describes the interaction, in one of his lectures to architectural students, at the IUAV:

Therefore there is the arch, with these two married people inclined towards each other and the ground which descends a bit: for a certain of coquetry of formal, symbolic order (a liberty that one can have sometimes when there are no functional and rational obligations), because I was thinking that he would say, in the evening "Good afternoon, Nina, how are you?": Meaning that the two dead ones are talking to each other. [...] However, the plastical reason....., therefore there is a bit of truth in this: I wanted to exaggerate a bit with a plastical dynamicity which would otherwise be missing. They would have been too immobile".³⁷⁰

In my conversation with Pietropoli, he describes the use of the tree behind the Arcosolium, which creates an expressive effect, as if to say that the tree is weeping.³⁷¹ It is with gestures like this that Scarpa gives anthropomorphic features to non-human elements at the Cemetery. Maria Bottero observes: 'The vegetation surrounding the tombs, symbol of death, is carefully tended and vibrant with life'.³⁷²

Overall, the Arcosolium allows the manifestation of a strong emotional identification and the recognition and/or elaboration of emotions, by allowing a nearness and an intimacy to what is being witnessed.

³⁶⁹ Robert McCarter, *Carlo Scarpa* (London: Phaidon Press, 2013), p.257.

³⁷⁰ Franca Semi, *A lezione con Carlo Scarpa* (Hoepli: 2019), p. 259.

³⁷¹ Conversation with Guido Pietropoli, 2019.

³⁷² Maria Bottero, 'Carlo Scarpa: lo spazio poetico del Cimitero Brion', *Abitare* (1989), 208-211, p. 211.

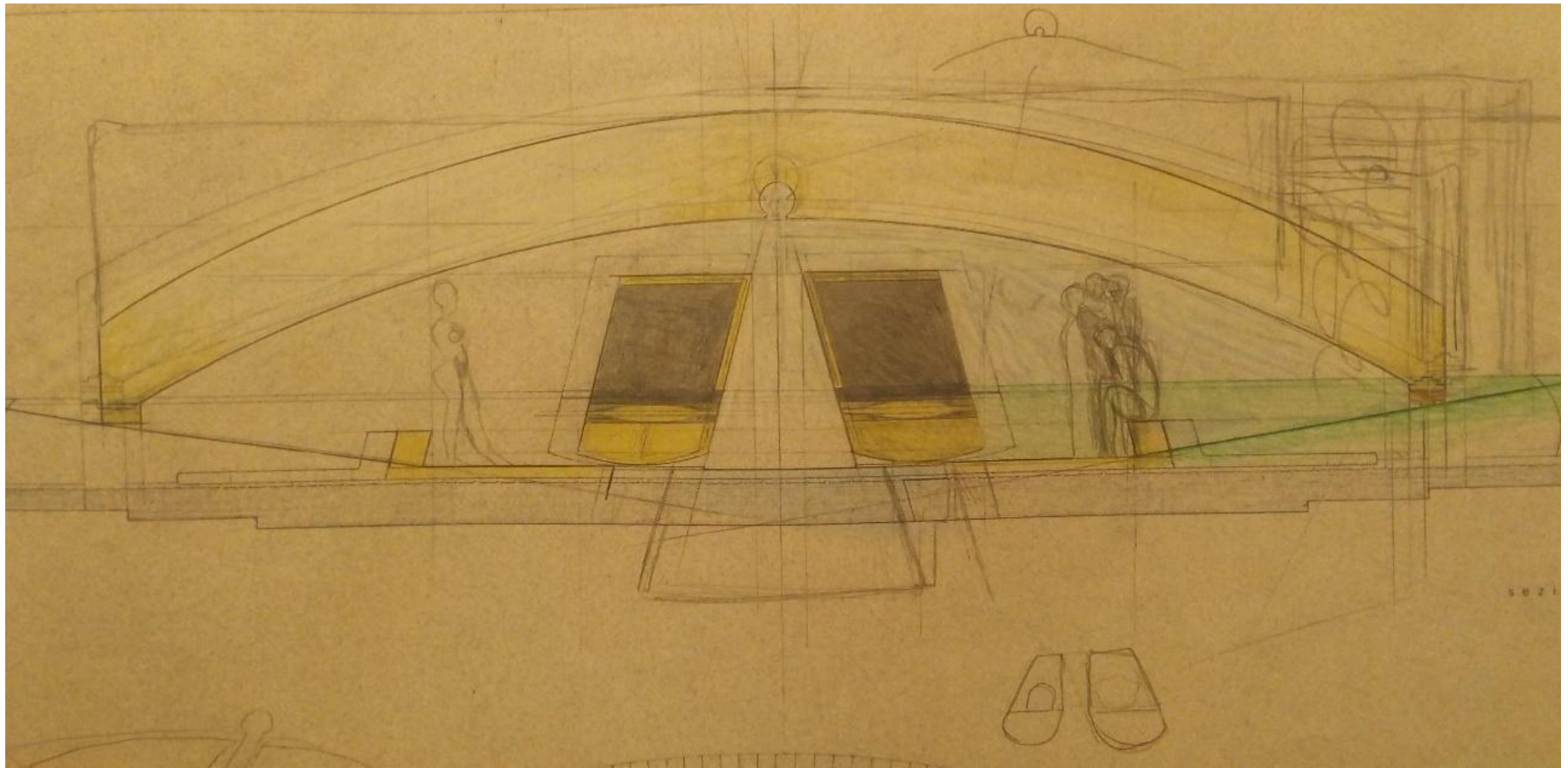


Figure 52 Drawing of the Arcosolium with human figures sitting and standing around it, found at the archives of the Centro Carlo Scarpa

6.6 UNIVERSALITY OF EXPERIENCE

6.6.1 The human condition

Let us return to the words of Aristotle:

The difference between the historian and the poet is not that between using verse or prose; Herodotus' work could be versified and would be just as much a kind of history in verse as in prose. No, the difference is this: that the one relates actual events, the other the kinds of things that might occur. Consequently, poetry is more philosophical and more elevated than history, since poetry relates more of the universal, while history relates particulars.³⁷³

In this section, in a continuation from the previous subchapter, the universal will be discussed, as part of the human experience, which can be encountered at the Brion Cemetery, and specifically the Arcosolium. The study has generally stayed away from attaching specific meanings to the architecture and does not presume to predict how the visitors will react, nor that those reactions will be universal or generalisable. What it does, however, argue, is that there are mechanisms in place, that allow a potential emotive reaction, as described in the previous subchapter. Furthermore, it argues that at the Arcosolium there are themes which assist a poetic architectural experience, towards wellbeing. These themes are those of death and love, two themes which are synonymous with the human experience, one way or the other, from the moment we are born, and we relate to others, until we are no longer alive. The detailed descriptions of emotions will not be presented here, as they have already been analysed in the previous section on emotional identification.

³⁷³ Aristotle, *Poetics* | Loeb Classical Library, *Loeb Classical Library* (2023) https://www.loebclassics.com/view/aristotle-poetics/1995/pb_LCL199.3.xml [accessed 15 December 2023].



Figure 53 The Arcosolium, viewed from the side

6.6.2 Carlo Scarpa's language

The universal experiences of life, death and love were present throughout the primary materials. Pietropoli talks about love and how it connects to serenity, as analysed in a previous chapter. Visitors write several emotional comments in the guestbook, and in the students' interviews what emerges is how the story of the couple is important to the experience of the Arcosolium.

To comprehend how Scarpa instills a sense of wellbeing in the Brion Cemetery, and specifically at the Arcosolium -at least in terms of intentions- one might need to consider his own understanding of the phenomenon of death. Olberg notes: 'Carlo Maschietto recalls hearing Scarpa say, while they were visiting the tomb, that he understood "death to be a moment of life'.³⁷⁴ He continues: 'The cycle begins with death and moves through birth back to death, because for Scarpa this is not a closed circle but a continuous movement'.³⁷⁵ Dal Co and Mazzariol make a connection between the poetic influences acting on Scarpa, by bringing the examples of Montale and Foscolo, the poets, when mentioning the sarcophagi at the Arcosolium:

Montale, whose "Ossi di seppia" remained part of Carlo's memory to the end; and Foscolo, whose implacable voice in the section "Sarcophagi" of the Sepolcri was so consoling that his lines come spontaneously to one's lips at the San Vito Cemetery'.³⁷⁶

Los, Scarpa's assistant, says that 'At the Brion Tomb this metaphorical language becomes immensely complex and layered. I do not think one has to decipher each sign to grasp these metaphors, nor do I think they carry absolute or prescribed meanings'.³⁷⁷ The thesis agrees with the idea that Los generally proposes in his analysis that the symbolic does not have to be specific or necessarily narrowly interpreted in order to have value in Scarpa's work. As

³⁷⁴ Nicholas Olberg and Guido Guidi, *Carlo Scarpa Architect* (Montréal, Québec: The Canadian Centre for Architecture, 1999), p. 214.

³⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p.208.

³⁷⁶ Francesco Dal Co and Giuseppe Mazzariol, *Carlo Scarpa: The Complete Works* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), p. 1.

³⁷⁷ Nicholas Olberg and Guido Guidi, *Carlo Scarpa Architect* (Montréal, Québec: The Canadian Centre for Architecture, 1999), p. 211.

previously mentioned in commentary of his work, this opinion seems to be consistent in his writings and is interpreted by me as a useful observation, because it does not present the symbolic aspects of Scarpa's poetic architecture as having a fixed meaning to be elucidated. Rather, his compositions include generative forms, whose meaning becomes alive through the projections of the individual, just like in poetry. When one finds themselves at the Arcosolium, near the tombs, they can draw their own conclusions, created by this close encounter with questions on life and death.

It is significant to state, once again, that the shared experiences here are potentially generalisable, but not generic. The forms at the Brion Cemetery are specific, and the symbolisms are everywhere. However, one does not have to engage with them, semantically, in order to feel. And this is what is significant, I would argue. To first feel, rather than intellectually understand: like a good poem, which holds us in its grip, in a sharp moment, when the visitor suddenly feels they have stepped into a new world, familiar and yet unfamiliar new world. If prose addresses the familiar and the literal, then poetry addresses the unfamiliar expressions of language, which somehow are familiar. Metaphors are not literal, they are not realistic, yet they manage to tap into a part of our imagination which is even more authentic and, in this sense, they are deeply experiential and connected to personal experience.

6.6.3 Poetry Therapy and the universal experience

The therapeutic model of "Hynes-Berry" in Poetry Therapy, suggests that there are stylistic and thematic dimensions which can significantly shape the beneficial therapeutic effect of a poem. One dimension is the so called 'universal experience'. Olson Mc-Bride states: 'Hynes and Hynes-Berry define a universal experience as one that "deals with experiences and emotions that are fundamental to the human condition"'.³⁷⁸ This characteristic is present at the Arcosolium. People share a common universal experience of mortality and love: the themes of love and death. These small distinctions are significant, not only in terms of aesthetics, (which are subjective) but more in the manner through which the events of death and love are presented.

³⁷⁸ Leah Olson-McBride, 'A Content Analysis of Poems Most Frequently Utilized by Poetry Therapists', *Journal of Poetry Therapy: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Practice, Theory, Research, and Education*, 25.3 (2012), 137-149, p. 142.

As mentioned previously, in Poetry Therapy the universality and shared basis of emotions is critical. This is achieved through the reframing of certain experiences, and of constructing a new meaning and a new way of seeing situations, life, and personal experiences. Also, the use of powerful imagery assumes a compelling role. McBride explains:

Striking or concrete images allow readers to ‘emerge from his or her closed world and focus on some external reality’ and are often related to “‘nature and things and experiences that are a part of daily life”’ (Hynes & Hynes-Berry, 1994, p. 73). In addition, such images do not merely state what is seen and felt and meant; they present the object or experience in such a way that the reader or listener mentally imagines or remembers what is being described.³⁷⁹

Coming from a phenomenological background, Collins and Furman observe as to metaphor in the therapeutic context: ‘It is our contention that helping clients understand the power of metaphor, and the compressed nature of a good poem, can help. Clients focus on what is “core” about their experiences’.³⁸⁰ At the Arcosolium, the subjective experience is amplified in different directions, spatially and experientially.

Overall, the universality of shared experiences and their recognition at the Arcosolium becomes a tool which can be used to connect to what can be shared and be shareable, while simultaneously elaborating on what is personal and intimate.

6.6.4 Concluding remarks

Overall, the concept of reframing is one which becomes central at the Arcosolium. The idea

³⁷⁹ Leah Olson-McBride, ‘A Content Analysis of Poems Most Frequently Utilized by Poetry Therapists’, *Journal of Poetry Therapy: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Practice, Theory, Research, and Education*, 25.3 (2012), 137-149, p. 144.

³⁸⁰ Kathryn S. Collins, Rich Furman, and Carol L. Langer, ‘Poetry Therapy as a Tool of Cognitively Based Practice’, *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 33.3 (2006), 180-187 p. 182.



Figure 54 Line of water starting from the Water Pavilion and ending at the Arcosolium, view of the Cemetery from the Arcosolium

of an emotional spectrum, being possible here, is accentuated by Scarpa's intention to create a space for the dead but also for the living. Through the reimagining of death and what it means the space invites for the subjective to be expressed and accommodated. The individual can connect (or not) emotionally through a universal theme of human experience. The Arcosolium emerges as a place for rest but also for emotional identification. The poetic is expressed through the possibility of imagining what is beyond 'these shoeboxes', as Scarpa says.

6.7 CONCLUSION

To conclude, this chapter has sustained that the sense of wellbeing that emerges at the Arcosolium, through the triangulation of all primary data related to the Arcosolium (Guido Pietropoli's interview, students' interviews, archival materials, personal observations, guestbook) connects to the following themes, in order of importance:

- Reframing of experience
- Universality of experience
- Emotions

The chapter sustains that the Arcosolium supports wellbeing through the concept of reframing. The idea of reframing was the primary core psychological theme, and the remaining three themes complemented the argument around it.

What is being observed at the Arcosolium is the possibility for a range of emotions to be expressed. Seemingly, opposites are combined and embraced. By creating moments in space where one can potentially let their guard down enough in order to feel emotional intimacy with what is witnessed as well as a sense of comfort, and to project their own experiences, the general and universal can become personal. One can claim the space, just like one can claim a poem, where words can feel like they were written for the person who reads them. The main character in the film "Il Postino" says: "Poetry belongs not to those who write it, but to those who need it".³⁸¹ From joy and play to tears and sadness, the Arcosolium provides a holistic experience. The chapter explored instances where expectations or preconceived notions were

³⁸¹ *Il Postino*, dir. by Michael Radford (Italy:1994) [accessed 30 December 2023].

reframed and seen in a different light. It also explored the emotional identification needed to provide enough proximity to the human experience, as well as the universality of emotions which it addresses.

At the Arcosolium, Carlo Scarpa embraces a materiality which invites the touch and a sense of proximity. The deliberate movement of the two sarcophagi leaning towards each other, “break the ice” in a way. The event of death and love become central. After all, the Brion Cemetery is there only because the Arcosolium is there – the couple that is buried there. By positioning the Arcosolium at a central location on the site, and by placing the garden in front of it, he opens the space to the visitors, rendering it generous and more extroverted. Nature and plants become active players in the design to complement and enhance the experience. Any symbolism draws the attention, engages and activates the imagination using metaphor that one chooses to project on them. By connecting the Arcosolium to the Water Pavilion through a direct visual relation and a line of water, there is, again, an intention to connect to natural elements - in this case that of water.

The chapter aimed not at providing a textbook of instructions to replicate the effect of Scarpa’s architecture, or poetic space. Nor did the chapter aim at presuming that a specific emotional reaction is present at the Arcosolium, as that would be impossible, since the author and the thesis recognise that experiences are subjective. What is joyful to one, may be sad to another. What it did was to uncover, through careful elaboration and maturation of the primary materials and of subjective experiences, what emerges as experiences which are potentially of value to wellbeing, and how a space can evoke them. What is more, it highlighted the mechanisms that are at place, both on a psychological and an architectural level, which allow a poetic experience, and which are potentially beneficial to the psyche. The chapter focuses on the specifics of the Arcosolium as one of the three tangible examples that the thesis analyses (Propylaea, Water Pavilion, Arcosolium), and connects the insights to the broader context (Architecture, Poetry , Wellbeing). Poetry Therapy and insights from the Mental Health and Psychology fields and the potential role of poetry are brought into the analysis.

To conclude, the Arcosolium at the Brion Cemetery emerges as a place where different emotions are present and vibrant. The chapter started with a presentation of a personal narration, then proceeded on analysing the primary materials analysis for the Arcosolium, and then each of the three themes were analysed. The chapter has given an overview of different types of primary materials, common themes that emerge and how they are connected.



Figure 55 Intersecting symbol which is found at the entrance and repeated on the sarcophagi of the couple

CHAPTER 7: WELLBEING AS A SPECTRUM OF REACTIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter connects and discusses critical elements stemming from the primary materials analysis and insights from the course of the research. The topics which will be discussed are the following:

1. Concepts of wellbeing at the Brion Cemetery: Catharsis, Self-Awareness and Reframing (these three themes emerged as the predominant psychological and emotional experiential themes in each of the three tangible moments analysed in Chapters 4, 5, and 6).
2. Body, Senses, Materiality, Natural Elements and Landscape as common themes (these three themes emerged as common predominant themes in each of the three tangible moments analysed in Chapters 4, 5 and 6).
3. The dynamic and static elements, at the Brion Cemetery as experiential qualities at the Brion Cemetery (these two elements, emerged from the initial triangulation of data, as evidenced in Chapter 3).

What is being examined and argued is that: There is a spectrum of emotional reactions which are possible, at the Brion Cemetery. The structure of the chapter follows the aforementioned themes and ends with concluding remarks, which summarise and signpost to the last chapter of the thesis, the conclusion.

7.2 AN ARTICULATION OF WELLBEING AT THE BRION CEMETERY

7.2.1 Introduction

In this subchapter, the three main psychological themes which were explored in Chapters 4, 5 and 6, will be presented again and summarized. They will also be discussed in the context of the aim of the study and the main research question, which is: how does the poetic experience

at the Brion Cemetery support wellbeing? The chapter sustains that the wellbeing that emerges there is not monolithic: it can hold space for the human experience as a whole. The three chapters of the analysis (Chapter 4,5 and 6) focused on a core psychological concept in connection to poetry and Poetry Therapy. This subchapter complements the analysis by highlighting, in more depth, these common themes as a commentary on the Brion, as a totality. The first part of the chapter summarises the outcome of the analysis, with the intention to connect these ideas to other significant factors. The second section of the chapter, picks up the thread of common themes which emerged at all three tangible moments (body, senses, materiality, natural & architectural elements), but were intentionally not included in the main analysis of the chapter, in order for it to focus solely on the main psychological theme. Lastly, the dynamic and static elements are analysed as critical parts of the Cemetery and, having emerged during the initial triangulation of data (before focusing on the main moments in space), they are brought into the analysis to further evidence the wide spectrum of experiential reactions which sometimes are even viewed as opposites. There are many ways, in which the Cemetery actively supports and engages the visitor, and the chapter comments on the architectural ways that make this happen.

7.2.2 Concepts of wellbeing

At the Brion, the intention of creating a space which affects the psychological state of the visitors clearly has been part of the architect's initial operating mode. It has also been picked up by visitors, as evidenced by them. The intricacy and details of those reactions, however, lie in the specifics of emotional triggers and mechanisms that are set in motion. Before proceeding further into the analysis, it is significant to reinstate what the core psychological themes of the study mean:

1. Catharsis, through emotional identification:

In psychoanalytic theory, catharsis, is the discharge of previously repressed affects connected to traumatic events that occurs when these events are brought back into

consciousness and reexperienced. [...] More generally, the release of strong, pent-up emotions. [from Greek, literally: “purgation,” “purification”].³⁸²

2. Self-awareness

The attainment of knowledge about and insight into one’s characteristics, including attitudes, motives, behavioral tendencies, strengths, and weaknesses. The achievement of self-understanding is one of the major goals of certain forms of psychotherapy.³⁸³

3. Reframing

A process of reconceptualizing a problem by seeing it from a different perspective. Altering the conceptual or emotional context of a problem often serves to alter perceptions of the problem’s difficulty and to open up possibilities for solving it.³⁸⁴

Strong emotional identification and poetry viewed as a cathartic experience per se, is not a new concept. Olsen McBride states:

The roots of Poetry Therapy can be traced back to Apollo, the god of medicine and poetry, and Aristotle. Aristotle deemed poetry a cathartic experience that provided an “emotional cure”(Hynes & Hynes-Berry, 1994; Mazza, 1999). The idea of poetry as a catharsis and an emotional cure, as well as a therapeutic tool, is one that has continued up until the present time.³⁸⁵

³⁸² APA, Dictionary of Psychology, Dictionary.apa.org <https://dictionary.apa.org/catharsis>[accessed 15 December 2023].

³⁸³ Ibid.

³⁸⁴ APA Dictionary of Psychology, Dictionary.apa.org <https://dictionary.apa.org/reframing>[accessed 15 December 2023].

³⁸⁵ Leah Olson-McBride, ‘A Content Analysis of Poems Most Frequently Utilized by Poetry Therapists’, *Journal of Poetry Therapy: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Practice, Theory, Research, and Education*, 25.3(2012), 137-149, p.138.

Richard Bruce Hovey and others analyse how poetry and more specifically a ‘cathartic poem’ can assist the psyche. They write:

The cathartic poem is an attempt at self-healing through self-empathy. The poem and the person endeavor to make sense of chaotic thinking, restoring a feeling of balance and of wholeness in oneself through words. By better understanding their own experience of their pain, and of the internal chaos that inhabits them, people may begin to open up to learning to accept their lives with pain.³⁸⁶

Unpleasant emotions and emotional pain are not quickly dismissed at the Brion, they are embraced with empathy. They find a way to be seen, to be acknowledged before they can be elaborated. One can stay with themselves, perhaps even to the point of tears, but in a cathartic manner, like catharsis at the end of a theatre play. The Brion Cemetery can act as a cathartic poem, in that sense. Pérez-Gómez :observes:

When successful, architecture allows for participation in meaningful action, conveying to the participant an understanding of his or her place in the world. [...] Vitruvius provides a fine example when he describes the manner in which the theatre, that paradigmatic ancient institution, conveys its sense to the spectators as they participate in the event of the dramatic representation. [...]the whole event becomes cathartic: a purification that allows the spectators to understand, through their participation in the space of drama, which is also the space of architecture, their place in the universe and in the civic world.³⁸⁷

When it comes to self-awareness in space, Jelic and others observe:

Architectural spaces can act directly on attention and conscious awareness through body schema by disrupting the habitual engagement with space. Example of peculiar Carlo Scarpa's stairs at the Brion Cemetery in San Vito D'Altivole, Italy which

³⁸⁶ Richard Hovey, Bruce Khayat, Valerie Curro, Eugene Feig, ‘Cathartic Poetry: Healing Through Narrative’, *The Permanente Journal/Perm*, 22 (2018), p. 17.

³⁸⁷ Alberto Pérez-Gómez, ‘Built Upon Love: Towards Beauty and Justice in Architecture’, *Mosaic: A Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature*, 44(2011), 43-59, p.52.

requires the visitor to recalculate the body's position and appropriate action. This brief instance is just enough to activate the attentional switch and to allow the visitor to consciously experience both the architectural settings and oneself as an experiencing and bodily subject.³⁸⁸

There are many elements at the Water Pavilion which facilitate an experience of self-awareness. Silence, slowness, and, as analysed previously, a sense of serenity. Margherita Ferrari observes how Scarpa had stated his intention of creating a place where one could spend time and experience death with “serenity and gentleness”.³⁸⁹ This reflective attitude is intimately connected to the body. In fact, as presented in several instances from my personal experiences and those of others, the space involves the mind after it has ‘grasped’ the body and has invited the person in a silent dialogue. In a therapeutic context, silence has often been described as a prerequisite for establishing a constructive intrapersonal space. Theodore Stickley and Dawn Freshwater observe:

It is our contention that for therapeutic work to take place in an interpersonal relationship, silence is imperative. It is during moments of silence that people may reflect and process what is being addressed in the relationship. It is during silence that a person may decide his or her own way forward and take control. However, the worker needs to allow space for the silence to happen, learning the perhaps uncomfortable but necessary art of just ‘being’ through being present, perhaps even learning to (silently and slowly) count to five, before any intervention.³⁹⁰

Concerning the effect of the Brion Cemetery in reframing experiences, Noever comments on Scarpa, his work and tendency to redefine and ability to reframe:

³⁸⁸ Andrea Jelić, Etieri Gaetano, Matteis Federico Ede, Ebabeloni and Evecchiato Giovanni, ‘The Enactive Approach to Architectural Experience: A Neurophysiological Perspective on Embodiment, Motivation, And Affordances’, *Frontiers in Psychology*, 7 (2016), p. 8.

³⁸⁹ Margherita Ferrari, *Il tempo del legno nel padiglione di Carlo Scarpa* (Firenze University Press, 2020), p. 248.

³⁹⁰ Theodore Stickley and Freshwater, Dawn, ‘The Concept of Space in the Context of the Therapeutic Relationship’, *Mental Health Practice*, 12.6 (2009), 28-30, p. 29.

His criticism was not limited to individual projects but included the ordinary, the most insignificant things. For example, he was critical of the emergence of the ballpoint pen, which he regarded it as impersonal compared to the fountain pen, and unsuitable for describing mood or emotional states: and he was critical of the lead pen, which, despite its perfect functionalism, completely lacked the charm of the conventional pen. His attitude did not spring from any absurd nostalgia or a rejection of new things but from a critical attitude towards everyday phenomena in an uncompromising interest in the essential. Nothing was further from his mind than accepting something because it was obvious or accepted by everybody. This persistent questioning and the inclusion of all experiences of life made him a highly sensitive architect, and I have gained a lot from each encounter with him. After meeting him, I always returned to my projects full of enthusiasm and with a sharpened perception regarding all facets of life.³⁹¹

At the Brion Cemetery, there are a multitude of details, routes, frames, paths waiting to interact with the visitor. I would say that everything is created with care, and nothing is considered of less importance than something else. Scarpa observes: ‘As men of our time we have redeemed many things, both morally and socially. But as architects we have not yet redeemed the form of humble, everyday things’.³⁹²

At this point, a few key quotations by Scarpa, previously mentioned in the thesis, will be mentioned again, to conclude the chapter and connect all intentions and manifestations of wellbeing at the Brion. On one cigarette pack found at the Carlo Scarpa archives, at the MAXXI Museo nazionale delle arti del XXI secolo, in Rome, it is written:

I think that it is ART (art, meaning poetry) that makes us understand reality in the world, it is the effort that man has made from the origins in order to clarify, with forms, to themselves their existence. / on things, animals, structures, architecture.³⁹³

³⁹¹ Peter Noever and Anfodillo Giovanni, *Carlo Scarpa: The Craft of Architecture* (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2003), p.18

³⁹² Francesco Dal Co and Giuseppe Mazzariol, *Carlo Scarpa* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), 282.

³⁹³ MAXXI Museo nazionale delle arti del XXI secolo, Roma. Collezione MAXXI Architettura. Archivio Carlo Scarpa.

Poetry here is interpreted as the essence of artistic expression, closely aligned with an existential meaning. Through poetry we can comprehend more about ourselves, our existence. Scarpa also explains his vision for the project stating:

I wanted to show some ways in which you could approach death in a social and civic way; and further what meaning there was in death, in the ephemerality of life—other than these shoe-boxes.³⁹⁴

Lastly, as mentioned previously in the thesis, Scarpa states:

If the architecture is any good, a person who looks and listens will feel its good effects without noticing.³⁹⁵

The human element which measures the ‘success’ of architecture seems to always be present, one way or the other. Elaborating on these words, and having investigated in-depth the multitude of poetic expressions, towards wellbeing at the Brion Cemetery, there is also Scarpa’s educational attitude “I wanted to show...”, a sort of passing down the torch of knowledge. Often poetry is considered a form of entertainment, as mere escapism. However, there is another point of view. One of the terms used in Greek for “entertainment” is ψυχαγωγία (psychagogia). The word stems from antiquity and (etymologically & literally) means the guidance of the soul, from ψυχή “soul” and ἄγειν “to lead, direct, or guide”³⁹⁶. Karsten Harries observes: ‘Ruskin calls architecture unnecessary. Of course, he does not really mean this, for despite, or perhaps precisely because of its uselessness, architecture is said to contribute to our “mental health, power and pleasure’.³⁹⁷

The Brion Cemetery, I would sustain, sits in all its well-crafted architectural splendour, useless but use-full: it is devoid of imposed societal narratives and expectations, it is full of creative and potential narratives that the people, themselves, can construct. It is a gift to be experienced freely by all, to interact with the psyche, like a beautiful poem created carefully

³⁹⁴ Sergio Los, Carlo Scarpa: *An Architectural Guide* (Venice: Arsenale Editrice, 1995), p.94

³⁹⁵ Francesco Dal Co and Giuseppe Mazzariol, *Carlo Scarpa: The complete works* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), p.286.

³⁹⁶ Brad Inwood, *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy, Volume 43* (Oxford University Press, 2012), p.3.

³⁹⁷ Karsten Harries, *The Ethical Function of Architecture* (Cambridge, Mass : MIT Press, 1997), p.15.

and with care, which aims to address, direct, and potentially empower the soul. It is my firm belief that, just as in life, so in architecture anyone who perpetuates the idea that poetry (and art in general), is for the few and a luxury, betrays and misses poetry's active, healing, empowering and potentially educational role in shaping and expanding peoples' minds - something which should be accessible to all.

Summarising, this thesis explores the existential experiences present at the Brion Cemetery, as well as human psychological reactions, through the lens of its poetic qualities. Poetry is considered to be an important facilitator in the equation. Catharsis and strong emotional identification, self-awareness and reframing have been identified as powerful psychological reactions present at the Brion Cemetery.

7.3 BODY, SENSES, NATURALELEMENTS, MATERIALITY AND LANDSCAPE AS COMMON THEMES

7.3.1 Introduction

Carlo Scarpa remarks:

For the Brion tomb, I could have suggested planting a thousand cypresses — a thousand cypresses are a large natural park, and a natural event, in the years ahead, would have produced a better effect than my architecture. But as always happens at the end of any piece of work, I've been thinking: "Dear me, I've done it all wrong!"³⁹⁸

The body and the senses as well as the importance of landscape and natural elements are critical at the Brion. As aforementioned in Chapters 4, 5, and 6 they also emerge as key themes at the Propylaea, the Water Pavilion and the Arcosolium. In this subchapter they will be discussed in detail and as part of a greater theme present at the Brion Cemetery.

³⁹⁸ Francesco Dal Co and Giuseppe Mazzariol, *Carlo Scarpa: The complete works* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), p.286.

7.3.2 The engagement of the body and the senses

Through the body, the natural element, present at the Brion, is analysed. Jo Seungkoo observes: ‘On the basis of body-subject’s knowledge of the world, bodies become lived experiences in Scarpa’s works’.³⁹⁹ Poetry Therapist Nicolas Mazza observes how “writing the body” i.e., “write a poem which attends to one part of the body”⁴⁰⁰ is part of four writing exercises to improve well-being including resilience for those who have experienced trauma. The Brion Cemetery has also been analysed through the prism of the body and senses, in the literature, as discussed in Chapter 2. Poets, on the other hand, have long been expressing and “writing” the body, throughout the years, and its relation to its surroundings. As Pallasmaa observes:

“I am my body”, Gabriel Marcel (in Dreyfus and Dreyfus, 1964: xii) claims; “I am what is around me”, Wallace Stevens (1990: 86) argues; “I am the space, where I am”, Noel Arnaud (in Bachelard, 1964: 157) establishes; and finally, “I am my world”, Ludwig Wittgenstein (1972: 68, prop. 5.63) concludes.⁴⁰¹

In one of Carlo Scarpa’s cigarette packs, I found the following quote:

“It’s acting/doing that is liked
Creating is a superior pleasure
And it’s true for all arts
Seeing the act of creation is a pleasure

-Alain 1868 Chartier-⁴⁰²

The kinaesthetic element at the Brion Cemetery and Scarpa’s architecture are characteristic of

³⁹⁹ Jo Seungkoo, ‘Body-Subject’s Knowledge of The World in Architectural Representation’, *Journal of Asian Architecture and Building Engineering*, 3.1 (2004), 207-215, p.210.

⁴⁰⁰ Nicholas Mazza, *Poetry Therapy : Theory and Practice* (Florence: Taylor and Francis, 2016), p.31.

⁴⁰¹ Juhani Pallasmaa, ‘Embodied and Existential Wisdom in Architecture’, *Body & Society*, 23.1 (2017), 96-111, p.100.

⁴⁰² MAXXI Museo nazionale delle arti del XXI secolo, Roma. Collezione MAXXI Architettura. Archivio Carlo Scarpa.

his work. The acting/doing that is mentioned in the previous quote and the pleasure it creates is embedded in the manner that Scarpa creates the space. In Scarpa's drawings for the Water Pavilion the same motif which is present throughout the Brion Cemetery continues: human figures are drawn, interacting with architecture intimately. Marco Frascari observes: 'Carlo Scarpa approached the question of the body through the medium of the drawing'.⁴⁰³ Human bodies wander around in space, touch, observe, interact with each other and the architecture at the Water Pavilion. Nicholas Olbserg writes:

Above all, he insisted that the building of a vocabulary of material and ornament was a critical step in capturing those senses-tactile, psychological and mnemonic-that open a work of architecture to "maximum expression and meaning".⁴⁰⁴

The body then becomes the gateway to understanding our situation, I would argue. It is the vehicle for action. The visitor can use their senses to touch, hear, feel, look at, smell their surroundings and reach stimuli at the Water Pavilion. The body is also connected to metaphors, which are at the basis of poetry. Metaphors can be connected to the concept of "embodiment," as described by philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty, as well as to the synesthetic process of sensory intertwinement, as described by Harry Malgrave, in *The Architect's Brain*.⁴⁰⁵ In the latter, the senses become a powerful compass.

During my conversation with Carlo Scarpa's collaborator, Guido Pietropoli, at one point, and as we were discussing Scarpa as a poet and poetic architecture and the Brion Cemetery, the discussion moved towards the importance of senses for the poet. He sustained: 'In general, the figure of the poet is that of a person to whom their sensations are very evident; they are very aware of themselves and of their body and therefore can narrate what their body feels, perceives'.⁴⁰⁶

This invitation of senses, the harmonious collaboration of senses, in a synesthetic-like manner, perceived by the visitor as a single experience and resulting to a 'physical mess and sensual matter',⁴⁰⁷ as described by architect Peter Buchanan with regards to the experiential

⁴⁰³ Marco Frascari, 'A New Corporeality of Architecture', *Journal of Architectural Education*, 40.2 (1987), 22-23, p.23.

⁴⁰⁴ Nicholas Olsberg and Guidi Guido, *Carlo Scarpa Architect: Intervening with History* (Montréal, Québec: The Canadian Centre for Architecture, 1999), p.13.

⁴⁰⁵ Harry Francis Mallgrave, *The Architect's Brain* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell,2011), p.175.

⁴⁰⁶ Conversation with Guido Pietropoli, 2019.

⁴⁰⁷ Peter Buchanan, 'Garden of Death and Dreams', *Architectural Review*, 179 (1985),54-59, p.54.

qualities of the Brion Cemetery, seem to have a powerful effect on visitors. Senses are awakened, through a gentle invitation and being kept alert throughout the experience. If we are to believe that metaphors, as described in previous sections of the chapter, are made up of such collisions and connections between different senses, then we may be in the right direction. A relevant intervention was made by Marco Frascari, with regards to the power of this embodied perspective, who suggested that: ‘Through embodiment, architecture becomes a perspicuous representation, a real human project, a representation of a becoming, dealing with a therapeutic dimension’.⁴⁰⁸Jelic and others argue: ‘As phenomenologists like Merleau-Ponty (1962, p. 129, 1964) have firmly established, “the body is our general medium for having the world” and therefore, our mode of experiential access to the world of architecture’.⁴⁰⁹During my personal on-site observations, and as described in the first subsection of this chapter, all my senses ,except for taste, were heavily involved in the experience of the Water Pavilion. The materiality invites for exploration. Pérez-Gómez states:

The omnidirectional senses of hearing, hapticity and smell complement the visual sensations to produce a multisensory existential experience relating us fully with our setting. The experience of atmosphere or mood is thus predominantly an emotive, pre-reflective mode of experience .⁴¹⁰

During the interviews, one student observed that at the Brion Cemetery: “They all held (the parts) different atmospheres. I think probably the most emphasized atmosphere is probably the one at the Water Pavilion. I think that's to do with the water”.⁴¹¹ Another student observed how: “That's why I thought like that the space was very poetic. [...] I think it combines nature with materials, makes the architecture more poetic [...] Because it's more calm, it's more...it's out of like the busy city, nature is more...[...].”⁴¹² In Poetry, Therapy and

⁴⁰⁸ Marco Frascari, ‘A New Corporeality of Architecture’, *Journal of Architectural Education*, 40.2(1987), 22-23, p.23.

⁴⁰⁹ Andrea Jelić, Gaetano Etieri, Matteis Federico Ede, Ebabeloni and Evecchiato Giovanni, ‘The Enactive Approach To Architectural Experience: A Neurophysiological Perspective On Embodiment, Motivation, And Affordances’, *Frontiers In Psychology*, 7 (2016), p. 8.

⁴¹⁰ Juhani Pallasmaa, ‘The Sixth Sense: The meaning of atmosphere and mood’, *Architectural Design*, 86.6, 126-133, p.130.

⁴¹¹ Interview with a student, 2018.

⁴¹² Ibid., 2018.

Emotional Life, Diana Hedges states:

Writing poetry requires thought and imagination. Performing poetry demands overcoming fear, being disciplined and having immense courage. To present a poem means employing techniques of body language, voice intonation, gestures, and facial expressions: all of these are useful in the real world. ⁴¹³

As mentioned in the previous subsection of the chapter, Guido Pietropoli argues that the gift that the architect as a poet gives in the Water Pavilion is the awareness of themselves, that they can perceive and observe their breath.⁴¹⁴ This sense of awareness connects to the body and the poetic quality. The body, in this sense, is intimately connected to the understanding of the experience, it can become a tool for sense-making and/or expression of the self. At the Brion, and the Water Pavilion specifically, the landscape allows for slowing down the pace, for observing, as explained in the previous subchapter.

Pallasmaa writes:

In our age of massive industrial production, surreal consumption, euphoric communication, and fictitious digital environments, we continue to live in our bodies in the same way that we inhabit our houses, because we have sadly forgotten that we do not live in our bodies, but we are ourselves fundamentally embodied constitutions. Embodiment is not a secondary experience; the human existence is basically an embodied condition. ⁴¹⁵

During my personal observations, and as mentioned in the previous subchapter, I observed how the entrance kept drawing my attention in and focusing my attention on the experience. This concept of sharpening the focus and bringing awareness to the experience was one which was also described at the Water Pavilion Chapter. During the interviews, one student said: “I think the circles. I thought it was unique and it's something that we don't usually see

⁴¹³ Diana Hedges, *Poetry, Therapy and Emotional Life* (CRC Press, 2017), p. 127.

⁴¹⁴ Conversation with Guido Pietropoli, 2019.

⁴¹⁵ Juhani Pallasmaa, ‘Embodied and Existential Wisdom in Architecture’, *Body & Society*, 23.1 (2017), 96-111, p. 99.

in cemeteries and it's the first thing that you see when you enter the Cemetery".⁴¹⁶ Another one, commented:

I think the entrance way that sort of entrance and then that sort of corridor space. [...] I think that is probably the most maybe dramatic, I think it really puts you in really quickly and straight away and has the most extreme things in it [...] quite loud [...] and there's colours as well on the circles, I think that's probably the most like intense bit, it's sort of like the densest sort of story there.⁴¹⁷

This quick introduction and sharp, immediate grasp of attention can be stimulating, psychologically. Vision becomes focused, in line with the axis of the linear path towards the entrance. Poetry is deemed to have the same effect, within a therapeutic context. Mazza claims:

Focus on the therapy sessions could be increased through the use of a preexisting poem by directing attention to a particular line or asking individuals how they might change the poem to reflect their thoughts or feelings more accurately. When there is drifting away from a central issue by an individual, the use of a poem can focus the session and reassess the purpose of therapy.⁴¹⁸

7.3.3 Materiality, natural elements, and landscape

The space is deeply energetic, and the aspect of nature complements this effect, changing with the seasons, becoming a vehicle, a poem about change, transformation, death, and rebirth, with plants and nature following that circle. Nature is critical. Scarpa collaborated with Pietro Porcinai, the well-known Italian landscape architect, when it came to the planting plants.⁴¹⁹

⁴¹⁶ Interview with a student, 2018.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid.

⁴¹⁸ Mazza, Nicholas, *Poetry Therapy : Theory and Practice* (Florence: Taylor and Francis, 2016), p.36.

⁴¹⁹ Marc Treib and Luigi Latini, Editors, *Pietro Porcinai and the landscape of Modern Italy* (Routledge: 2006) p. 115.

At the Propylaea, the tree which greets us at the entrance is a central element. Scarpa did not place it there accidentally. In our conversation, with Guido Pietropoli, he asserted how the current tree is “terrible,” in comparison to the original one, which Scarpa chose carefully and was intended to create a “curtain” while entering.⁴²⁰ He observed how that threshold was meant to make the visitor aware of the shift that accompanies a new reality, that of the Cemetery. He also noted how the leaves of the tree were meant to “sting” the fingers of the person, while moving them away from their body in their entrance. By “sting” no pain or discomfort was implied, but a sense of making one sharply aware of their body, where they are, what they are about to witness, and, also, for the experience to act as a reminder of death as a concept. Poets have also long used nature and natural elements in their writing, as vehicles towards a certain purpose. Metaphors and similes can be full of images of plants, trees, the sea, the sky, animals etc. In Poetry Therapy, nature is deemed to have a significance.

Mazza argues:

Nature (plants, animals, landscape) offers ecological lessons on life and living. This collection is consistent with humanistic theory and practice (p. iii). The poetry speaks to what is universal in our experience with nature and is helpful as we pass through transitions. Moats et al. provide numerous poetry activities to engage nature. These activities include the following that relate specifically to writing and poetry.⁴²¹

He also notes that:

The direct contact with nature relates to client empowerment and authenticity. It was also noted that “the triangular therapist-client-nature” (p. 249) is of paramount importance. Rituals are also into nature therapy thus consistently used in the symbolic/ ceremonial mode of poetry therapy.⁴²²

Landscapes outside connect with the landscapes inside, I would say. Diane Hedges remarks:

⁴²⁰ Conversation with Guido Pietropoli, 2019.

⁴²¹ Nicholas Mazza, *Poetry Therapy : Theory and Practice* (Florence: Taylor and Francis, 2016), p.32.

⁴²² Ibid.

In *The language of landscape*, (1998), Anne Whiston Spirn writes that landscape has all the features of language – structure, formation, pattern, shape, and function. Landscape is “pragmatic, poetic, rhetorical, polemical”. She also speculates that many poets had a particularly intimate connection with nature. She observes: “Nature as inspiration, as educator, as nurturer, as battlefield. It is as if nature carries our feelings, or we project onto nature certain feelings, often very intense ones”.⁴²³

At the Water Pavilion, one is exposed to the natural elements from all sides, as described in previous subsections. The Water Pavilion interacts with water, the sky, plants, it is open all year round and exposed to the effects of all the natural elements. Nicholas Olsberg recalls the poem which Louis Kahn wrote, for Scarpa’s work:

“The detail is the adoration of Nature”, Louis Kahn wrote, by "adoration" probably meaning a respectful gratuitousness conscious of its own cognitive and creative powers. It has to do with an overall aspiration toward richness that lies as much outside Scarpa's architecture as within it .⁴²⁴

Diane Hedges states:

We have seen that, in transpersonal work, images and active imagination are used to help people feel connected to a deeper part of themselves. Imagery, metaphor and evocative sounds, the tools of poetry, are used to achieve the same aim. Poems about nature are by no means the only subject matter, but I have chosen to focus on them because they are used so often and in many diverse cultures. Nature is often the vehicle a poet uses to express deeply human and spiritual experiences, those described by Maslow’s ‘peak experiences’.⁴²⁵

In the visitor’s guestbook, found at the Brion, one visitor wrote: “Harmony, Silence, Geometry, Light, Sky, Water, Earth, Trees... That’s how I imagine eternity. Thanks to Carlo

⁴²³ Diana Hedges, *Poetry, Therapy and Emotional Life* (CRC Press, 2017), p 44.

⁴²⁴ Francesco Dal Co and Giuseppe Mazzariol, *Carlo Scarpa: The complete works* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), p.19.

⁴²⁵ Diana Hedges, *Poetry, Therapy and Emotional Life* (CRC Press, 2017), p 43.

Scarpa”.⁴²⁶ On this note, it is significant to discuss the presence of compelling images. From the moment one reaches the Water Pavilion, there is a landscape that unfolds ahead of them. Bachelard writes: ‘Generally, in fact, the word image, in the works of psychologists, is surrounded with confusion: we see images, we reproduce images, we retain images in our memory. The image is everything except a direct product of the imagination’. On a related note,⁴²⁷ Olsen McBride states:

The most recent, and by far the most detailed, criteria for the selection of poetry for use in a poetry therapy intervention were developed by Hynes and Hynes-Berry (1994). Hynes and Hynes-Berry’s (1994) criteria involve the examination of “thematic dimensions” and “stylistic dimensions”. Desired stylistic dimensions are compelling rhythm; striking and/or concrete imagery; simple, precise, and clear language; and succinctness or manageability.⁴²⁸

Gerald Walker agrees:

And there are other sources for gaining access to poetic images. Where, for example, can we find better images of buildings and the way people deal with them than in Faulkner or Garcia Marquez or Iris Murdoch? What does Wallace Stevens say about buildings in his poetry? If we need to understand what counts in today's American culture, is it really illegitimate to listen carefully to the blue-collar laments of Bruce Springsteen?⁴²⁹

Overall, the Brion Cemetery presents opportunities for the visitor to engage with the totality of their body and to receive this space as it stands, intertwined with nature. As Arrigo Rudi, a close collaborator of Scarpa’s, once remarked: ‘You cannot walk in a building designed by

⁴²⁶ Comment by a visitor in the Brion visitors’ guestbook, 2019.

⁴²⁷ Gaston Bachelard, *Poetics of Space* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), p. xxxiv.

⁴²⁸ Leah Olson-McBride, ‘A Content Analysis of Poems Most Frequently Utilized by Poetry Therapists’, *Journal of Poetry Therapy: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Practice, Theory, Research, and Education*, 25.3(2012), 137-149, p.140.

⁴²⁹ Gerald Walker, ‘Architecture, Method, and the Poetic Image’, *Journal of Architectural Education*, 40.2, (1987) 85-86, p.86.

Scarpa with your hands in the pockets'.⁴³⁰ The visitor can choose to interact. The powerful images, materiality and nature provide stimuli. What one decides to do with them is up to them. The body is an indispensable part of experiencing the space at the Brion Cemetery. It continuously asks to engage and to become present, to feel to experience. Gianluca Frediani observes: 'Scarpa was certainly an inspired singer of materiality and a delicate poet of the immaterial'.⁴³¹

7.3.4 Conclusion

This subchapter has investigated all the core psychological themes that emerge at the three tangible examples that the thesis focuses on. It has connected all the important elements emerging from the primary materials analysis. It has also highlighted how Scarpa's approach supported the manifestation of the poetic element in space. This includes the direct involvement of the body, senses, materiality, nature and the landscape. The Brion Cemetery is an existential space, in the sense that it brings the visitor back to existence, I would argue. The subchapter concludes that wellbeing at the Brion Cemetery emerges not as a binary of experiences (pleasant/unpleasant), but as a spectrum. One that holds potential and can aid towards internal elaborations and potentially, healing.

7.4 THE DYNAMIC AND STATIC ELEMENT, AT THE BRION CEMETERY

7.4.1 Introduction

During one of the interviews, a student observed:

⁴³⁰ Marco Frascari, 'The Lume Materiale in the Architecture of Venice', *Perspecta*, 24 (1988), 136-145, p. 141.

⁴³¹ Gianluca Frediani, *Sul filo dell'orizzonte: architettura fra terra e cielo. Carlo Scarpa: la gipsotecacanoviana (1955-1957) e la tomba Brion (1969-1978)* https://www.academia.edu/9646016/Sul_filo_dell_orizzonte_architettura_fra_terra_e_cielo_Carlo_Scarpa_la_gipsoteca_canoviana_1955_1957_e_la_tomba_Brion_1969_1978 [accessed on 15 December 2023].

It is something I've never really experienced before. In the sense that...well I would I mean I've been on other study trips to see other cemeteries. [...] Everything's peaceful and laid out and sort of has this stillness to the place. But I think the Brion Cemetery is really dynamic and it's sort of static in any way...you know you always imagine every little piece to be moving even when it's not you see these sort of joints which are like hinges, but they're not.⁴³²

The subchapter analyses two major themes of the thesis, identified as part of the initial data analysis and triangulation, explained in Chapter 3. These two major themes are: the dynamic and the static elements. The chapter aims at highlighting how these two categories emerge generally and how they connect specifically to the aforementioned three moments in space, examined in Chapter 3,4 and 5. In this way, the themes are connected and brought in alignment with the broader articulation of wellbeing at the Brion Cemetery.

7.4.2 The dynamic element

7.4.2.1 Introduction

The dynamic element is crucial to the understanding of the emotional spectrum evoked at the Brion Cemetery. As mentioned in previous chapters, the Brion Cemetery has emerged as a space where rest happens. However, much more is at play: a certain kind of playfulness, a dynamic request for the visitor to participate actively with their bodies and choices of movement. Moreover, these emotions and experiences, which emerge repeatedly as a common theme in the primary materials, differ from the other category of analysis (static/rest), and hold a powerful presence at the Brion Cemetery. The presence of this dynamic element is perceived as an oxymoron, or a surprise, within the context of a cemetery, as well as a rather rare/unique characteristic, present at the Brion Cemetery. In this subchapter, thus making it significant within the context of this research, testimonials to this element have been gathered and weaved together. This includes the students' interviews, on-site students' observations, Brion Cemetery's visitor guestbook notes, on-site personal observations, archival drawings, archival texts, and on-site photographs. Sub-themes that are

⁴³² Interview with a student, 2018.

explored are those of the element of *surprise, playfulness, exploration, curiosity, effort*. They are grouped to convey an overall atmosphere of vivid engagement with space.

7.4.2.2 Dialogues, Relationality and Shared Experiences at the Brion Cemetery: A Sense of Wellbeing from Active Engagement Surprise and Playfulness

Yutaka Saito writes:

The attempt to describe Scarpa's works in words can only end up in banality. There is no substitute for directly engaging his works with an uncluttered mind and an open heart. Only then can they truly be enjoyed and appreciated. For me, at least, this is the only way to reach the essence of Scarpa's architecture—to begin to hear his poetry.⁴³³

This dynamic element is expressed in various manners at the Brion Cemetery. To begin with, it occurs through an active kinaesthetic element, which prompts the body to a constant exploration, movement and, in some cases effort. The mind becomes active and alert in an investigative mode. This is more obvious upon the first visit, when someone does not yet know the space. However, from my personal experience and subsequent visits to the place, it never ceases to be present. I would argue that this happens because of a multitude of reasons: Firstly, the constant changes of the weather and exposure to nature and interaction with the unpredictability of the natural elements: wind, rain, light and shadow. Secondly, the inexhaustible details and considerations one makes when exploring the space. As one student observed: "It's different. It's full of unexpected, kind of interesting features that in every day you don't really [...] Everywhere you went there was an underlying level of detail".⁴³⁴ This is not only highlighted from the elaborate architectural elements, but also from the imaginative ways with which ordinary elements are presented. Another student observed:

There's always surprises everywhere that you don't get when you're just walking in a normal building. [...] I've never seen anything like that, he sort of reimagined all these really everyday things, sort of like, [...] adding value to every day, doors and stairs

⁴³³ Yutaka Saito, *Towards Poetry: The Works of Carlo Scarpa* (Toto, 1997), p. 240.

⁴³⁴ Interview with a student, 2018.

have this extra element, doors are completely re-imagined. So..[...] similar to the everyday but advanced.⁴³⁵

Thirdly, the spectrum of relational dynamics that the space offers, due to its possibilities of interacting with the state of mind of the visitors, are also ephemeral and fluid. However, whether one visits the Cemetery for the first time or not, an element of surprise is always present. This element of surprise is not only present in the details, but also in the perspective that Scarpa introduces, by shifting the point of view of the visitor. As a student noted: “[...] I wasn't expecting anything like that because it's not like a normal cemetery [...] It was more like a landscape, a narrative experience, a journey around. And the experience never ended, like, you keep searching for things and keep noticing things”.⁴³⁶

This surprise element which sparks curiosity leads to an explorative attitude, and a questioning attitude. Nothing is obvious anymore. The visitor is not a passive recipient, but a continually active co-creator of the narratives. Narratives draw on life itself and its complexity. Carolina Dyer writes:

It is not a coincidence that Frascari would have invoked Scarpa's name to think of confabulations. Scarpa, a storyteller par excellence, exercised the power of confabulations throughout his architectural drawings. From doodles to musical score notations, from sections coexisting together with different scale plan drawings, every trace, planned or unplanned, seems to have whispered a story to the design of the building. Scarpa's practice of drawing things together relies on the observation that seemingly unrelated events inevitably relate when encountered on the sheet of paper, allowing a field of possible new thoughts to continually emerge. Such encounters with and inside drawings resonate with a thought by Italo Calvino, another Italian storyteller who believed that "in a work of literature, various levels of reality may meet while remaining distinct and separate, or else they may melt and mingle and knit together, achieving a harmony among their contradictions or else forming an explosive mixture”.⁴³⁷

⁴³⁵ Interview with a student, 2018.

⁴³⁶ Ibid.

⁴³⁷ Paul Emmons, Marcia F Feuerstein, and Carolina Dayer, *Confabulations : Storytelling in Architecture* (Taylor & Francis, 2016), p.176.

Not only are visitors invited to join, but they are required to, in a sense. Yet ,all of this happens without it imposing its presence. I would say that this is a high achievement on behalf of Scarpa as an architect, as there is a fine balance, and somehow Scarpa manages to avoid reducing this space into a rhetorical, obvious experience. And this is where its poetic element comes to the surface, rather than being prosaic. A student described the Cemetery as:

Explorative. Revealing. Mysterious [...] There is a process of exploring the Cemetery but there's also... that also links to the revealing thing, cause as you explore [...] feelings kind of reveal themselves, I think the mysterious one is more probably atmospheric, than directional.⁴³⁸

In a letter to Scarpa, which I found at the MAXXI Museum archives, one of his friends writes to him and describes Scarpa's ability in this sense by describing his work as holding an: "[...] element authentically stimulative to operate against the mental laziness with that liberty that has nothing to do with the arbitrary, but stems from the endless limitations".⁴³⁹ Stimulation, liberty and a very carefully studied openness are all qualities that one can discern in the Brion Cemetery. And there is also another element: that of a certain playfulness. At the Brion Cemetery, this playfulness allows the visitor to let down their guard and be more open. Openness is required if one is to imagine and poeticize. One student observed:

I wouldn't say there was some sort of immediate emotional connection. But I think the space just really invites you to sort of explore, it kind of instills that sort of an adventurous sense because you're just sort of discovering a new place that you've never really seen. [...] I think for a lot of us, from our, just our discussions of the group, it seemed as though we'd never really come across something like that before. That kind of level of architecture, I mean it's really playful. So, it just it kind of invites you to explore I guess. So those are the sort of feelings...I guess excitement is probably one feeling that you would say.⁴⁴⁰

⁴³⁸ Interview with a student, 2018.

⁴³⁹ MAXXI Museo nazionale delle arti del XXI secolo, Roma. Collezione MAXXI Architettura. Archivio Carlo Scarpa.

⁴⁴⁰ Interview with a student, 2018.

Another student remarked:

I think it's sort of all the little surprises that you get as you're going around, as you're walking through...[...] if you were a child it 'd be an amazing place to play hide and seek. [...] Because of the little sort of corners and niches nuts and leashes and inside out places like when the [...] pumping room was with this very narrow staircase.⁴⁴¹

7.4.2.3 Effort & Reflection

Juhani Pallasmaa in *Eyes of the Skin* argues:

Modern architectural theory and critique have had a strong tendency to regard space as an immaterial object delineated by material surfaces, instead of understanding space in terms of dynamic interactions and interrelations. Japanese thinking, however, is founded on a relational understanding of the concept of space. In recognition of the verb - essence of the architectural experience, Professor Fred Thompson, in his essay on the concept of *Ilia*, uses the notions of 'spacing' instead of 'space', and of 'timing' instead of 'time', and the unity of space and time in Japanese thinking. He aptly describes units of architectural experience with gerunds, or verb-nouns.⁴⁴²

Carlo Scarpa, who coincidentally was deeply influenced by Japanese thought and architecture, seems to create this network of active relations, with the purpose of enhancing the value of the experience in architecture. He, indeed, once stated that: 'To achieve anything, we have to invent relationships'.⁴⁴³ As described in the previous sections of the chapter, the person is invited to participate in various, and sometimes surprising, ways. The value of this dynamic relationality and participation with regards to a sense of wellbeing is significant and connects to the poetic experience of space. One element which emerged during observations, especially during the interviews, is effort and it will be discussed in this section. Effort

⁴⁴¹ Interview with a student, 2018.

⁴⁴² Juhani Pallasmaa, *The Eyes of The Skin* (Chichester:Wiley, 2005), p.64.

⁴⁴³ Francesco Dal Co and Giuseppe Mazzariol, *Carlo Scarpa: The complete works* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), p.282.

emerged as both an element of disruption, in terms of interrupting a passive experience, but also as an element of participation and reflection. While answering to the question of “what stayed with you from the experience,” one student observed:

For me it would be that gate, pushing the gate down, like so... Like normally I'm really, I don't like to go places that I shouldn't go and if there's a gate there, I won't go. So, like seeing other people on the other side of the gate I was like "No I can get over there, and I will". And then like, how do you do it...Yeah, it's like you were rewarded for playing with it. And I think you don't get that with normal buildings.⁴⁴⁴

During the on-site observations of my visit to the Brion Cemetery with the architectural students, in 2018, there was one incident of particular interest to me. As I was observing students from a distance, and making sure I was not, in any way, interfering in their interactions, I slowly approached two of them who seemed deeply engaged in a conversation, by attempting to make sense of a specific detail at the Brion Cemetery: a path that leads nowhere:

You see what I mean -Yeah, no it makes sense” Like I said (?) you would just pull a notch in[...] But I guess..yeah, it's sort of that effort. Yeah, I can see your point. -It's like that door, (?) pushing -Yeah there's a lot of effort that goes into.... She interrupts him -“Life” (they both laugh)⁴⁴⁵

It is as if once Scarpa has achieved capturing one's attention, by showing that everything is so well thought out to the tiniest details (he worked on the Brion Cemetery for 10 years and produced more than 2,000 drawings), the mind starts attempting to decipher everything and offering explanations, while the body is engaged all along. The architect did intend to make this space a place to contemplate on life and, although one might have assumed this function to be taking place in more “reflective” parts of the Cemetery (for example, the Water Pavilion), this process is activated in multiple ways. Plummer argues:

⁴⁴⁴ Interview with a student, 2018.

⁴⁴⁵ On-site observations of students, 2018.

The most liberating aspect of these mutable environments is what they effect beyond their work, freeing us somewhat from goals and use and drawing us into the delights of interplay. While we can close or open apertures, dim or amplify illumination, the kinetic elements are not entirely literal or predictable.⁴⁴⁶

He continues: 'The liberated dweller, like the reader of poetry, is given many fragmentary beginning and suggestions for meaningful experience...'⁴⁴⁷ and further explains:

Increasing evidence comes from psychiatrists that freedom and play are not only enjoyable, but are the primary facilitator of self-restoration and well-being. Donald Winnicott has written that "it is in playing and only in playing that the individual child or adult is able to be creative"⁴⁴⁸

During the interviews, a student observed how the element of effort brings awareness, and further realisations:

[...] So I don't know whether it's more for the people to experience his architecture, rather than his architecture be for people. [...] Rather than just being perfect for people[.]it would be quite hard to live in a space like that, you would have to get used to it, because it makes you really think about it and experience it rather than walking down some stairs. You have to be quite careful and slow but then I think when you make things you hear the sound and it feels different. [...] It's kind of a like thoughtful place to which I be. [...] I don't know maybe that's what he was trying to do, like the Cemetery is quite a thoughtful place [...] [...] When you walk onto that pond, which covered bit on the pond there's quite a big gap between the walkway and when you get on to that. So, you do all the time have to be like quite aware of the built environment around you. I don't know whether that would be possible today, anymore, with sort of health and safety things. It wasn't trying to make it easy for people.

(I ask the student if that felt stressful)

⁴⁴⁶ Henry Sheppard Plummer, 'Liberative Space', *Journal of Architectural Education*, 40.3 (1987): 12-23, p. 17.

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid, p. 14.

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid.

I don't think so, no I don't think it is. I think it just makes you think a lot.⁴⁴⁹

To conclude, the dynamic experience that the Brion Cemetery presents to the visitor is of particular significance, I would say. It enhances a sense of empowerment, through active engagement, effort, surprise, curiosity, and playfulness. The reflective process and imaginative acts that are constructed in the minds of the individuals are set in motion by the poetic element at the Cemetery, which opens possibilities. Freshwater argues:

Reflective spaces have often been linked to emancipatory spaces through the application of critical and feminist theories; they offer the potential to throw off dominant ideologies including one's own, and to take responsibility for one's own life space. This is a dynamic process, is never complete and is always in the process of becoming. [...].⁴⁵⁰

Bachelard suggests about poetic space in his *Poetics of Space* 'once it is expressed, assumes qualities of extension'.⁴⁵¹ These qualities of extension for the mind are of paramount importance at the Brion Cemetery.

7.4.3 The static element

7.4.3.1 Introduction

The previous subsection was concluded by examining elements of reflective actions set in motion by the keen sense of awareness that accompanies emotions such as surprise and curiosity. In this subchapter, the thematic group concept of "static" elements is being presented. This notion is analysed through coded concepts that emerged from the NVivo analysis, such as "reflection," "contemplation," "silence," "stillness," "calmness," "peace" and "slowness." Static is defined as "lacking in movement, action, or change, especially in an undesirable or uninteresting way" [...] and in physics as "concerned with bodies at rest or

⁴⁴⁹ Interview with a student, 2018.

⁴⁵⁰ Dawn Freshwater, 'The Poetics of Space: Researching the Concept of Spatiality Through Relationality', *Psychodynamic Practice*, 11.2 (2015): 177-187, p. 186.

⁴⁵¹ Gaston Bachelard, *Poetics of Space* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), p. 201.

forces in equilibrium, often contrasted with dynamic.” Etymologically it stems from the Greek word *statikos* “causing to stand”, from the verb “*histanai*”.⁴⁵² This interpretation is significant in the context of the study’s analysis. Causing to stand here is interpreted as a moment in time where a sense of a “breath” in space is introduced; where calmness and silence, slowness and stillness become valuable tools, towards a sense of wellbeing present in the architectural experience.

Therefore, concepts of restorative elements are being introduced. In the field of Environmental Psychology, restorative design elements include “retreat, fascination, and cognitive capacity and are fostered by several types of exposure to nature”,⁴⁵³ as sustained by Evans and Mitchel McCoy. These elements can be identified at the Brion Cemetery and, combined with the natural elements (landscape), create a powerful effect.

7.3.1.2 Emotion, Calmness and Contemplation

In one of the interviews with students, in line with previous analysis, one of them observed:

I remember thinking that it seemed to be a memento mori [...] like there’s little reminders of death, in like not in an overly morbid, horrible way but things like the flooring where it moves, to me it feels like you’re walking on like tombs, or something like that. I think it felt like a reminder of that. [...] It’s got quite a clever play where at times it was that you were reminded of death and then other times it’s a bit more lighter, you know where you’ve got the pavilion, where you see a very light structure [...] I think his [...] making that contrast so you’re aware of both what you’re telling us about the water coming down and feeding out and drying out [...] ⁴⁵⁴

During the interviewing process, one student observing the complexity of the Cemetery commented: “Peaceful. I’d say probably at the same time quite intense. Pretty intense like it

⁴⁵² A., Stevenson, *Oxford dictionary of English*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

⁴⁵³ Gary Evans and Janetta McCoy, ‘When Buildings Don’t Work’, *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 18.1 (1998), 85-94, p. 91.

⁴⁵⁴ Interview with a student, 2018.

was..in a good way”,⁴⁵⁵ and one visitor wrote in the guestbook: “Emotional. Vibrant. Pacifying”.⁴⁵⁶

Another student argued:

It was like forcing you to slow down which is obviously not something you get very often. [...] It was so nice to go and see something that was built beautifully. [...] It's just nice to know that things are..you know can be built...[...] properly. Slow you down.⁴⁵⁷

All these elements are beneficial to the wellbeing of the person, within space. From a psychological standpoint, Freshwater, making connections to the significance of poetic space as reflective space, with the psychotherapeutic context, writes:

Therapeutic space is somewhere where the individual can find a private mental space, free from the pressures of having to speak, where they can think aloud and bring the private background to the foreground, momentarily allowing the foreground to become background.⁴⁵⁸

Moreover, the guestbook was flooded with similar comments: “A beautiful, necessary and welcome silence, so glad we made the trip...”.⁴⁵⁹ “Not everyone has the ability to create a Silent Space...and for sure Brion-Vega is one, that will always inspire me...A dream that came true”,⁴⁶⁰ “An enchantment of peace and tranquility”.⁴⁶¹ There were also some expressions of gratitude: “An honour to have experienced such beauty and serenity. Thank you”,⁴⁶² “In distance of years I return here and I feel the same sensation of peace”.⁴⁶³

⁴⁵⁵ Interview with a student, 2018.

⁴⁵⁶ Comment by a visitor in the Brion visitors' guestbook, 2019.

⁴⁵⁷ Interview with a student, 2018.

⁴⁵⁸ Dawn Freshwater, 'The Poetics of Space: Researching the Concept of Spatiality Through Relationality', *Psychodynamic Practice*, 11.2 (2015): 177-187 p. 185.

⁴⁵⁹ Comment by a visitor in the Brion visitors' guestbook, 2019.

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁶¹ Ibid.

⁴⁶² Ibid.

⁴⁶³ Ibid.

Interestingly, Venice, the city defined by and built on water, and a lifelong influence on Scarpa, bears historically the name of La Serenissima⁴⁶⁴, which, in Italian, etymologically translates as “the most serene (city)”.

7.4.1.3 Rest for the Brions

Rest (riposò) in Italian, and as used by Carlo Scarpa stems from the concept of pause.⁴⁶⁵ There is a static energy in the pause, in the cease of action. In the archives, as part of some notes, I found a statement written by Scarpa. It reads: ‘May the soul of Giuseppe Brion rest in peace in this space dedicated to him’.⁴⁶⁶ When Scarpa wrote these words, only Giuseppe Brion had died (the husband), and Onorina Brion (the wife) along with her son, were the ones who commissioned the work to Scarpa. One visitor wrote in the guestbook: “I hope that all our beloved will rest in peace”.⁴⁶⁷ Ennio Brion remembers:

In 1968, when my father died my mother and I wanted to go to Scarpa. The choice was easy. Experience has taught me that every one of us has our own propensities. The factory was definitely not the place for Scarpa; he was good at working on small things, places of appropriateness, intimacy.⁴⁶⁸

In fact, Carlo Scarpa is often described and remembered as a master of details, in a tectonic material sense. But the emotional aspect which could be said to be hidden behind that complexity of details, and behind the elaborate joints, does not go unnoticed, I would say. Kenneth Frampton observes:

It is difficult to write about Scarpa’s work in a systematic manner, for in the last analysis his achievement can only be comprehended as a continuum. There was only

⁴⁶⁴ Eric R. Dursteler, ed., *A Companion to Venetian History, 1400-1797* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), p. 951.

⁴⁶⁵ Treccani, <https://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/ricerca/a-riposo/> [accessed 15 December 2023].

⁴⁶⁶ MAXXI Museo nazionale delle arti del XXI secolo, Roma. Collezione MAXXI Architettura. Archivio Carlo Scarpa.

⁴⁶⁷ Comment by a visitor in the Brion visitors’ guestbook.

⁴⁶⁸ Interview with architect Ennio Brion <https://www.floornature.com/ennio-brion-7265/> [accessed 15 December 2023].

the “nearness of things” and their unfolding progression from part to part and joint to joint’.⁴⁶⁹

Scarpa infuses human narratives, into the work. The description of the couple talking to each other is an endearing everyday dialogue. The Arcosolium allows for a restful presence of love and intimacy, can potentially become a space for peace for visitors, and was intended by Scarpa to be a place for rest for the deceased. Ennio Brion emphasizes:

This experience taught us that if you want good architecture you have to know how to plan and choose the right architect. If you lack the ability to choose a good architect you won’t be able to establish a good harmonious relationship with them. Even more importantly, you have to have an eye for choosing architects who are appropriate for the particular theme you have in mind. No one, for example, would commission Carlo Scarpa to design a factory. But we needed a poet to design the ‘tomb’ that we had in mind. And we couldn’t think of any architect more poetic than Scarpa.⁴⁷⁰

“We needed a poet”. The poetic element has been present at the Brion, before it was even commissioned to Scarpa, it was present when Scarpa was designing it and building it, as evidenced by the archival texts examined previously, and it is present now that it is being experienced by others, many decades later.

7.4.1.4 Conclusion

This section has summarised the function of the three psychological themes at the Brion Cemetery. It has also explored the concepts of the dynamic and static elements present at the Brion Cemetery. The chapter also highlighted the materiality as well as the natural elements and landscape as part of key common themes which were discussed in the primary materials analysis of the tangible examples, and more specifically at the Propylaea, the Water Pavilion and the Arcosolium.

⁴⁶⁹ Kenneth Frampton, *Studies in Tectonic Culture: The Poetics of Construction in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Architecture* (Chicago: MIT Press, 2001), p.332.

⁴⁷⁰ Interview with architect Ennio Brion <https://www.floornature.com/ennio-brion-7265/> [accessed 15 December 2023].

7.5 CONCLUDING STATEMENT

To conclude, the Brion Cemetery offers itself not only for the deceased. It offers itself, in a very vibrant manner, for the living as well. It is a space rich in opportunities for self-reflection and rest which can also cause internal shifts, shifts of perception and motions through emotion. Its highly poetic nature allows emotions and personal interpretations to come forth and to be expressed. I would say that through the power of a poetic, architectural experience, which allows such deep, cathartic movements in our psyche we can better make sense of ourselves and our place in the world. Catharsis, Self-awareness and Reframing ,as experiential and psychological functions ,are the core concepts of wellbeing which are brought forth at the three tangible moments. These are supported by the critical use of the body and the senses, as well as the natural elements and the landscape, which emerged as common themes at all three moments in space. Scarpa designed in a way that allowed a full range of experiences and reactions. From his intentions to how these manifested in space, polarities are not viewed as opposites but as a pendulum, all parts of life. As seen throughout the analysis, Scarpa uses a multitude of mechanisms, such as engaging the body, senses, scale, materiality, moments of surprise, curiosity, moments of uncertainty and effort, symbolism, serenity, silence, intense emotions, and the careful use of natural elements. The range of experiences in these three tangible moments in space expresses two broader key themes which were identified at the Brion Cemetery, those of the static and dynamic element. From tears to play, the Brion Cemetery is alive.

Overall, the space which is found at the Brion Cemetery, offers us an opportunity and a gift in times when a sense of wellbeing is urgently posed by other disciplines. By openly following the encounters emerging from the unfolding of the experience, and the careful examination of spatial questions and realisations, architectural research can open channels of communication with other fields of knowledge. And thus, it can contribute to the endeavour towards a better sense of understanding of how poetic experience is of value to wellbeing.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

8.1 INTRODUCTION

The Brion Cemetery supports wellbeing by bringing forth catharsis, self-awareness, and reframing. It allows for both tears and play. Covering a long way, since the first catalytic experience, many years ago and before my doctoral studies, and throughout all the several stages of the research, this concluding chapter brings us to the present. The chapter will remind and summarize the results of the study, the aims that have been achieved, and provide directions for future research.

The first chapter introduced the thesis, with an abstract, introduction and its aims. The chapter presented the research question which is: how does the poetic experience at the Brion Cemetery support wellbeing? It also narrated the three catalytic moments, which shaped the research. Firstly, an experience which took place in 2015, prior to the beginning of the doctoral studies, which remained imprinted in my mind as an intense experience of a space capable of shifting perceptions and evoking joyful reactions, was presented. Secondly, a catalytic moment in 2018, during the doctoral research, which, with the participation and perspective of others, and more particularly architectural students, revealed a slightly different point of view, one where disruption and challenge is welcome. Lastly, an experience at the Propylaea was presented, where water (tears and rain) came together in one intense moment of emotional release.

The second chapter introduced the general inter-disciplinary literature review, as well as the literature review on Scarpa and the Brion Cemetery. The review examined the field of knowledge that is created in the intersection between architecture, poetry and wellbeing. The study addressed the lack of a well-developed, systematic and robust research field identified in this intersection. By focusing on the Brion Cemetery as a case study it also offers an original reading of it, one which is informed by insights from Poetry Therapy and by the aforementioned general inter-disciplinary review.

The third chapter described the methodology and rationale which was followed, as well as the specific methods. The phenomenological theoretical framework, and more specifically the three phenomenological paths, described by David Seamon: first-person, existential, and hermeneutical set out the basis for the methodological framework. The process included:

personal visits on-site & personal observations and use of photography, architectural students' observations and interviews, interviews of Guido Pietropoli (Scarpa's collaborator), and, lastly, the readings and interpretations of the guestbook found on-site at the Brion Cemetery, and of archival original material by Scarpa (drawings, texts, letters, notes, and cigarette packs).

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 discussed the main results, with the three tangible examples that the thesis examines. The three chapters examined psychological reactions, possible at the Brion Cemetery. More specifically they evidenced:

- a. Fourth chapter: the theme of catharsis, specifically, at the intersecting circles, of the Propylaea
- b. Fifth chapter: the theme of psychological self-awareness, at the Water Pavilion
- c. Sixth chapter, the theme of reframing

The seventh chapter is the one where all the outcomes, stages of research results and triangulation of data were brought together in relation to the literature. The results were further triangulated to strengthen the concepts of wellbeing that were analysed, as the main outcomes of the study.

The thesis emphasizes the experiences of catharsis, self-awareness and reframing through an in-depth examination of the three moments in space: the Propylaea, the Water Pavilion, and the Arcosolium. The connections between articulations of wellbeing and poetic experience are made through the correlation of primary materials and insights from Poetry Therapy.

As mentioned previously, the thesis does not claim that these concepts and experiences are universal. What it does is present an in-depth study on a case study and a detailed examination and articulation of the mechanisms which allow these experiences of wellbeing.

8.2 STATE OF ART AND ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION

The initial driving motivations behind the topic of this thesis were personal and intuitive and stemmed from personal experiential observations and needs. I have always believed and understood that poetry and wellbeing are not mutually exclusive. The connection has always been obvious to me, yet the articulation of the reasons and mechanisms behind it were not. This study needed a strong example; somewhere I had experienced this and knew it to be true, architecturally. The literature offers examples, historically, where the connection was

understood. In Scarpa's work and the Cemetery, poetry is strong. Since my first on-site visit (and, unknowingly, catalytic moment for the study) the experience stayed with me as the most architecturally complete experiences I had ever witnessed. This was due to the versatility and spectrum of atmospheres and emotions present, as well as the broad spectrum of life experiences that it offers itself to, philosophically: life, death, and love. Michael Stern argues:

Scarpa was also cognizant of both the private and the public connotations of the garden, of the private contemplations of the solitary poet as he wanders in the garden and the sensual pleasures of social gatherings in the same setting: "He even suggested jokingly [of the Brion tomb] that one might just as well lie on the lawn of the cemetery with a good glass of wine and from there enjoy the view over the fertile landscape and the village of San Vito."⁴⁷¹

Furthermore, Rui Song Yuening An, and Xin, Yang state: 'Scarpa's design was both emotional and rational. In some aspects, he was more like a painter, and his works were free and easy'.⁴⁷² Since the beginning of the study, the idea of wellbeing in the built environment has only become more talked about in architectural discourse. In fact, in a recent examination of the landscape of wellbeing within the built environment, Altomonte and others discuss how wellbeing may have become the new green.⁴⁷³ This study currently finds itself in a landscape, where there are established and developing frameworks, building standards, legislations and certifications which have been trying to establish what constitutes wellbeing and measure it. This includes wellbeing being considered as one of the pillars of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.⁴⁷⁴ However, the directions, ideas, and frameworks proposed for wellbeing, generally, as well as in the built environment, follow definitions, which often,

⁴⁷¹ Michael A. Stern, 'Passages in the Garden: An Iconology of the Brion Tomb', *Landscape Journal*, 13.1 (1994): 37-57, p. 44.

⁴⁷² Song Rui, Yuening An, and Xin Yang, 'The Ecological Aesthetics of Funeral Architecture Towards Death: A Case Study of Tomba Brion', *Journal of Landscape Research*, 15.3 (2023): 90-94, p. 94.

⁴⁷³ Sergio Altomonte, Joseph Allen, Philomena M. Bluysen, Gail Brager, Lisa Hescong, Angela Loder, Stefano Schiavon, Jennifer A. Veitch, Lily Wang, and Pawel Wargocki, 'Ten Questions Concerning Well-Being in the Built Environment', *Building and Environment*, 180 (2020), 106949, p.9.

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid.

as analysed in Chapter 2, aim at avoiding negative or disruptive experiences, and promote excellence, satisfaction, and positive emotions. Rachel Dodge and others conclude:

‘Wellbeing is a growing area of research, yet the question of how it should be defined remains unanswered’⁴⁷⁵ while arguing for a sense of equilibrium.

The thesis argues for a full spectrum of experiences and that the Brion holds space, gently disrupts, and supports wellbeing, through the processes of catharsis, self-awareness and reframing. Paul Hyett observes: ‘Carlo Scarpa has the ability to create works that are both calming and provocative’.⁴⁷⁶

What is looked at is directly defined by the ‘lens’ one is using. But what if the “lens” is different? What if the definition needs to change? How would the built environment respond to the need, perhaps, to have spaces, not only that are risk averse or positive, but that challenge the person and can help empower them? The interpretations of wellbeing at the Brion are but a start, and in a way show a path and future research ahead. This study, by introducing a third parameter, poetry, affects propositions of what constitutes wellbeing. At the Brion Cemetery, a sense of wellbeing is connected to poetry. By including poetry as a parameter, wellbeing cannot be seen as a direct equation. Poetry acts as a prism through which the ‘light’ of understanding passes, and its course may change.

Wellbeing can be present but is difficult to be measured. Stephen Kite observes:

‘Practitioners are under pressure to quantify quality, but it remains questionable whether it is possible or even desirable to do so’.⁴⁷⁷ Mhairi McVicar concludes: ‘Quality as defined, applauded and pursued by architects is more often a quality of extremities, deriving from deviations from the standard, from the richness of ambiguity, from something more than an objective of certainty can promise’.⁴⁷⁸

Wellbeing, in its holistic sense, can, however, be experienced and evaluated. And that part is important because experience exists, it is observable. Still, one cannot intentionally make poetry, as Scarpa argues. The danger with frameworks is that they simplify human experience and narrow down what wellbeing means. That should not mean, I would argue, being

⁴⁷⁵ Rachel Dodge, Annette P. Daly, Jan Huyton, Lalage D. Sanders, ‘The Challenge of Defining Wellbeing’, *International Journal of Wellbeing*, 2.3 (2012), 222–35, p. 222.

⁴⁷⁶ Paul Hyett, ‘Italy’s master of the complex narrative’, *The Architects’ Journal* (2006), p. 25.

⁴⁷⁷ Stephen Kite, ‘Can quality be managed and assured in architecture? Issues of qualification and quantification’, *arq*, 11. 3/4 (2007) 95-197, p. 195.

⁴⁷⁸ Mhairi McVicar, *Precision in Architecture : Certainty, Ambiguity and Deviation* (Taylor & Francis Group, 2019), p. 3.

discouraged and refraining from studying the topic, but exactly the opposite: deepening the study. Alvar Aalto, in the 1940s sustained that:

It is not the rationalization itself which was wrong in the first and now past period of Modern architecture. The fault lies in the fact that the rationalization has not gone deep enough. The present phase of modern architecture is doubtless a new one, with the special aim of solving problems in the humanitarian and psychological fields. [...].⁴⁷⁹

The thesis calls for a deepening of our understanding. Perhaps instead of asking ourselves what wellbeing is, the question should be: what is the difference between two buildings, or two spaces? As mentioned previously Scarpa establishes, when talking about poetry and architecture: ‘Poetry is born of the thing in itself.. The question should be this: ‘When is an Attic base poetry, and when isn't it? This means that there are huge differences between two of the same object’.⁴⁸⁰ Often, the difference is not found in metrics. It is relational. It is interpreted. It is complex and diverse, based on personal experiences, context, background etc. The thesis sustains that the study for wellbeing needs to be found in the mechanisms of choice, as Albertini and Bagnoli describe Scarpa’s work: ‘...he taught a method, that of seeking, and of learning how to recognize something done well [...]Therefore the method consists not of copying or interpreting but of grasping the mechanisms of choice’.⁴⁸¹ It is a critical task, especially in times when we have ample literature and evidence of how important the built environment is and how it can be a source of disempowerment or empowerment on a psychosomatic level. If poetry is seen as a form of psychagogia as an educational, exploratory, and emancipatory process, then it has an active, valuable role to play. As mentioned previously, Scarpa remarks: ‘If the architecture is any good, a person who looks and listens will feel its good effects without noticing. [...] The environment educates in a critical fashion’⁴⁸². Kathleen Galvin, commenting in her phenomenological

⁴⁷⁹ Hyon-Sob Kim, ‘Alvar Aalto and Humanizing of Architecture’, *Journal of Asian Architecture and Building Engineering*, 8.1 (2009): 9-16,p. 10.

⁴⁸⁰ Francesco Dal Co and Giuseppe Mazzariol, *Carlo Scarpa: The complete works* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), p. 238.

⁴⁸¹ Bianca Albertini and Sandro Bagnoli, *Carlo Scarpa : Architecture in Details* (MIT Pr, 1988), p.17.

⁴⁸² Francesco Dal Co and Giuseppe Mazzariol, *Carlo Scarpa: The complete works* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), p.286.

research, argues: ‘...poets may tell us more about well-being than does the sole focus on the inner psychological world that has been the mainstay of research on well-being’.⁴⁸³

To conclude, the thesis uncovered evidence to support an articulation of wellbeing, through the Brion Cemetery. It examined the precise moments in space where psychological reactions were observed and how these were connected to poetry. To do so, definitions of psychological reactions connected to wellbeing were examined and defined: catharsis, self-awareness, reframing. Each one is connected to one of the three tangible examples in space. The thesis has evidenced that the Brion Cemetery addresses catharsis, self-awareness and reframing and has articulated connection to wellbeing and poetry. It has explored the importance of emotional identification and emotions, elements which evoke a sense of serenity, and others which present themselves as a challenge. It has examined several subthemes and presented how they manifest, at the Brion. It has argued on the significance of the involvement of the body, the landscape and natural elements in assisting the person’s experience. It has also sustained that the closest one can get to expressing poetry is, rather than mimicking Scarpa’s aesthetic or design choices, by understanding the critical process of the influences and the multilayered choices behind choices, their aims, and their mechanisms. In a way one must understand/feel (not necessarily an intellectualised process) poetry’s active role in a person’s psyche before embarking on instilling ideas and making choices that would create forms that ‘emanate a sense of formal poetry’ as Scarpa describes his intentions for this Cemetery. Poetry is relational, is alive and context related. As mentioned previously: ‘Herodotus’ (the historian) work can be put into verse and it will still remain history’, reminds us Aristotle. His words are a reality check and a reminder that poetry is about its function to the psyche; that is precisely its distinctive quality. Scarpa also argues that poetry arises from the things themselves and can sometimes occur when the person carries it within themselves. Pietropoli, in our interview, commented on how critical the “poet’s” figure is and how “the experience is more valuable than the culture that one accumulates over time”. As mentioned previously, he remarked: “In general, the figure of the poet is that of a person to whom their sensations are very evident; they are very aware of themselves and of their body and therefore can narrate what their body feels, perceives”⁴⁸⁴. From there, “poetic

⁴⁸³ Kathleen Galvin, ‘Well-Being Through the Poet’s Speaking: A Reflective Analysis of Well-Being through Engagement with Poetry Underpinned by Phenomenological Philosophical Ideas about Language and Poetry’, *Indo-Pacific Journal of Phenomenology*, 19.2 (2019), 71-80, p. 76.

⁴⁸⁴ Conversation with Guido Pietropoli, 2019.

imagination” (as described by Scarpa, regarding the way he approached the design) can emerge as a stimulative process, rich with empathy, clear intentions and “qualities of extension” as Bachelard writes. The gap the thesis addresses was covered by a reading of the Brion Cemetery which examines its poetic qualities in connection to its potentially therapeutic value, through an interdisciplinary perspective and a thorough examination of psychological concepts of wellbeing and insights from Poetry Therapy. The study also offers the opportunity for an initial methodological framework and rationale, in order to examine similar interdisciplinary explorations in architecture. Overall, it offers a new reading of the Brion Cemetery and the understanding around its poetic characteristics, as well as a possibility of an articulation of wellbeing in the built environment, through poetic experience.

8.3 DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study has examined and established a reading of the Brion Cemetery which draws on interdisciplinary insights, with regards to poetry and wellbeing. It provides a thorough examination of reactions and experiences at the Brion, but most significantly, I would argue, of the mechanisms that contribute to those reactions and experiences.

Given the richness of primary materials but also the limitations of the study, a deepening of the methods, which would include an increased number of interviewees, participants, guestbooks etc., could be beneficial for future research. The thesis provides the blueprint, methods and connections between the topics explored; however, the concepts of wellbeing being presented need to be further investigated. Also, it would be interesting to examine other spaces at the Brion, which were not included in this research. Future research may also aim at correlating the Brion with other cemeteries and/or other works by Carlo Scarpa, to further examine the specifics of the mechanisms used and invented by the architect to achieve the psychological and poetic qualities in space.

Moreover, to deepen the ties with other disciplines, Poetry Therapy and poetry could be further explored, and/or practitioners from other fields of knowledge could be included in the data collection. Lastly, this study could also expand towards other, and more fit for purpose, methodologies, to include a set of different questions in order to elaborate on social, environmental, and political parameters and implications.

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APPENDIX

GUIDO PIETROPOLI

Informed Consent Letter



CONSENT FORM

Title of research project: Intersections of architecture, poetry, and wellbeing, at the Brion Cemetery: *catharsis, self-awareness, and reframing*

SREC reference and committee: 2217

Name of Chief/Principal Investigator: Irini Barbero

Email: barberoi@cardiff.ac.uk

**Please
initial box**

You understand that have been invited to take part in this research as your contribution and insights, given that your close association with Carlo Scarpa, your architectural knowledge and overall appreciation of Scarpa's work is invaluable.	
You are aware of the topic and purposes of my research, and that at any point you can ask questions.	
You willingly consented to being recorded and you have been given the audio file, for transparency purposes.	
You understand that you can refrain consent and decline permission at any point, and are aware that you are not required to give permission. You have the right to refuse to let me use your quotes and/or names, and are aware that your participation is voluntary. However, in case you withdraw your consent, the information that has already been published cannot be withdrawn.	

Interview Transcript

Discussione con Architetto Guido Pietropoli, Rovigo 3 Agosto 2019

Arch. Guido Pietropoli (G. P)

Irini Barbero (I.B)

[...]

I.B: Allora, il mio tema ha a che fare con l'architettura, la poesia e il benessere emotivo esistenziale, sto esplorando...

G.P: Tema complicato

I.B: Molto

G.P: Molto aperto

I.B: Molto, molto aperto. E quindi il primo anno è stato un anno di esplorazioni di questi tre fields of knowledge, come si dice in inglese...

G.P: Sì. Tre filoni di conoscenza

I.B: Sì, poi il secondo anno è stato centrato un po' sulla tomba Brion, Carlo Scarpa e il lavoro. E sto cercando di esplorare questi temi

G.P: Auguri

I.B: *(risata)* Lo so. Grazie. Molto difficili ma penso molto importanti

G.P: Penso di sì. C'è un libro che io non amo moltissimo perché è un po' complicato ma... che si chiama *Carlo Scarpa: architetto poeta*. Non so se lo conosce

I.B: Lo conosco, di Sergio Los?

G.P: Sergio Los, sì

I.B: Non sono riuscita a trovarlo finora

G.P: Io ne avevo due copie, una l'ho regalata a un mio amico americano che si chiama George Dodds che ha scritto su Scarpa. E posso farle vedere la copia

I.B: Certo

G.P: Ma non...

(pausa per trovare il libro)

I.B: Grazie

G.P: È sull'ingresso della Facoltà di Architettura di Venezia, se vuole ne parliamo. Lo considero un po' complicato. Come dire, un po'... c'è differenza tra complesso e complicato, in italiano complesso vuol dire che ha *many layers* e c'è una profondità, qualsiasi strato,

qualsiasi *layer* è interessante ed è fatto per diversi livelli di persone, no? Complicato vuol dire che è molto...cioè, che è maggiore la difficoltà di quello che si guadagna alla fine. Non so se capisce. It is more difficult the effort that you do to understand what happens than what you may gain by reading this book. Non so se... (*risata*)

LB: Sì, penso di capire

G.P: In ogni modo, lui fa un tentativo abbastanza interessante. Io credo che la qualità di questo libro sia l'idea di mettere assieme Scarpa e poeta. Questa è una buona idea. Perché poi è quello che sta facendo Lei. Dopo, capire come un architetto sia architetto e poi diventi anche architetto poeta è più complicato. I think that one man could be architect without being poet, se vogliamo. Però poeta implica una maggior profondità, una specie di spessore diverso, thickness, more thickness, e molti livelli di comunicazione diversi. Adesso, parlo un po' a ruota libera ma...

LB: Sì

G.P: Gli indiani, la filosofia indiana antica ha molte teorie di storia dell'arte, di arte, di scienze, di filosofia. Noi la conosciamo poco, io pochissimo, ma il mondo occidentale in generale non la conosce molto, no? Loro fanno una distinzione molto semplice tra arti (pittura, scultura, architettura) e discipline della conoscenza (matematica, filosofia ecc.). E la differenza sostanziale tra queste due, che è anche semplice se vogliamo, è quello che loro chiamano il *rasa* e cioè il sapore. Cioè, la filosofia, la matematica non hanno sapore mentre le arti hanno sapore. Ciò vuol dire che tutte e due (arti e discipline della conoscenza) sono alimento... it's a sort of food...ma da una parte c'è un alimento che ha sapore, cioè che implica un'esperienza, dall'altra parte c'è un alimento che può essere indifferente all'esperienza perché che l'abbia detto io che l'abbia detto lei o un altro è indifferente. Io credo che l'arte, in particolare la poesia, chiami in campo l'esperienza, l'esperienza dell'artista, dell'architetto e l'esperienza della persona che percorre questa architettura che ne usufruisce, che l'utilizza. È una differenza non da poco, secondo me.

LB: E uno la sente la differenza quando entra in questi spazi (...? inaudible)...

G.P: Penso di sì... e beh sì perché questi, queste possibilità di entrare nella sensibilità...in fondo il sapore vuol dire che c'è una forma di utilizzo dei sensi, cioè, vuol dire che può sentire il salato, il dolce, il sapore può anche voler dire l'impressione visiva, evidentemente, il tatto... tutti i cinque sensi insomma. C'è un libro di un architetto... non è straordinario come libro però è buono, l'autore si chiama Pallasmaa, credo

LB: Juhani Pallasmaa

G.P: Sì. Parla degli occhi della pelle

LB: Sì

G.P: Credo che nel caso di Scarpa può andare bene questo punto di vista, gli occhi della pelle perché l'architettura di Scarpa, essendo architettura poetica, implica tutti i cinque sensi, anche l'olfatto, anche l'odore, anche il tatto evidentemente

LB: È vero

G.P: L'udito, oltre che la vista. Ma la vista è sempre considerata... forse è un problema rinascimentale che abbiamo noi, è considerato il più importante, ma non è il più importante dei sensi che vengono messi in gioco nell'esperienza dell'architettura

LB: Per Lei quale sarebbe il senso più importante?

G.P: Ma, io credo che tutti, tutti i cinque sensi sono importanti. Probabilmente... adesso io cerco di dare importanza o do importanza anche all'olfatto perché non è preso in considerazione da nessuno, normalmente. Non si è mai parlato di un'architettura importante dal punto di vista dell'olfatto

LB: Sì, ha ragione, è molto raro

G.P: Sì, oppure è importante se uno disegna un cimitero, per esempio, e allora il problema del corpo in decomposizione del morto diventa fondamentale, allora in questo caso l'architettura vuole nascondere il problema dell'olfatto perché diventerebbe insopportabile. Non so se mi spiego. Per dirle, io ho vissuto con Carlo Scarpa dieci anni, per cui ho una certa esperienza, ma una delle prime sensazioni che ho avuto entrando nella casa di Carlo Scarpa per una prima correzione, ero studente, era un profumo particolare che ho scoperto dopo perché gli ho chiesto "ma che cos'è questo profumo ecc." ed erano delle foglie di *patchouli*, lei sa qual è...?

LB: Sì

G.P: ...che lui comprava quando andava a Zurigo per certi lavori e lasciava queste foglie di *patchouli* in certe coppe a casa, tipo questa per dire, lasciava queste foglie di *patchouli* e il profumo si espandeva per tutta la stanza. E poi ho scoperto che il *patchouli* ha delle virtù, delle qualità particolari, cioè, calma i nervi e rende sereni

LB: Sì, è vero

G.P: Sì, ogni profumo ha una sua funzione oltre che il piacevole evidentemente. C'era un imperatore cinese, non so quale sia, che viaggiava con una grande cassa con tante bottiglie di profumi e utilizzava un profumo o un altro per esaltare un momento, cioè una sensazione oppure per controbilanciarla

LB: Molto interessante

G.P: Perché questo effetto dei profumi sul corpo, sulla psicologia, e poi tutta la nostra

esperienza di bambini, è un'esperienza molto vicina ai profumi. Più diventiamo vecchi e più perdiamo questo collegamento con la nostra parte dei profumi. Queste sono piccole cose...

LB: Anche una memoria incredibile

G.P: Il profumo suscita la memoria di eventi anche molto lontani. C'è Proust che mangia questi piccoli biscotti...

LB: Le *madeleines*

G.P: Le *madeleinettes*, e le *madeleinettess*catenano una sequenza di ricordi. Per cui l'architettura secondo me è un'arte totale perché coinvolge tutto il corpo, le dimensioni fisiche del corpo, il tatto, perché io passo attraverso muri, li sento vicini e lontani e poi anche l'olfatto perché se si entra in una casa, mettiamo, veneziana del '600 e magari ci sono i pavimenti in legno si sente il profumo della cera che è stata data sui pavimenti e questo profumo è un profumo ma ha anche un significato: vuol dire che in quel luogo ci sono persone ne hanno cura perché danno la cera; dare la cera vuol dire spalmarla, poi passare lo straccio, mettere in ordine. Cioè ci sono tanti profumi che sono collegati con fatti piacevoli e positivi della vita, esperienze di vita

LB: Sono d'accordo

G.P: C'è differenza tra scienza e poesia perché sono tutte e due forme conoscitive, possibilità di conoscere le cose però secondo due angolazioni diverse

LB: Quindi lei pensa che tramite la poesia uno conosce?

G.P: Sì assolutamente, la poesia, la forma conoscitiva assolutamente... come si può dire la poesia passa attraverso l'esperienza e l'esperienza è un dato personale formidabile, molto importante. C'è un bellissimo scritto di Papa Ratzinger, che è pericoloso citare se si vuole perché è amato non è amato, e lui parla...lui è un grande teorico un grande teologo, e parla dell'importanza dell'esperienza per decidere qualcosa perché in ogni atto della nostra vita dobbiamo decidere qualcosa: viaggio, vado, non vado, mangio, bevo, reagisco, no? ecc. E lui dice che sulla base dell'esperienza noi possiamo decidere. We have the possibility to take a decision

LB: Sì

G.P: ma dice che c'è anche la ragione per decidere. We also have a brain...E dice anche però che la ragione nel Medioevo non era molto considerata, non aveva grande importanza perché i teorici del Medioevo affermavano che la ragione ha un naso di cera che si può girare da una parte all'altra a seconda di come ti comoda. Se vuoi, tu vuoi puoi girare un ragionamento, magari imbrogli anche, allora lo giri di qua...

LB: Retorica

G.P: Sì, retorica. Mentre l'esperienza che si fonda sulla propria vita e sulle proprie sensazioni è difficile imbrogliarla, non puoi fare giochi strani perché hai patito, è un problema di patimento, di passione.

LB: È vero, sì

G.P: E il poeta credo che abbia molto evidente...in generale la figura del poeta è una persona che ha molto evidente le proprie sensazioni, è molto consapevole di sé stesso e del suo corpo e dunque riesce a raccontare quello che il suo corpo prova, percepisce.

LB: Molto interessante, non ci avevo mai pensato

G.P: Secondo me è così, infatti il poeta può essere poeta anche a 12 anni, a 15 anni, a 20 anni, molto giovane perché vale più l'esperienza che la cultura che può aggiungere nel tempo. C'è un bellissimo inizio di un... vado a cercare il libro...

LB: Posso dare un'occhiata?

G.P: Sì, certo

(pausa per prendere il libro di Musil)

LB: Ah, sì

G.P: Lo conosce?

LB: Sì. L'ho appena ordinato, è lei che me l'aveva scritto...

G.P: Forse sì, forse sì, perché è una serie di saggi, poi è una raccolta che non si trova più, non è facile da trovare

LB: Infatti ho fatto difficoltà per trovarlo

G.P: Può darsi che ci sia in inglese tradotto, ma è l'inizio che è interessante. Non so se sia facile leggerlo immediatamente...

LB: E capire?

G.P: Sì...le posso fare una fotocopia delle prime due pagine, lui dice praticamente che la nostra epoca, ma Musil si riferisce ai primi del Novecento e a Kakania... lei sa come chiamava l'Impero austro ungarico?

LB: No

G.P: Siamo nel periodo in cui l'Impero austro ungarico sta cadendo perché con la Prima guerra mondiale l'Austria perderà la guerra e poi l'imperatore morirà.

L'Austria diventerà da così a così, da grande impero diventerà una piccola nazione perché perde l'Ungheria, perde la Jugoslavia, perde l'Italia...tutte queste cose qui, no? L'Impero austro ungarico era un impero strano perché non aveva un'unica lingua: aveva il tedesco, aveva, il serbo, aveva l'ungherese ecc. Kafka stesso è uno scrittore strano perché scrive in

tedesco, ma la sua lingua originale il ceco (è esattamente il contrario) perché lui è praghese, di Praga. E allora in questo periodo gli scrittori, che in molti casi vengono non da Vienna ma anche dalle province dell'impero, hanno un atteggiamento critico nei riguardi di questo impero e siccome qualsiasi documento dell'Impero austriaco era firmato alla fine KK (Kaiserlich-Königlich), allora dicendo KK, come scrive Musil, si può anche dire Kakanian ed è veramente un gioco dispregiativo. E lui parla di questa nazione nella quale lui è dentro e che è piena di contraddizioni, che poi esploderanno. E allora cerca di tornare alle origini e di capire cos'è la poesia cos'è... Parla addirittura di un uomo senza qualità che è il contrario dell'uomo eroe, dell'uomo con tutte le qualità che invece la cultura ufficiale considerava importante. E l'uomo senza qualità per lui è anche poeta perché apparentemente non serve a niente il poeta, a cosa serve? Non inventa macchine da guerra, non fa polvere da sparo, non è un lottatore. Tutte queste cose... allora Musil dice che nella sua epoca hanno più importanza i professori delle università dei poeti, e hanno più importanza i giornalisti dello scrittore. Cioè, la gente guarda di più la pagina culturale di un giornale, piuttosto che leggere l'autore vero e proprio. Perché? Perché tutto è veloce, tutto è superficiale. Nessuno vuole andare in profondità e tutte queste cose qui. Per cui... Ma io penso che questi qui siano...vediamo forse se...forse non sono neanche molte pagine. Lei, l'ha trovato questo o no?

LB: Sì, mi è appena arrivato, devo ancora leggerlo

G.P: Ah, bene, bene, sì, sì. Ma forse lo può trovare anche, io credo, in edizione inglese probabilmente?

G.P: Perché è una raccolta di saggi, magari questo libro ha il titolo di un saggio, di questo saggio che è *La conoscenza del poeta*

LB: Ah, quindi...ah ho capito...

G.P: Però ci sono altri saggi, hanno scelto gli altri saggi, sono sui libri di Robert Musil e altre cose

LB: C'è il libro *The man without qualities*

G.P: Sì, *L'uomo senza qualità*. Però quello è proprio un vero e proprio, se vogliamo, romanzo... Ecco, questi sono i saggi. Questi qui. Può darsi che li trovi in inglese o lo trova in una raccolta di saggi generale oppure l'edizione inglese magari prende il nome da un altro di questi saggi

LB: Hm, "spirito d'esperienza" Molto interessante

G.P: Antonio Gaudi

LB: Sì

G.P: Lui scrive piccoli aforismi. Aforismi sono piccole, piccole frasi. Io so che mi

ne ho annotati due perché mi sembravano interessanti... Sempre con questo argomento che dicevamo...Sapienza e intelligenza...allora, provi a leggerti lei, sono tanto brevi e se non li capisce casomai li commentiamo assieme

LB: Grazie. Quello che mi ha detto prima!

G.P: Sì, perché sapienza vuol dire mangiare, vuol dire assaporare, to “taste”. Ma in inglese si perde questa etimologia

LB: Sì perde, sì. Anche la parola poesia che è greca, alle volte la gente non conosce cosa vuol dire, “poetry”, l’origine...

G.P: Certo, sì

I. B: Però non sa...

G.P: Però, diciamo che lì mantiene il suono ma invece il sapore è sapere...

LB: Giusto. Sì

G.P: Resta abbastanza...Invece “taste” è completamente diverso

LB: Sì, ha ragione

G.P: Il tipo di lavoro che lei dovrà fare o che verrà fuori è un lavoro di una facoltà di arte e di architettura o è un lavoro di una facoltà, diciamo, più umanistica, filosofia, o che so io?

LB: No, è in architettura

G.P: È in architettura. Ma... come potrebbe essere... lei ha un'idea di come potrebbe essere...come si potrebbe dire...exposed, cioè, raccontata questa tesi al di là del contenuto che...

LB: Sto cercando di trovare un modo...È abbastanza difficile come presentarlo. A dire la verità io questo tema...è un bel po' che mi occupo di questo tema anche nei miei studi precedenti che ho fatto in Grecia per la parte della tesi di laurea, c'era questo... Potevamo scegliere un argomento e analizzare e approfondire. E allora io ho scelto questo argomento, ‘Architettura e poesia’ perché non so, da sempre mi affascinava la poesia. Poi notavo che usavo tanto il termine poetico spazio. Era proprio una cosa molto intuitiva e molto...volevo esplorare questa mia curiosità personale e mi ha anche preso tanto tempo, più del normale per finire.

G.P: Sì. Ma è normale perché si aprono...

LB: Sì

G.P: Si ha l'impressione di essere arrivati, poi si apre un'altra direzione

LB: Sì

G.P: Allora poi si pensa che anche quella è risolta, poi se ne apre un'altra

LB: Sì

G.P: Ed è una serie di...

LB: Sì, esattamente. E poi mi interessava anche vedere un po'...come questi spazi che noi descriviamo come poetici, che effetto hanno...

G.P: Su di noi

LB: Forse anche perché come architetto giovane ma anche come persona quando entro...sento una mancanza di questi spazi nella nostra esperienza

G.P: Sì, nell'esperienza nostra

LB: Sì

LB: Nell'architettura

G.P: E questo perché siamo diventati più mentali, decidiamo più con la testa che con tutto il resto del corpo. Molte decisioni che prendiamo sono di carattere mentale, di carattere...e se vogliamo tornare all'etimologia della parola, mentale viene da 'mens', da mente, però viene anche da 'mentire' e cioè da 'tell lies' dire bugie

LB: Davvero?

G.P: E sì, certo

LB: Non lo sapevo

G.P: Mentale e...Quando diciamo 'è un problema mentale' vuol dire che è un problema di testa soltanto e non di cuore. Ma anche che ha qualcosa di sbagliato al suo interno, di complicato, no? Mentre noi diamo grande importanza all'occhio e al cervello, sono due facoltà umane che sono più importanti. C'è, credo, un libro di quel giapponese che scrive in inglese che ha scritto. *Quel che resta del giorno...* era stato fatto anche un film...Kazuo Ishiguro, deve essere lui l'autore, mi pare. E lui dice una frase molto divertente, dice: "Era un uomo molto, molto...". Vediamo se la dico giusta. "Era un uomo molto buono e molto umano nonostante fosse intelligente"

(pausa per incontro e caffè)

LB: Grazie. Em, allora diceva il libro come...

G.P: A vabbè, sì ma la frase è questa; insomma è una frase strana perché è al di fuori dei nostri modi di pensare - bisogna essere aggressivi, mentali, professionali.

LB: No, ma io sono d'accordo con questo

G.P: Sì, ma, dico, invece il modo di pensare comune è che quando uno mi dice "è un grande

professionista”, per dire che è un grande personaggio, io dico “i veri professionisti sono i killer”, il killer è un grande professionista ma io non voglio essere un killer, evidentemente

I.B: Sì

G.P: Cioè la professionalità...

I.B: Ha un...

G.P: Ha un lato che... intanto dimostra che uno capisce solo quella cosa lì perché si è concentrato su quei problemi, no? E non ha un'apertura su tutto l'orizzonte dei problemi insomma

I.B: O il dubbio anche...

G.P: Sì o un dubbio, certo... sì. Eh, beh, l'apertura, il dubbio; il dubbio è la condizione per riuscire...o quello che provoca un'apertura, insomma. Questo qui è divertente perché ...è un po' faticoso, insomma, io l'ho trovato faticoso. Lui cerca... Los utilizza un'unica opera di Carlo Scarpa che è questo qui e cioè l'ingresso della facoltà di Architettura, però è il primo progetto; quello che è stato realizzato è il secondo progetto, quello che si vede a Venezia. Ma c'era un terzo progetto che non è stato realizzato, e che era il migliore probabilmente.

I.B: Ah, sì?

G.P: Perché questo ingresso di architettura era...cosa volevo dire... è stato realizzato postumo dopo la morte di Carlo Scarpa, cioè quello che noi vediamo adesso è stato realizzato da Sergio Los, che aveva lavorato con Scarpa per questa cosa qui. La sua tesi, se vogliamo, è abbastanza semplice. Lui dice: Scarpa non ha scritto quasi niente, non ci sono scritti, libri, forse l'unico libro autografo di Scarpa - dopo lo vediamo assieme - si chiama *Memoriae causa*. ed è l'unico libro in cui lui ha fatto tutto, ha fatto il testo, le fotografie no perché alcune sono mie e altre di altre persone... ha fatto l'impaginazione e la confezione, diciamo. E non ma ci sono scritti di Scarpa. Oppure ci sono delle trascrizioni, sono da una registrazione come questa, una persona poi ha trascritto, ha riversato il soundtrack in un testo. Però i suoi scritti sono pochissimi. E allora Los dice che la scrittura di Scarpa è il disegno e cioè lui, il suo racconto di progetto avviene attraverso la sequenza di disegni. C'è Paul Klee che ha parlato di...come si chiama...non è consapevolezza... confessione creatrice. *Creative confession*. È un passo proprio della teoria...che è il modo attraverso il quale l'artista mostra il suo percorso di progettazione perché confessandosi, il riferimento è più alla religione cattolica se vogliamo, uno va in Chiesa, va dal prete e dice: “ho fatto questo peccato, quest'altro” e poi il prete alla fine dà la soluzione: “sei libero, i tuoi peccati sono stati lavati”, questa è la versione cattolica però la confessione è un momento in cui uno resta nudo di fronte all'altro perché mostra tutti i suoi lati buoni ma anche i lati cattivi, no? Mostra il suo

percorso di vita. Klee parla di questa confessione creatrice che nel caso di Scarpa è possibile percorrere. Perché...io lo sto facendo con Brion, con la tomba Brion, e ho a disposizione per mia fortuna i 2.200 disegni (two thousand two hundred drawings) – non sono pochi - e sto cercando di metterli in sequenza. Io non credo che la sequenza sia fondamentale, perché un'idea può essere venuta all'inizio poi perduta poi ritorna, per cui... però ha una sua importanza, la sequenza. È come un film e come una...come si dice, pellicola cinematografica. E allora mettere in sequenza questi disegni e commentarli, io ho capito ad esempio che se noi guardiamo un disegno di Scarpa, siamo colpiti da alcune cose, magari è un bel disegno, dei bei colori, ci sono delle donne nude, dico delle stupidaggini per dire i momenti cioè il *focus* dell'attenzione; però se facciamo la fatica di descriverlo, cioè proprio descrivere, leggerlo come un testo, ci accorgiamo che ci sono molte più cose di quelle che vediamo il primo momento perché non avevamo notato quel piccolo appunto, quello schizzo, questa cosa, che invece proprio è come se io prendessi, adesso non è il caso di questo disegno...prendessi un cursore, diciamo...

(pausa per acqua)

G.P: Dicevo che il disegno di Scarpa si può leggere come un testo, dopo, lei sa che Scarpa era mancino, *was left handed*

I.B: Sì

G.P: Però scriveva con la destra

I.B: Ah, non lo sapevo

G.P: Sì, era ambidestro, *both hands*, però quando disegnava, disegnava con la sinistra. Infatti, un modo per distinguere un disegno originale da un disegno falso è vedere come faceva le ombre; quando tu disegni, fai uno schizzo e dai delle ombre, cioè, annerisci certe parti se disegni con la sinistra le ombre hanno queste inclinazioni, se disegni con la destra, le ombre hanno quest'altra inclinazione, cioè, è difficile che un destro si metta a fare questa...

I.B: Giusto

G.P: Va beh, ci sono tante favole sui *left-handed*. Io ad esempio sono *lefthanded*, per cui mi sembra di capire di più i problemi di Scarpa... Scarpa diceva “gira a destra” quando andavamo in macchina, “turn right” “ma no, Professore, dobbiamo andare a sinistra”, “ah, sì sinistra...”

I.B: Anch'io lo faccio questo, non so perché

G.P: Ma è mancina?

I.B: No

I.B: Però ho sempre...non so perché...

G.P: Questo, può avere tante spiegazioni, non lo so. In ogni modo, analizzare i disegni è il primo approccio, il primo contatto, che è molto importante oltre che poi la vista, la visione dell'architettura. Però il disegno può dare... è una specie di *roadmap* del procedimento attraverso il quale... perché, potremmo fare anche degli esempi...ci sono... mettiamo 20 disegni in sequenza, abbastanza ragionevole non esattissima perché non ci sono mai date non c'è scritto "1° agosto, ore 10" ecc; però, ad esempio Scarpa adoperava carta di questo tipo, di rotolo, carta da schizzo e non la tagliava come la taglio io qualche volta con la stecca, così, no... ma la rompeva, cioè strappava

I.B: Ah, strappava

G.P: Allora il taglio è fatto così il più delle volte che si può vedere. Allora questo siccome...se io faccio un taglio dritto netto non riesco a capire se questo foglio viene prima o dopo. Perché sono tutti uguali i tagli, ok?

I.B: Sì

G.P: Se invece rompo così uno viene così un altro viene...un'altra... allora... e se li metto assieme capisco che certamente uno è prima e uno è dopo...

I.B: Giusto, sì. Ah, però...

G.P: E poi teneva il rotolo con una mano e lo rompeva con l'altra. Ma la mano era sempre la sinistra per cui ci sono...in ogni modo i disegni, io credo che siano il first step... il primo, primo approccio...e l'opera è assieme insomma, però .per capire questo discorso del poeta, questo speech del poeta, bisogna leggere i disegni insomma...

I.B: Mm-hm

G.P: ...secondo me, altrimenti...e più i disegni di un'opera si riescono a studiare e più forse è profonda la conoscenza. Ma dopo se il discorso è generale diventa complicato...non so. Il suo approccio è su un'unica opera o in generale?

I.B: Sì, è su, su Tomba Brion

G.P: E che lettura ha fatto della Tomba Brion?

I.B: Sto facendola in questo momento. Sono proprio...

G.P: È stata a vedere l'edificio?

I.B: Sì

G.P: Sì

I.B: E diverse volte

G.P: Uh-hm

I.B: Ma anche prima di cominciare la ricerca...

G.P: Sì

LB: La prima...ero...cioè...la conoscevo come opera, l'avevo studiata. Però poi quando ho finito quella tesi di laurea per i miei studi che ho fatto...

G.P: Uh-hm

LB:...“Spazio Poetico”, poi sono venuta in Italia e sono andata a vederla da vicino. E sono andata con famiglia e amici e allora...ehm...l'esperienza è.... non è dive... è diversa. Io penso che uno deve proprio andare lì per capire come... come diceva Lei non è una cosa della mente o dell'occhio, la fotografia...

G.P: Dopo si aggiungono, sì, ... diventano anche... vanno assieme

LB: Sì

G.P: Ma il primo...la prima... cosa più importante, secondo me, è l'esperienza dell'architettura.

LB: Sì. Poi ho avuto un'esperienza, così diciamo personale, che eravamo in compagnia e allora c'era...siamo arrivati alla Tomba Brion dopo un lungo viaggio ...e allora eravamo tutti un po' stanchi ... c'era una persona che era un po' stanca non voleva venire, poi il concetto di cimitero era un po' pesante...

G.P: Sì, non è divertente

LB: Sì, per uno che non conosce...

G.P: Che non sa

LB: Ecco... e allora voleva rimanere in macchina e aspettare...vabbè. All'ultimo momento ha deciso di venire, no?

G.P: Ah, ok

LB: E siamo entrati in questo posto abbiamo...poi era una bellissima giornata col sole anche se ho notato che anche con la pioggia...

G.P: Sì

LB: Bellissimo. Però era una giornata così...

G.P: Sì

LB: Così solare. E allora siamo entrati, piano piano abbiamo cominciato a esplorare. E alla fine eravamo tutti un po' come bambini piccoli in questo spazio, proprio pieni di curiosità e di interesse. Anche la persona che era stanca...

G.P: Sì

LB: E non voleva venire alla fine, era...

G.P: Rigenerata

LB: ...Rigenerata, ma curiosa. E ci chiamava “guarda questo”... Allora, è una storia molto semplice, molto personale che io non ho pensato nemmeno di usare perché non avevo

dall'inizio questa tomba Brion come, come focus... come le ho detto era più generale...poesia... Però poi dovevo presentare in una conferenza l'anno scorso e allora pensavo che esempio dare per...

G.P: Per raccontare queste cose

[...]

LB: Per riuscire a capire

G.P: Per rendere concreta qualche...

LB: Uh-hm...Quindi...

G.P: Io ci penso da 40 anni su questa cosa...per cui è un argomento... e ho conosciuto molti amici adesso poi sono diventati amici uno canadese, un altro americano e un altro di Chicago, ad esempio questo di Chicago aveva avuto un *grant* dalla Graham Foundation di Chicago per fare una ricerca su Brion e gli hanno dato 3 anni di tempo, lui ha detto: 'benissimo ce la faccio'; sono 15 anni adesso che lavora e non è ancora arrivato. Per cui...

LB: Io alle volte non so anche perché le ho detto che ho cominciato quasi non dieci anni, otto anni fa, ho cominciato con la poesia architettura

G.P: Uh-hm

LB: E allora alle volte con questa ricerca penso che potrebbe essere una cosa di vita

G.P: Potrebbe andare avanti, sì

LB: Come interesse, come...

G.P: Questo non vuol dire abbandonare il campo, perché vuol dire che ci sono delle esperienze che si possono concentrare e poi lasciare aperta la porta, dire: la ricerca continua

LB: Certo sì. Quindi sto cercando...

G.P: Questa prima parte di ricerca sulla poesia che mi pare di aver capito ha avuto una sua chiusura, una conclusione, siccome non si può parlare di poesia se non si parla di poeti anche, che architetti erano, cosa aveva visto, che architetti?

LB: Eh, tutti questi che ho menzionato

G.P: Uh-hm

LB: Facevano parte... sì...ma anche architetti, non tanti esempi ma...

G.P: Sì

LB: Comunque Brion era dentro

G.P: Uh-hm, ok

LB: Già da allora

G.P: Sì, capisco. A me veniva in mente...forse sto cercando di farlo dire a lei, ma magari non

è della stessa opinione.

LB: Mi dica

G.P: Perché un poeta ama poeti di solito, no?

LB: Uh-hm

G.P: Cioè Scarpa. Può essere interessante anche capire chi amava Scarpa

LB: Sì sono d'accordo

G.P: Ecco

LB: Volevo anche chiedere

G.P: Sì, c'è un inglese che Scarpa amava moltissimo anche se e lo considerava un uomo sfortunato, unlucky...

LB: Mm

G.P: per le sue vicende familiari, era John Soane. Scarpa aveva un affetto e un'ammirazione straordinaria per Soane

LB: Ah, sì?

G.P: Sia perché, perché aveva visitato il Soane Museum di Londra...è mai stata, lo conosce?

LB: No non sono mai stata

G.P: E allora vada, è un'esperienza, sì. Questo personaggio che non è famosissimo nell'architettura, forse è più famoso, in Inghilterra

LB: In Inghilterra, sì lo conoscono, sì

G.P: Perché ha fatto la Banca d'Inghilterra, opere formidabili, eccetera però che...anche ha scritto poco nonostante che abbia fatto... anche lui ha insegnato, mi pare, forse alla Royal Academy, qualcosa...ma...perché è vissuto in un periodo in cui il classicismo stava morendo e stavano nascendo le nuove tecniche dell'architettura, no?

LB: Sì

G.P: E lui decide...era diventato molto ricco perché aveva sposato una donna molto ricca anche se lui aveva origini modeste non era...non veniva da una famiglia importante, però essendo molto dotato di testa... sale, sale, sale e poi fa anche questo matrimonio molto importante per cui può disporre di cifre formidabili, ha a disposizione tanti denari. E compera prima una casa a Lincoln In the Fields a Londra, che è un quartiere straordinario, di una bellezza formidabile, compra prima un numero mi pare il 13 e poi il 14 poi il 15, tre case, poi le mette assieme e questa sua casa è diventata una casa museo. Ma è un museo particolare perché, quando entri hai l'impressione che lui sia lì perché ci sono i fiori nei vasi, cioè, tutto funziona, cioè non è diventata, gelo, fredda, eccetera, ma hai l'impressione che lui sia presente nella casa. E nella parte...qui davanti c'è lo Square Lincoln in the Fields e c'è la

grande facciata della casa che ha suscitato grande problemi, lui ha avuto anche battaglie perché dicevano che non si poteva fare in questa maniera perché tutti gli edifici erano in mattoni, queste cose qui e lui le fa in pietra bianca. E la parte dietro perché queste case hanno l'ingresso importante sullo square e poi hanno la piccola strada dietro che serve la back street come la chiamano

LB: Sì

G.P: In cui andavano i fornitori...

LB: Sì

G.P: ...Portavano lì, no, le cose

LB: Sì

G.P: E in questa parte retrostante lui fa il suo studio, il suo museo vero e proprio (inaudible?). Allora questo è il...una parte del suo museo, ma vediamo in pianta che forse... Allora, qui forse si vedono i numeri civici, vediamo...sì 12, 13, 14 allora prima compera questo, poi compera questo, poi compera questo...

LB: Questa è la parte dietro?

G.P: La parte su Lincoln's Inn Fields, cioè sullo square

LB: Ah, sullo square

G.P: Questa qui è la parte retrostante. Allora questa è la parte di abitazione vera e propria, no?

LB: Sì

G.P: Con questa sala importante ecc. Poi questa invece è la parte dello studio

LB: Uh-hm

G.P: E questa è la 'dome', la sala con la cupola che poi è questa qui che ha una cupola sopra. Tutto lo studio è giocato con qualità di luce straordinaria perché questo corpo di fabbrica è molto profondo. Non so quanti metri siano, ma saranno 20 metri, forse di più di 20 metri. E dunque lui può ricevere luce da qui ed è qui soltanto...

LB: Mm

G.P: Però lui inventa delle macchine luminose

LB: Mm, sì

G.P: E dei sistemi di portare la luce dentro. Uno molto famoso è questo qui ad esempio la breakfast room, che poi è stata adoperata in molte altre architetture, e questa qui: c'è questa specie di vela, ma non è una buona foto questa, e questo arco è staccato dalla parete la luce viene da dietro la parete

LB: Sì

G.P: E addirittura lui aveva adoperato dei vetri gialli, leggermente gialli, per avere una luce sempre calda come fosse il sole

LB: Sì...interessante

G.P: Ma per dire, era talmente ricco che la facciata desta molto stupore, è forse un po' glaciale un po' cimiteriale. ma questa *dome*, questa parte...lui raccoglie in questa parte di studio, quella dietro, molti reperti archeologici

LB: Mm-hm

G.P: Cioè, va a Roma compera capitelli antichi, come facevano tutti gli Inglesi in quel periodo

LB: Sì

G.P: Addirittura inventa una, - dopo gliela faccio vedere - inventa una *picture room* che è questa qui che si vede, non ci sono delle foto, ne prendiamo un altro.... ecco qua si vede meglio, in questa *picture room* lui aveva così tanti quadri, Canaletto, quadri italiani cioè cose...

LB: Straordinarie

G.P: Straordinarie e non aveva spazio, non aveva abbastanza pareti allora inventa una quadreria che si può sfogliare come un libro

LB: Sì

G.P: Per cui io metto assieme questi due e ho tutto...la stanza Canaletto

LB: Incredibile

G.P: Oppure apro altre due cose... Philip Johnson fa una cosa simile nella sua residenza a New Canaan, cioè inventa un museo in cui ci sono delle specie di pannelli che ruotano e offrono sempre due pagine e allora io ho sempre due pagine di un autore

LB: Sì

G.P: Però la stanza cambia continuamente perché c'è...

LB: Sì

G.P: ...un *depository*.. Insomma, per farla breve...e qui si vede la luce che è ambrata, è molto complesso come spazio. Lui era talmente ricco che riesce a comperare una cosa abbastanza insolita, vediamo se viene fuori da qualche parte, allora nella *dome* in questo grande spazio che va dal *basement*, cioè dal sottoterra, *underground*, al tetto compera questa cosa che si vede qui, che dopo vediamo meglio... Allora questa è una foto molto difficile da fare perché è fatta aggiungendo più..

LB: Ah

G.P: ...Piu scatti fotografici, cioè non c'è nessun obiettivo che riesce ad avere un angolo...

LB: Sì

G.P: ...Un angolo così ampio, e questa è stata fatta con un sistema di basculaggio, vabbè insomma a parte, questa cosa qui, che si non si capisce cosa sia...vediamo..allora si dovrebbe vedere da qualche parte... me lo gira...

LB: Sì

G.P: Qui si vede, ma si vede male, ci vogliono cinque libri per fare una buona esperienza di architettura, perché questo racconta una cosa, questo ne racconta un'altra

LB: Ah

G.P: Allora messe assieme forse...

LB: Ah, sì, giusto (*risate*) interessante

G.P: Raccontano...

LB: Anche se...

G.P: E questa è la breakfast room, quella che dicevo, Navarro Baldeweg poi utilizza questo tipo di volte

LB: Mm

G.P: Che sono come...

LB: Sì. Molto bello, molto

G.P: ...Come dei foulard sospesi, molto leggeri, no? Perché poi la luce viene da...

LB: Mm

G.P: Oltre che un po' dalla cupola...Adesso dobbiamo arrivare alla, alla, alla ... questa foto nessuno la fotografa però c'è, ci sono dei disegni. Tra l'alto Soane ha qualcosa in comune con Scarpa, perché disegna molte tombe

LB: Ah

G.P: Disegna la tomba della moglie. Ci sono molte tombe...a Londra ci sono cimiteri anche dentro la città

LB: Sì

G.P: Perché non ha avuto Napoleone che ha obbligato a fare i cimiteri fuori

LB: Sì

G.P: E così c'è la tomba della moglie e molte altre. In ogni modo...cercavo una fotografia ma non la trovo. Questa è *the dome*, questa è questa grande cupola vetrata che prende più...

LB: Quella che abbiamo visto

G.P: ...Piu livelli, sì, sì, della... Qui si intravede una cosa strana questa, cosa strana è questo qui, eccolo qua....

LB: Ah...

G.P: È il sepolcro di Setti II credo che sia, è una sarcofago egiziano di alabastro tutto disegnato all'interno e all'esterno che il Benzoni, che era ... diciamo ... a mezza strada tra archeologo e mercante

[...]

G.P: Scarpa è stato accompagnato da amici inglesi che conoscevano questo Soane Museum. Uno era addirittura un *fellow* qualcosa del Soane Museum, insomma. E appena entrato, io ero in studio quando lui ritorna da Londra me ne ha parlato come...come un ubriaco. Mi dice: “Ma vai, devi andare a vedere...”

I.B: Davvero?

G.P: “...assolutamente, è una cosa straordinaria”. Io ci sono stato tre quattro volte dopo evidentemente

I.B: Sì

G.P: Ma era forse...anche lui sognava di essere così ricco come Soane...

I.B:(risata)

G.P: ...Per comperare tutte le cose che Soane aveva, perché aveva dipinti importanti

I.B: Eh sì

G.P: Pezzi di archeologia e queste cose qui. Dopo Soane ha una vita familiare durissima perché i due figli che ha, sui quali aveva avuto grandi speranze, non fanno...uno credo che spende male i soldi e forse diventa un po'...e l' altro addirittura scrive un libro anonimo un po' cattivo, molto cattivo contro il padre... Dopo scoprono che è stato invece lui per cui ha una vita familiare molto difficile

I.B: Sì

G.P: Però è un personaggio interessante. E vive in un momento in cui utilizza sia l'architettura antica perché non poteva abbandonarla...

I.B: Sì

G.P: ...sia le tecniche moderne , cioè, è un uomo molto intelligente e molto aperto. Capisce che il linguaggio antico è formidabile è pieno di possibilità. È c'è...una...della Banca d'Inghilterra di Soane non resta quasi nulla ormai perché l'hanno rifatta, è un edificio orribile adesso, ma, lui aveva fatto questo grande edificio. Era proprio un pezzo di città un blocco urbano.

I.B: Mm

G.P: E siccome questo blocco urbano era quasi triangolare, un trapezio molto chiuso, c'è un punto in cui c' è una facciata a punta quasi una... e lui la fa rotonda lo chiama “Tivoli corner” perché copia il tempio di Tivoli, il tempio greco romano di Tivoli che era rotondo, no? E fa

proprio una citazione e lo chiama Tivoli corner

LB: Un po' come Scarpa fa 'arcosolium'

G.P: Sì, se vuole... utilizzandosi la parte. Ma nel caso di Scarpa... adesso magari tiriamo via Soane

LB: Sì, grazie

G.P: Perché è troppo invadente

LB: Devo andare a vederlo

G.P: Vada, sì. Penso che sia... può non servire, non essere importante per la ricerca. Però è un'esperienza garantita, cioè, sono 2, 3 ore, 5 ore, a seconda di quanto uno può restare, è notevolissimo, formidabile... perché non succede... Lui riesce a farsi fare una legge dello stato inglese che si impegna alla conservazione della casa. Questa casa è così ben conservata perché c'è una legge dello stato inglese che assume la spesa. Lui lascia molti soldi perché era molto ricco

LB: Sì

G.P: Però e forse questo rende più facile fare una legge perché altrimenti lo stato iniziava "abbiamo solo spese, non abbiamo...". Non è certamente un museo che può mantenersi con quello che guadagna dai biglietti e dunque è più costoso mantenerlo che quello che arriva poi. Io non ho mai visto migliaia di visitatori, fortunatamente. È anche bello perché normalmente c'è poca gente

LB: Ah

G.P: Cioè è una... È visitato da conoscitori soltanto

LB: Mm

G.P: Però lui fa fare questa legge e quando era morto, lo stato gli aveva già garantito che la casa avrebbe, come si dice, sarebbe proseguita nel tempo, insomma

LB: Mm

G.P: È interessante, sì

LB: Interessante, sì

G.P: Scarpa credo che lo amava come architetto, e lo invidiava anche

LB: Ah, sì?

G.P: Nel senso buono positivo, cioè diceva: "Se potessi essere come Soane"

LB: Come Soane... Ma anche... non solo, Lei ha detto che Lui ha portato insieme il modo antico...

G.P: Sì

LB: ...Ma anche quello moderno, Soane

G.P: Sì, certo

I.B: È anche un po' Scarpa

G.P: Sì, io fatto una parafrasi. Una parafrasi è un modo di fare una citazione cambiando un po' le parole, però utilizzando il concetto

I.B: Il concetto, sì

G.P: E allora c'è Erasmo da Rotterdam, che era un grande erudito, un grande umanista che diceva, adesso non vorrei citare sbagliato, diceva: "Abbiamo resuscitato l'antico e non abbiamo ucciso il moderno"

I.B: Mm

G.P: Per dire "noi abbiamo ridato vita alla cultura antica però senza uccidere la cultura moderna" cioè abbiamo fatto una continuità"

I.B: Mm

G.P: E allora mi pare...adesso...cito me stesso ma io ho detto "Abbiamo fatto nascere il moderno sento uccidere l'antico" che non è esattissimo, insomma però Scarpa riesce a fare un'architettura moderna che è collegata con l'antico, non nega l'antico. Anzi diventa una...ma senza...

I.B: Senza...

G.P: ...Adoperare le forme

I.B: Ecco

G.P: E questo è un tipo di intelligenza difficile, perché...

I.B: Sì, proprio un modo di, un metodo di scegliere, di saper scegliere e fare la sintesi delle cose. Un nuovo modo per dire...

G.P: Ma forse anche un vecchio modo, perché io penso che questa cosa si può fare se si capisce lo spirito dell'antico e non le forme dell'antico. E lo spirito dell'antico vuol dire il modo con cui l'antico interpretava la sua vita e come la interpretava. Io credo che la interpretava con la legge dell'analogia e cioè...noi quando descriviamo una cosa diamo molti giudizi che sono giudizi del corpo, sensibili... adesso non mi viene magari, non mi vengono esempi immediati, ma c'è un bel libro, almeno a me è servito molto, che si chiama Il Monte Analogico di René Daumal

I.B: Mm...me l'aveva detto

G.P: Forse l'ho citato

I.B: Sì

G.P: È un libro...forse... diciamo un romanzo analogico, lui lo racconta... in effetti è quasi un trattato, ma non è difficile. Lui dice che, fa un esempio mi pare che lo faccia in quel libro o

in un altro - dicendo: “Per arrivare alle sorgenti di un fiume, bisogna andare controcorrente”
no? *against stream*, “*if you want to reach the...*” devi andare... è una cosa evidente, no?

LB: Sì

G.P: Perché il fiume scende così, qui c'è la sorgente, qui c'è il mare... e allora ma tu se tu vuoi andare alla sorgente devi andare contro corrente, no? Questa frase è piena di significati

LB: Mm

G.P: Perché vai alle sorgenti? Per capire da dove sei, da dove sei nato. Tu sei nato nella sorgente dopo sei diventato fiume, evidentemente

LB: Mm

G.P: Questo percorso è un percorso di *rebirth*, di rinascita, di conoscenza della tua vita, no?
Però non pensare che sia un percorso facile

LB:(risata) Sì

G.P: Perché tu devi nuotare controcorrente. Allora, questa legge dell'analogia che mette assieme il ragionamento con l'esperienza fisica è, secondo me, alla base dell'architettura antica e dell'architettura moderna. Cioè, quando noi descriviamo...non so ... c'è la casa, l'edificio famoso di Adolf Loos a Vienna

LB: Vienna

G.P: Questo edificio che lui costruisce di fronte all'Hofburg

LB: Mm-hm

G.P: Che è chiamata *Loos House* adesso, no?

LB: Mm-hm

G.P: Ed è uno dei primi edifici in cui le finestre non hanno contorni, non hanno cornici, non hanno decorazioni, i viennesi forse non avevano capito l'edificio, però dicono una cosa interessante dicono che l'edificio è senza sopracciglia, perché la finestra è un occhio per un antico e allora questo paragonare sempre il corpo all'edificio è un'intuizione interessante perché vuol dire che collegarlo all'esperienza ma anche collegarlo alla fisicità perché l'esperienza si fa attraverso il proprio corpo

LB: È interessante che Scarpa nei suoi disegni...quasi sempre c'è la, la figura umana

G.P: Sì, certo

LB: È interessante perché proprio è una cosa quasi fondamentale

G.P: Sì, beh, perché dà la misura, dà la proporzione, dà il rapporto, anche se disegna un bicchiere disegna la mano che tiene il bicchiere, per capire il rapporto tra la forma del bicchiere

LB: E l'esperienza

G.P: E l'esperienza. Probabilmente se noi avessimo delle mani grandi così, Scarpa o un altro artista disegnerebbe delle robe diverse. Se noi fossimo delle mosche, mosquito, avremmo una vista a 180°, avremmo un occhio con tante visioni e dunque faremmo delle architetture forse tutte curve, forse come un *fisheye*, un obiettivo fotografico, forse di pesce. E se fossimo degli uccelli gli occhi qui...

LB: Gli occhi qui, sì

G.P: Perché facendo così, volando vediamo giù, non ci interessa vedere dritto ci interessa vedere di fianco, oppure ci sono uccelli che hanno gli occhi davanti come noi. Ma il nostro corpo è un codice importante per...

LB: Mm

G.P: ...La nostra architettura viene dal nostro corpo

LB: Mm, sì

G.P: Se avessimo un corpo diverso faremo un'architettura diversa

LB: Sì, ha ragione, sì.... non so se, se posso andare in una domanda...

G.P: Sì, certo

LB: Perché è proprio su questo...

G.P: Uh-hm

LB: Questa questione...ehm guardando i disegni e notando tutte queste figure umane, mi è venuta questa domanda: pensa che Carlo Scarpa dava un significato speciale alle figure umane, nei termini che interpretassero emozioni umane? Cioè, tristezza...perché ho visto, c'è un disegno, ci sono mi sembra due, due figure femminili, una è nel padiglione...

G.P: Sì

LB: ...E una è seduta e ha questa espressione triste...proprio...

G.P: Sì, è grassa? È una persona grassa o magra?

LB: No

G.P: Quella seduta

LB: Magra con i cap... beh non mi ricordo (*risata*)

G.P: No, perché

LB: Perché...

G.P: Perché c'è un disegno famoso del...dopo possiamo anche vederlo probabilmente... del padiglione in cui c'è una persona un po' grassa, *flat*, son so si dica così in inglese...

G.P: *Fat*. Seduta, che potrebbe essere anche il ritratto dell'Onorina Brion, della moglie di Brion, perché lei era una donna molto bella di viso, ma un po' appesantita, forse amava mangiare non lo so... e sono poi ci sono due donne nude in piedi invece. È un disegno

famoso, è stato pubblicato molte volte. Allora, vada, andiamo avanti...

LB: Sì, no...e allora volevo capire se magari Lei conosce o dalla sua esperienza con Scarpa, o da quello che adesso vede nei disegni... se magari lui cercava di ...come si dice, di “convey” si dice in inglese, non mi viene la parola...” trasmettere”...

G.P: Mm

LB: ...L'emozione ma anche l'importanza dell'emozione umana in questo spazio

G.P: Ma penso di sì, penso di sì

LB: Tramite come esprimeva anche i disegni

G.P: Sì

LB: Perché mi, mi...non è una cosa che la vedi molto sovente...

G.P: Sì

LB: ...L'espressione della figura umana

G.P: Sì, capisco

LB: In un disegno

G.P: Ma probabilmente ci sono architetti che pensano che è più importante la loro architettura che l'effetto che farà sulle persone e dunque non disegnano le persone ...“Io sono molto bravo, molto intelligente, di sicuro...”

LB: Di sicuro...

G.P: ...apprezzeranno la mia architettura” altri personaggi che, Scarpa in particolare, che amava molto disegnare che vorrebbero vedere abitata già la propria architettura. Forse non gli interessa raccontare l'espressione ma vedere che questa architettura può essere abitata, cioè, può essere visitata...

LB: Mm

G.P: ...Vissuta delle persone. E allora certo lui nella tomba di parenti, ad esempio, disegna spesso persone...

LB: Sì, giusto

G.P: ...che piangono, persone...addirittura mette piante che piangono

LB: Sì

G.P: La pianta che c'è dietro l'arcosolio

LB: Dietro l'arcosolio

G.P: Sembra una prèfica, la prèfica probabilmente nella cultura greca l'avete molto presente

LB: Ah, non ho presente

G.P: Sono quelle donne che venivano pagate per piangere al funerale

LB: Ah, non ho presente

G.P: Erano vestite di nero..

LB: Sì? Ah, non...

G.P: Sì nella cultura classica c'era questa... quando c'era una persona importante che moriva, i familiari erano evidentemente i primi che piangevano, se la amavano, ma poi invitavano molta gente, soprattutto donne, che si mettevano un velo nero e facevano (*suono di pianto*)

LB:(*risata*)

G.P: E piangevano e facevano questo lamento...

LB: Sì

G.P: ...Che era una specie di cerimonia, no? E allora Scarpa adopera anche delle piante che devono raccontare questo momento di dolore, no?

LB: Mm

G.P: Oppure segnalare che sta succedendo qualcosa. Per esempio...

LB: Mm

G.P: ...Forse...questo può esserci utile.

LB: Ah

LB: Allora questo glielo posso lasciare anche...

LB: Ah, guardi ce l'ho...ce l'ho con me (*risata*)

G.P: Ah, l'ha preso lì a San Vito

LB: Sì, me l'hanno...sì, me l' hanno dato al municipio...

G.P: Uh-hm

LB: ...d' Altivole, sì

G.P: Sì. Allora, ok

LB: È un bel libro molto...

G.P: Perché l' ho tirato fuori...non mi ricordo, non mi ricordo...beh i testi li ho fatti io

LB: Ah, volevo chiedere, tutto...

G.P: Sì. Il testo della parte descrittiva di Brion ecc. è mio, dopo non è tanto in evidenza, ma non...io non mi preoccupo tanto di apparire

LB: Mm

G.P: Perché ho preso questo...cosa dicevamo che ho una *défaillance*

LB: Ah, dei momenti, cosa interessava Scarpa come momenti di...ah parlavamo del dolore, delle donne che piangevano e allora

G.P: Ah, sì

LB: Delle storie umane...

G.P: No, ho capito perché adesso...allora...qui ci sono alcune foto recenti.

LB: Sì

G.P: Adesso il testo questo qui non è recentissimo, non so di che anno sia, sarà del 2008, sono dieci anni fa, undici anni fa

LB: Sì

G.P: E dunque non è proprio...In ogni modo ci sono sia foto storiche anche di Brion, sia foto fatte nel 2008...

LB: Sì, mm

G.P: Evidentemente le foto di *Memoriae Causa*, di questo libro che fa Scarpa sono le più vecchie di tutte ma qui c'è una foto mia che abbiamo dovuto mettere perché non c'era possibilità di...questa qua... questa foto mostra l'albero com'era prima

LB: Come era allora...

G.P: Adesso è terribile. Cresce da tutte le parti. Non so se ha notato...

LB: Sì

G.P: È proprio brutto, è un albero sgradevole e... c'è uno schizzo, un disegno di Paul Klee che si chiama "Mio Zio quand'era stregato"

LB:(risata)

G.P: E si vede un uomo che si muove

LB: Sì

G.P: Questo albero...Allora io ho assistito...

LB: Ah sì?

G.P: ...al momento in cui veniva posato questo albero e dunque Scarpa l'ha scelto, è andato a sceglierlo nel vivaio, il vivaio è dove vengono allevate le piante

LB: Sì, le piante

G.P: Ha guardato quello lì, dopo ha portato l'albero, ecc. Che cosa ha di straordinario...intanto che ha un andamento raro che è questa parabola e poi che i rami cadono come una tenda, a *curtain*, no? e questa forma di questo albero, che morì nel 1980 circa, obbliga chi vuole entrare a far così, ad aprire la tenda e cioè c'è un limite, c'è un velo che dà l'inizio...

LB: Sì

G.P: E che adesso invece non si legge

LB: Sì, è diverso, sì

G.P: Questo albero essendo una conifera, cioè della famiglia dei pini, degli abeti, degli alberi sempreverdi, punge

LB: Ah

G.P: Punge le dita, cioè è un ingresso pungente. Non saprei come tradurre...

LB: Sì, no, capisco

G.P: Sì, ecco, perché uno deve avere questa esperienza che sta entrando in un'altra realtà, in un'altra cosa che può già vedere, perché se guarda di qua vede l'arcosolio, e cioè ha già una specie di previsione, una *preview* di quello che vedrà, per cui è attirato da questa cosa, questa macchina strana che non riesce a decifrare

LB: Mm, mm

G.P: Ma però se vuole entrare deve pungersi

LB: Ma ci aveva pensato Scarpa anche a questo?

G.P: Sì, sono scelte le piante, sì

LB: Anche nel...questa...

G.P: Sì, beh sì perché poteva scegliere

LB: Certo sì...

G.P: Certo questo tipo di albero piangente...Perché questo albero piangente che vuol dire...

LB: Weeping

G.P: Weeping, forse anche in inglese. Perché gli alberi hanno due nomi uno in latino che è il nome scientifico o poi il nome comune che viene adoperato, è forse weeping tree....ma ci sono alberi piangenti come il salice ad esempio

LB: Eh, qual è?

G.P: Il salice ha piccole foglie però perde le foglie

LB: Ah...

G.P: Lui avrebbe potuto mettere

LB: Mettere, sì

G.P: Un salice piangente. In inverno avremmo visto solo i rami le foglie

LB: Mm

G.P: Se voleva mettere un albero che piange, mesto, triste poteva scegliere molte specie di alberi. Però decide per questo, cioè, punge ma non fa male

LB: Sì

G.P: Però ha un effetto...

LB: Un effetto...

G.P: E dopo appena apro questa cosa c'è questo fatto formidabile, importantissimo. Io ho capito questa cosa nel 1983, quando ho scritto quest'articolo qui. E cioè Io l'ho capito 10 anni,

12 anni dopo

LB: Dopo?

G.P: Aver lavorato per questa, per la tomba e ho avuto anche... io ho... questo qui è catalano e questo è italiano, però c'è anche l'*english digest*. Cioè, io avevo, ho scoperto, una cosa che nessuno aveva notato, cioè, che la scala era *shifted*, era spostata. Nessuno...

LB: Nessuno?

G.P: ...Nessuno ne parlava. Ma se tu vai, se vai in Brion e entri con delle persone e le fai poi spostare in modo che non possano vedere di nuovo da dove sono venuti, e tu chiedi "come siamo arrivati qui?" e ti dicono "abbiamo fatto la scala" e io chiedo: "e dov'è la scala?" "al centro, nell'asse del locale?" E invece non è nell'asse...

G.P: ...Non è nell'asse e questo spazio è completamente assiale, questo è uguale, questo è uguale, questo è il centro, questa è la cosa...la scala è spostata; allora o Scarpa è matto, un tipo strano, vuol fare le cose strane, oppure è un'indicazione formidabile che lui dà immediatamente fin dall'inizio. Poi si scopre che ci sono due scale, questa scala e questa scala qui. Questa la può fare qualsiasi persona perché ha scalini normali

LB: Sì

G.P: Noi diciamo l'alzata, cioè la distanza tra un punto dove si mette il piede e l'altro è normale

LB: Sì

G.P: Però qui c'è un'altra scala con scalini molto più ampi, perché questa è infilata dentro questa. E guarda caso che questa...se io facessi questa scala... poi tutti fanno questa evidentemente, no?

LB: Sì

G.P: E se andassi di qua mi accorgerei che questo percorso è un percorso molto solitario, molto difficile, molto personale, perché vado nel padiglione

LB: Vero, vero

G.P: Cioè, sono due cose diverse

LB: Sì, ma anche poi tutto il percorso che uno fa per andare...

G.P: Sì, e poi deve abbassare la porta di cristallo. Anzi devo...scusa faccio una telefonata

LB: Sì. L'ultima volta che sono andata avevano spaccato il vetro

G.P: Ah, lo so. Infatti, adesso chiamo il fabbro, perché ieri ero a Brion e non funziona la porta, non si riesce a tirarla su

LB: Ah

G.P: Aveva notato lei la scala spostata?

LB: Devo dire all'inizio, no. No.

G.P: Io ogni tanto ho qualche orgoglio, *proud*

LB: Sì, *pride*

G.P: E se si guarda la data di questo saggio, 1983, prima di quella data nessuno...

LB: Nessuno

G.P: ...Ha notato questa cosa che era evidente, perché sotto gli occhi di tutti

LB: Sa dove l'ho letto? l'ho letto in un articolo...perché questo non l'ho letto... Riesco a trovarlo?

G.P: Sì, ma posso spedire la scansione

LB: Sì?

G.P: Sì

LB: Grazie, grazie. Grazie mille. L'avevo letto in un articolo di George Dodds

G.P: Beh George...ci siamo...

(pausa per telefonata)

G.P: Questo è the *blacksmith*

LB: Ah

G.P: ...Perché io ho avuto...Io sto lavorando per il mantenimento

LB: Mm

G.P: Il restauro e la pulizia di questa opera e gran parte degli esecutori sono morti...

LB: Mm

G.P: ...Perché l'impresa edile, quella che ha fatto il *concrete* e le parti edili, le architetture insomma, è morto, il geometra Bratti; il falegname, chiamiamolo *cabinet maker* se vuoi, ha chiuso ed è morto anche lui. Sopravvive, sono ancora vivi i *blacksmith* che sono questi due fratelli che hanno l'officina a Venezia e si chiamano Zanon

LB: Zanon

G.P: Che sono...Paolo avrà quasi 80 anni, io penso, no? E che mi hanno aiutato per restaurare le parti di metallo, tutte le parti in metallo. E allora adesso lo chiamavo perché la porta, la *sliding door*, questa qui...

LB: Sì

G.P: ...Che si vede da qualche parte...ma qui non c'è una foto specifica... non funziona...

LB: Non funziona

G.P: Non sale e non scende, anzi ho provato ieri e questo è il pavimento, l'abbiamo tirata su fino a qui

LB: Sì

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G.P: Niente di grave perché uno riesce a fare un passo ed entrare. Però se uno vuole fare dei danni, come la porta rotta, può dare dei calci o dei colpi e spaccare il vetro, lo abbiamo già cambiato due volte, già si era rotto due volte. Non si sa come è successo

LB: Hm. Comunque, stavo pensando al discorso di questo sentiero, come si dice, *path*...

G.P : Ah, sì

LB: ...Solitario

G.P: Sì, certo, certo

LB: Che è molto...

G.P: Anche perché diventa più, come si dice, eh qui si entra, no? E qui c'è più o meno la porta di cristallo. Eh, qui ci possono stare due o tre persone...

LB: Sì

G.P: ... Perché è un metro e ottanta circa, ma qui va molto stringendosi e diventa... è solitario perché passa una persona per volta

LB: Mm

G.P: Per cui, non so se ha visto i disegni per dire...

LB: Del padiglione?

G.P: Padiglione o anche la posizione, la sistemazione del padiglione. Il padiglione nelle prime versioni nei primi disegni ha 10 colonne

LB: Ah, non ho notato

G.P: Poi è diventato otto colonne, poi diventato quattro colonne e i primi disegni mostrano che lui voleva fare un percorso diretto dall'arcosolio al padiglione. E capire perché ha deciso poi di far così è interessante, molto importante. Io credo che la spiegazione più banale e più semplice è che lui ha capito che una persona che era qui dentro e che voleva meditare, pensare, magari vedendo la tomba dei genitori, non poteva essere serena se vedeva la gente che arrivava, se aveva una strada che arrivava direttamente. E allora ha pensato che era più giusto se la gente arrivava di fianco

LB: Sì

G.P: Perché uno poteva continuare a guardare e osservare e a pensare senza vedere i movimenti delle persone

LB: Sì

G.P: E queste sono scelte che si capiscono mettendo assieme i disegni

LB: Complicato

G.P: Ma è anche semplice, è il processo, cioè... lui capisce che bisognava mettere in connessione questo con questo

LB: Sì

G.P: E allora pensa che la cosa più semplice è far così, dritto, io sono qua all'arcosolio vado al padiglione...

LB: Mm

G.P: E poi vede che non funziona, fa tanti disegni, non funziona, prova, cambia il numero delle gambe dieci, otto, quattro eccetera, però non funziona ancora. E poi capisce che non ha utilizzato questo, perché questa parte qui fino a qui l'aveva sempre disegnata. Però arrivavo qui e poi arrivavo dall'acqua, nell'acqua, e uno dice "cosa me ne faccio, cosa serve, che io arrivo lì...?"...

LB: Sì

G.P: ...Di fronte all'acqua". E dopo fa la cosa più semplice e più banale che è quella di dire "allora li faccio entrare di qua". E si capisce che qui adesso io posso stare a meditare sereno. Perché non... lei sa cosa vuol dire sereno?

LB: Sì, no, capisco perfettamente...

G.P: No. Sa l'etimologia di sereno?

LB: Ah. No, che cosa...?

G.P: Che significato dà a 'sereno' lei? Molto semplicemente

LB: Calmo, pacifico, non...Non è così?

G.P: No, è vicino ma non è arrivata

LB: Vicino?

G.P: Non è arrivata...

LB: Non ha a che fare niente con la sera, no?

G.P: No. Non direi di no. Sì, non c'entra molto. Secondo Lei cos'è una cosa serena. Uno spazio sereno, una luce serena, un cielo sereno. Quand'è che sono sereni? Quando sono sereni?

LB: Quando...

G.P: Sì, che condizione devono avere per essere...Il cielo può essere tempestoso, *cloudy*

LB: Sì

G.P: Può essere...

LB: Adesso mi viene il discorso del silenzio...

G.P: Sì, diciamo che ci sono dei rumori visivi

LB: Sì

G.P: No, assenza di rumori visivi. Però ci sono dei fatti proprio, una cosa molto, molto semplice, molto

LB: La luce? No

G.P: Ma anche...

LB:(*risata*) Non, non lo so

G.P: Se lei guarda un vocabolario italiano e apre la pagina sulla parola 'sereno'

LB: Sì

G.P: Vede uguale e cioè vuol dire, tu puoi dire la stessa cosa adoperando la parola sereno o adoperando quest'altra parola, quest'altra parola è "secco"

LB: Secco?

G.P: Secco, *without cloud*

LB: Ah

G.P: Un cielo sereno è senza nubi e senza umori

LB: Sì.

G.P: È vero, no? Quando è sereno il cielo, no? Senza nuvole

LB: Quindi uno stato di meditazione?

G.P: Uno stato d'animo sereno è uno stato senza umori, senza essere agitato da pensieri, da cose complicate, no? Cioè, uno può decidere con la mente chiara, pulita, senza nubi

LB: Mm

G.P: Il re è serenissimo. Quando decide il re...

LB: Mm

G.P: O il giudice

LB: Deve essere...

G.P: Deve essere sereno

LB: Sì

G.P: Cioè, deve decidere senza simpatie per l'uno per l'altro, senza umori. Deve decidere secco, *dry*

LB: Capito

G.P: E la città più bagnata del mondo, più *wet* del mondo è serenissima ed è Venezia

LB: Quindi l'acqua...

G.P: L'acqua...ma perché è serena Venezia? Perché è piena d'amore. Perché l'acqua può essere mandata via con il calore. Se tu vuoi asciugare un ambiente, renderlo secco

LB: Secco, sì

G.P: Devi riscaldarlo

LB: Sì

G.P: Ecco, allora riscaldandola l'acqua evapora. E Venezia è piena d'amore, attraverso le

chiese, la passione per l'arte, la passione per la gente per l'uomo. Cioè, è l'amore che rende serena e anche il principe ama il suo popolo. E allora attraverso questo suo amore diventa sereno

LB: Che bello questo. Bellissimo

G.P: *The most wet town in the world is dry, completely dry*

LB: A questo devo proprio...proprio pensarci adesso...*food for thought*

G.P: No, è pieno di, è pieno di aperture, di possibilità. Io credo che l'architettura di Scarpa sia serena. *In my opinion, his quality is most come si dice, hidden quality...that you feel 'sereno' inside.* Sereno in italiano, non so se poi si può adoperare in inglese con la stessa...

LB: Sì, 'serene', andando indietro all'etimologia però...

G.P: O probabilmente...sì perché sempre un'etimologia latina. E dunque. Ma io sono restato meravigliato perché cercavo il significato di sereno e ho visto 'secco', come 'secco'?

Possibile com'è possibile?, poi invece è vero... il vero significato di sereno è secco, *dry*. Tutti i vocabolari danno questa spiegazione, forse anche un vocabolario inglese. Non so...

LB: Devo cercare non so...

G.P: Uh-hm. Il principe è sereno, no? Sua Altezza Serenissima. Non si chiamano così normalmente i re, i reali?

LB: Ah, non ho...Io non

G.P: No, dico che her *Majesty, majesty* non so come si dica

LB: Majesty

G.P: Ma noi diciamo 'Sua Altezza' perché...

LB: Sì

G.P: È più alta degli altri

LB: Sì

G.P: Ma, serenissima, è questa qualità che la rende più alta di tutti gli altri. Perché gli altri, la gente comune, come noi decide anche con le passioni, con le cose

LB: Mm

G.P: Invece il giudice, l'imperatore è serenissimo perché decide senza umori, senza passioni. Decide, vede chiaro, non ha dubbi, non ha *cloud*, non ha *fog* davanti agli occhi

LB: Venezia è piena di...

G.P: Ma io penso di sì, perché basta passeggiare per Venezia c'è una chiesa ogni, ogni 100 metri, ogni calle c'è una chiesa. Comunque, c'è questo amore per l'uomo, per la religione, no? E poi c'è questa passione civile per la Repubblica, no? Cioè Venezia non è una monarchia è una repubblica, una repubblica particolare, no?

LB: Mm. Sì

G.P: Ma è tutto il popolo che lavora per la gloria di Venezia. Cioè c'è questa grande passione civile

LB: Ma eh...l' ho letto anche...per quello che volevo anche chiedere se Lei che ha scritto il testo perché c'è alla fine mi sembra il punto dove, non so se riesco a trovare adesso, scrive di questo...esattamente di questa cosa...

G.P: Può darsi

LB: Non su sereno ma sull'amore, sul...

G.P: Ah, perché forse parlo della...

LB: La parte spirituale

G.P: Sì, perché forse parlo dei due cerchi

LB: Sì, mi sembra di sì, adesso devo

G.P: Sì perché, nella...

LB: Sì, scusi, ecco qui. Questa è la parte inglese

G.P: Sì, ma c'è anche in italiano

LB: Sì, lo so

G.P: Ehm, è stato divertente perché adesso...allora cos'è successo, è successo che Scarpa fa questo disegno, nel 1970 circa, perché è uno dei primi edifici che viene costruito

LB: Propylaeum, ah

G.P: Propilei, sì, dei primi edifici e allora, io, come si dice, ho studiato le misure eccetera e in questo disegno si vede in nero, si vede come sono i due anelli nei propilei. Poi cosa succede, succede che io regalo a Scarpa un libro che è questo qua. Vediamo se lo trovo: Francesco Borromini

LB: Sì

G.P: Molto amato da Scarpa. Molto, molto amato

LB: Ah, sì?

G.P: Sì, un architetto che lui amava. Anche perché è uno dei primi architetti che adopera la matita., disegna con la matita. I disegni di architettura di Borromini...

LB: Sì

G.P: Tra l'altro, assomigliano molto ai disegni Scarpa perché sono molto... come si dice... in un unico disegno ci sono tante versioni, tante stesure, non è mai un disegno... perentorio

LB: Sì

G.P: Sì. Questo è San Carlino alle Quattro Fontane. E poi c'è una qualità del disegno altissima, ma proprio... Ed è un disegnatore con matita, cioè con il *pencil* con la ...come si chiama, adesso non ne trovo neanche una, ma...

LB: Qui?

G.P: Sì, matita, ok. E io regalo questo libro a Scarpa e lui vede questa cosa qui. Allora lui vede questo disegno che è attribuito a Francesco Borromini ma forse è il nipote di Borromini, non è proprio... è il disegno di una chiesa che non è mai stata realizzata ed è la costruzione dell'ellisse, perché questa è un'ellisse. E lui capisce che la costruzione dell'ellisse è fatta con due cerchi e poi con questi due triangoli e poi io punto il compasso qui, faccio quest'arco, insomma è una costruzione normale e là si vede adesso noi...tutti quelli che adoperano il computer non conoscono come si arriva a una forma perché dicono 'ellisse' e il computer fa l'ellisse, no?

LB: Mm

G.P: Poi tu dai le misure, larga, stretta, schiacciata ecc., e il computer fa....Ma io credo che molti che sono molto bravi...

LB: Sì

G.P: ...nel disegno digitale non conoscono le costruzioni geometriche per arrivare...

LB: Devo dire neanche io conoscevo...

G.P: Ecco. Allora questa è una costruzione geometrica classica per disegnare un'ellisse. E Scarpa s'accorge che praticamente sono i suoi due cerchi, no? E si accorge che, mentre nel...

LB: Quello che ha fatto lui

G.P: ...Sì, mentre allora questo è il raggio del nero, no?

LB: Del nero...

G.P: È questo...Allora i due cerchi neri sono, hanno, si chiama eccentricità insomma, diciamo la distanza tra i due centri, in questo caso, nel caso di Scarpa è mezzo raggio-*half radius*

LB: Mm

G.P: E lui si accorge che se si adopera un'eccentricità di un raggio, quella rossa quella di Borromini...

LB: Mm

G.P: ...Allora si allarga la mandorla, the almond, diventa (inaudible?)

LB: Sì

G.P: E questa mandorla più larga permette di costruire un triangolo equilatero il triangolo equilatero, poi un altro triangolo equilatero, ecc.

LB: Ah

G.P: Cosa che non si può fare nella mandorla più piccolina. E questa costruzione geometrica è piena di nuove possibilità perché permette di ricavare graficamente radice di due, radice di tre, radice di cinque, che sono rapporti geometrici molto importanti in architettura. La radice di cinque poi porta alla sezione Aurea al numero ϕ e tutte queste cose qui...

LB: Mm

G.P: Allora lui... allora succede che alla fine della sua vita, con un edificio già costruito, si accorge che questa costruzione in rosso (*the red one*) è molto più ricca geometricamente e simbolicamente. Però si accorge anche che questa costruzione nera andava bene a lui nella sua architettura perché intanto dava due cerchi molto più orizzontali

LB: Mm

G.P: Perché mettiamo che i cerchi di Scarpa sono questi, e dopo i rossi diventano, si avvicinano

LB: Mm...

G.P: Perché la loro distanza si riduce, no? Fino poi diventare un cerchio

LB: Sì

G.P: Se io arrivo a sovrapporli, allora avrebbero solo modificato le proporzioni in facciata. Adesso quindi la vediamo schiacciata, ma insomma questi due cerchi sarebbero... e dunque avrei avuto più pieno attorno rispetto ai due corpi. In ogni modo lui però decide nel suo libro di adoperare questa costruzione, quella rossa che non è quella che lui aveva già realizzato nell'edificio. È diversa. Lui avrebbe dovuto disegnare nella copertina, nella cover del suo libro, avrebbe dovuto mettere il disegno originale dei due cerchi del tunnel del Propilei ... questa è la costruzione di Borromini e non è la costruzione dei due cerchi del tunnel del Propilei Però questa è piena di... come si dice di... risorse simboliche e anche geometriche

LB: Mm

G.P: Perché appunto posso ricavare tante proporzioni che nell'altra costruzione non riesco a ricavare. E dunque adopera questa, e se uno pensa, dice, ma come mai doveva adoperare la nera invece che la rossa, no?

LB: Mm

G.P: Perché è evidente che i due cerchi....

LB: Sono

G.P: ...Sono più chiusi, no? Però cosa c'è dentro a questa cosa qui normalmente? c'è questa cosa qua: normalmente nella mandorla c'è questa

LB: Ah

G.P: Cioè, io non avevo capito, prima di ragionare sul tema di Brion, che questo qui è chiamato 'Cristo Pantocratore', non il Cristo che soffre. Non è Cristo in croce ma il Cristo risorto, Pantocratore...

LB: Pantocratore, sì

G.P: ...E che ha tutt'attorno i suoi evangelisti. Perché questi sono i simboli degli Evangelisti, l'aquila con San Giovanni, poi sono i vari altri

LB: Mm

G.P: Se si fa una costruzione geometrica e si cerca di capire dove sono i due cerchi che hanno dato origine a questa mandorla, si può vedere che nella tradizione cattolica, è una tradizione certamente non è la sola tradizione, ci sono molti tipi di mandorla. Ci sono mandorle più aperte, più chiuse...

LB: Sì

G.P: ...Cioè, non c'è una regola precisa

LB: Non c'è?

G.P: No, la regola è che la mandorla viene dalla sovrapposizione dei due cerchi, però possono essere più lontani o più vicini. Addirittura in alcuni casi, non so se trovo l'esempio... è bellissimo... è brutta ma è bellissima nel senso che è brutta come scultura, non è la più importante, però è molto importante...Credo che questi libri li aveva anche Scappa, adesso... glieli avevano ... adesso ecco questo qui è, è molto... sembra, sembra fatta da un bambino, è molto naïf

LB: Sì

G.P: È molto...ed è Gesù Cristo questo...E Gesù Cristo ha detto "io sono la porta. Chi entra attraverso di me entra nel paradiso entra nella vita eterna". I Vangeli dicono così insomma, no? Questo è interessante perché normalmente questa è la mandorla, e Cristo è dentro. In questo caso la mandola/porta è dentro Cristo

LB: Sì, ah

G.P: E questa è la mandorla di nuovo disegnata in maniera

LB: Sì

G.P: Semplice, approssimativa, e diciamo *naïve*

LB: Sì

G.P: Però è chiaramente non la mandorla del Cristo Pantocratore questa, perché io posso trovare i due cerchi...

LB: Sì

G.P: ...questo simbolo io l'ho trovato in Giappone, ad esempio

LB: In Giappone?

G.P: ...Nel tempio delle peonie in Giappone. È un tempio

LB: Non sono mai stata...

G.P: Non mi ricordo come si chiami esattamente, loro lo chiamano 'il tempio delle peonie' perché peonie è un fiore che per loro è molto importante. Credo che la peonia in inglese si chiami *Desert Rose*, la rosa del deserto

LB: Ah sì? Non è *peony*?

G.P: Forse *peony* anche, sì, ma che questo secondo no...e da colori magnifici non ha profumo ma e un fiore... Nel tempio delle peonie c'era un pozzo per raccogliere l'acqua e noi chiamiamo "vera da pozzo" l'anello, la parte, il cilindro che protegge...

LB: Sì

G.P: ...Chi prende l'acqua

LB: Sì

G.P: Vera perché è fatto come un anello

LB: Sì

G.P: E vera è l'anello che si dà nei matrimoni. Chi è sposato ha la vera di solito

LB: In greco è *vera*

G.P: Sì, ok, sì. Io non lo porto perché l'ho persa, l'ho persa nuotando

LB: Ah

G.P: E allora ce l'ha mia moglie, non perché non voglio portare...

LB: Sì

G.P: E, nella vera da pozzo, ci sono...c'erano i due cerchi, ma è un simbolo molto antico, lo si trova in molte religioni, non è cattolica soltanto o cristiana soltanto

LB: Mm

G.P: C'è in molte religioni perché segna l'unione di due persone del maschile e femminile, se vogliamo

LB: Mm

G.P: Si possono avere anche idee diverse. Possono essere anche due maschi e due femmine non è un problema

LB: Sì

G.P: Si allarga?

LB: No, è tutto molto interessante, stimolante

G.P: Mm

LB: Adesso... devo pensarci

G.P: Sì, no...questo lo capisco

LB:(risata) Ma però grazie dei discorsi molto...

G.P: No, Io...quello che dico, sono mie letture, mie, come si dice... interpretazioni, no?

LB: Mm

G.P: Che si possono in parte trovare anche nei racconti di Carlo Scarpa...

LB: Mm

G.P: ...In quelle poche cose...non so se lei conosce il libro della Franca Semi

LB: Sì, l' ho appena ho cominciato a leggere

G.P: Sì, non è facilissimo perché è un po'... Cioè io amo molto altro...e tra l'altro Franca e morta...

LB: È morta...?

G.P: ...Un mese fa

LB: Oh, no

G.P: Sì. Ed era felice perché aveva potuto fare la seconda edizione

LB: Ah

G.P: Ed è un modo per cercare di avvicinarsi all'opera di Scarpa, però non è un trattato sistematico, perché sono lezioni in cui parlava di tanti argomenti

LB: Sì

G.P: E di tante cose per cui... ma lì si possono...Se uno ha pazienza e entra un po' nella testa di questo modo di fare lezione molto strano...perché Scarpa iniziava da un punto poi faceva così...

LB: Sì

G.P: ...E a un certo punto dici "ma dove sto andando...?"

LB:(risata)

G.P: "E poi dove vai", "e poi di cosa parla...?" però dopo tornava

LB: Tornava...

G.P: Sì. E un discorso un po' ellittico no? E Scarpa diceva che lui faceva... non riusciva a fare una lezione dritta, perché anche i visi delle persone che aveva di fronte potevano modificare la lezione

LB: Ah, sì?

G.P: Sì. Una frase che lui diceva...noi avevamo all'epoca Manfredo Tafuri come insegnante...

LB: Sì

G.P: ...come insegnante di storia dell'architettura. Scarpa diceva “ Io non sono come Tafuri che si guarda il cervello. Io guardo fuori”. Tafuri guardava il suo cervello e poteva succedere qualsiasi cosa davanti e il suo discorso era sempre...

LB: Mm

G.P: ...conseguente, sempre corretto, sempre...Nel caso di Scarpa invece se vedeva uno...

LB: Osservava...

G.P: ...Lui reagiva di fronte a... Una lezione fatta in un posto, fatta in un altro, fatta con certe persone davanti o altre persone poteva essere completamente diversa. Per Tafuri invece poteva essere sempre la stessa lezione, era indifferente al pubblico o alla *classroom* che aveva di fronte perché era più...

LB: Sì

G.P: ...Più un intellettuale, più... non dava valore forse all'esperienza...

LB: Mm

G.P: ...La sua esperienza forse era quella importante.

LB: Questo anche un...non so come si dice in italiano, il concetto di “*empathy*”

G.P: Sì, certo, sì. Empatia, sì. Ma io penso che bisogna avere questa capacità di empatia per trasmettere agli altri dei sentimenti

LB: Sì

G.P: Cioè, un architetto non può essere senza empatia

LB: O può essere però produce...

G.P: Sì, però produce qualcosa che...

LB: Sì

G.P: ...Che...io credo che gran parte della nostra architettura moderna purtroppo diventerà...come, come le automobili. Quando compri un'automobile appena nuova è bellissima

LB: Mm

G.P: E dopo basta un piccolo colpo, una piccola cosa e diventa un disastro, diventa un rottame, no? Invece se il problema non è quello di presentare un oggetto perfetto ma di presentare un'esperienza, cioè un'architettura dell'esperienza, anche se manca qualcosa un dito a una statua, c'è questa empatia che ricostruisce la forma completa. Mentre un'automobile con tanti colpi prima era un grande amore poi diventa un problema. La si getta via, no?

LB: Mm

G.P: Diventa un rottame. Il problema in architettura è invecchiare bene. E avere capacità

interne per invecchiare. E non è solo una questione di materiali, marmo, pietra. È proprio una questione di assemblaggio, di parti che entrano e lavorano bene assieme.

LB: Mm

G.P: Cioè, non è...cioè, molte persone hanno sottolineato che Scarpa aveva una grande memoria visiva, straordinaria memoria visiva

LB: Ah, sì?

G.P: Sì, lui collegava un'immagine con una cosa, diceva “questo l'ho visto qui”. Quello che non ha potuto raccogliere con i viaggi perché ha viaggiato, non ha viaggiato moltissimo, lo ha raccolto attraverso i libri attraverso... perché aveva una biblioteca molto importante, molto... E poi incamerava continuamente queste immagini, no? Allora molti docenti molti...persone che insegnano dicono “imparate e ricordate. È importante ricordare” ma io dico che è più importante digerire

LB: Mm

G.P: ...Più importante digerire che ricordare, perché tu puoi avere un grande archivio in testa però se non sai...

LB: Sono d' accordo

G.P: Mettere assieme le cose

LB: Sì

G.P: Vuol dire che c'è un momento in cui tu devi dire “fermo, non mangio”...

LB: Esatto, esatto, sì

G.P: ...Adesso digerisco

LB: È proprio vero. Quando... adesso mi vengono tante cose in mente

G.P: Mm, hm

LB: Ma una delle cose, quando siamo andati con gli studenti in ottobre a Brion e poi ho parlato con loro... eh... tanti studenti hanno parlato di questa esperienza, che in diversi posti a Brion hanno avuto questa esperienza che uno deve fare una pausa...

G.P: Mm-hm

LB: ...Per vedere un po' come funziona...

G.P: Certo, sì

LB: ...Questa cosa strana, la porta, no? Le finestre, le finestre lì quelle nel tempietto che sono un po' particolari

G.P: Sì, certo

LB: Allora uno deve proprio “re-invent” come si dice...

G.P: Sì

LB: ...Un modo di fare e di vedere di e di...to experience

G.P: Certo, sì

LB: E allora uno studente diceva che “ mi ha fatto pensare (Scarpa)...

G.P: Mm

LB: ...“che magari devo vedere le cose in un modo diverso” o devo, devo..non devo nel senso...ma proprio che...di questa possibilità di...

G.P: Sì, lui suggerisce una possibilità di vedere le cose

LB: Ecco, di vedere che proprio in quel momento che uno fa la pausa per capire ma anche per, per digerire

G.P: Sì...ma sto pensando come potevo raccontare questa cosa. Scarpa diceva spesso che molti dei nostri ricordi sono mentali

LB: Mm

G.P: Come prima naturalmente mentire ecc. Un esempio forse è divertente. Non è un esempio

(pausa per cercare libro)

G.P: Vediamo...Vediamo se Violetta sa perché lei ricorda di più di me

(Pausa)

G.P: Allora tolgo un po' di roba perché fa confusione

LB: Ah, questo mi sembra...

G.P: Allora questo possiamo mettere qua, questo qui...allora questo architetto non è importante però è una... Come si potrebbe dire?

LB: Italiano?

G.P: Sì. Un architetto di Como, lombardo, Simone Cantoni. Ma non è importante come architetto, l'occasione è importante, cioè Il ragionamento è importante. Questo è un architetto neoclassico, cioè, siamo 1700 fine Settecento primi...primo Ottocento

LB: Mm

G.P: Allora lui... puoi leggere forse qui cosa dice

LB: Sì. Mm ...questo?

G.P: Sì. Lo storico, perché questo è uno storico che ragiona. Che fa questo libro su *Simone Cantoni* scrive...scusa cosa dice?

LB: “Località non precisata, chiesa non identificata”...

G.P: Identificata

LB: ...“Facciata non databile”

G.P: Ok, cioè lui non riesce a capire dove Cantoni ha fatto questo disegno, no?

L.B: Sì

G.P: Io poi ho scoperto dov'è questa chiesa

L.B: Ah, sì?

G.P: Sì. Ma non ci voleva molto a scoprirla. Riesce a capire dove è questa chiesa?

(pausa per trovare il libro)

L.B: No, non...

G.P: Allora quando farò vedere la fotografia probabilmente... È un modo di parlare un po' ellittico. Cioè, uno dice "ma cosa mi sta facendo vedere... parlavamo di una cosa"...

L.B: Ah, ellittico, sì *(risata)*

G.P: ..."Parlavamo di una cosa e poi mi fa vedere un'altra cosa, non capisco più niente etc". Allora l'edificio è questo. Questo in Italia è un edificio molto famoso perché l'autore è molto famoso

L.B: Alberti

G.P: Eh sì. Questo è il tempio Malatestiano di Mantova

L.B: Di Mantova?

G.P: Sì, di Rimini scusa

L.B: Ah, di Rimini

G.P: Ed è una specie di come si potrebbe dire di "re-design" di un edificio gotico che viene rivestito...

L.B: Ah, la parte

G.P: Nuova pelle...ed è incompleto, chiaramente incompleto, no?

L.B: Mm

G.P: Allora magari uno dice non lo so... che però uno storico dell'arte, questo, dica "località non identificata, edificio" eccetera, cioè non abbia capito...

L.B: Sì

G.P: ...Che è il tempio Malatestiano è strano, questo non è uno storico è uno stupido è un idiot

L.B: Sì

G.P: Cioè ha delle grandi, dei grandi problemi a non capire. Però ha anche qualche giustificazione. Cioè...perché non ha capito che era il tempio Malatestiano. Guardiamo qui dentro, no? Qui, questi archi, no, qui sono riempiti di pietre, no?

L.B: Sì

G.P: E questi invece sono

LB: Sono di...

G.P: Tutti regolari, no?

LB: Sì

G.P: Allora cosa succede. Succede che questo Cantoni è andato a Rimini di sicuro in questa località, ha preso delle misure...

LB: Sì

G.P: ...E poi ha pensato "ho abbastanza materiale per fare il disegno"

LB: Ah, e poi...

G.P: E non si è preoccupato però di fare il disegno preciso

LB: Esattamente, sì

G.P: Di queste parti perché dice "boh, insomma"

LB: Mm

G.P: Essendo poi un neoclassico... noi... nel periodo neoclassico c'era anche una industrializzazione per cui era facile ottenere tutti i blocchi di pietra uguali perché c'erano delle macchine che potevano tagliare la pietra

LB: Mm

G.P: Nel periodo rinascimentale invece il blocco di pietra invece poteva avere misure diverse

LB: Mm-hm

G.P: E però questo qui, da questo qui è tutta...

LB: È vero

G.P: È una cosa completamente diversa, no?

LB: Sì

G.P: È totalmente diversa

LB: Ma anche il resto

G.P: Sì perché lui ha fatto dei ragionamenti...dopo il rilievo

LB: Sì

G.P: Ma pare che qui c'è il rilievo proprio effettivo, da qualche parte...Ma in ogni modo...

LB: Mm

G.P: ...Lui ha avuto un'esperienza con l'edificio però non ha avuto un'esperienza completa dell'edificio

LB: Mm

G.P: Perché pensava che il resto poteva essere completato a memoria

LB: Mm

G.P: A mente, cioè secondo la sua visione

LB: Mm-hm

G.P: Invece proprio nelle parti che non ha rilevato ha sbagliato completamente.

LB: Mm

G.P: E ha dato un'immagine di un edificio che anche allo storico che ha scritto il libro è risultato incomprensibile. Cioè, questo qui ha sbagliato... forse non era un grande...

LB: Sì

G.P: ...Un grande storico.

LB: Sì

G.P: Però questo qui ha qualche motivo, ok?

LB: Mm

G.P: Per perché non ha saputo riconoscere questo edificio

LB: Hm, sì

G.P: Allora il problema mentale di non vedere le cose come sono realmente apparse; certe persone credevano di aver capito le cose con il cervello e non con l'esperienza, no? Per dire Franz Kafka quando racconta e dice "e io ho visto un uomo che è passato dietro l'orecchio di quello con cui parlavo". E uno dice ma come è passato dietro l'orecchio. E se tu pensi se passa una persona dietro di te...

LB: Sì

G.P: Cioè, lui ha descritto esattamente quello ha visto. Una persona normale avrebbe detto "parlavo con un amico eccetera"...

LB: Sì

G.P: ...E dietro è passato uno, ma lui dice dietro l'orecchio addirittura, no? Che è una descrizione poetica straordinaria perché...

LB: Mm

G.P: ...Voglio far capire che c'è qualcosa che centra con quello che io dicevo...

LB: Ah

G.P: ...Che stavo dicendo a questa persona e ti sto raccontando esattamente quella che è stata la mia esperienza, no? Allora...

LB: Mm

G.P: Queste persone trasmettono un'esperienza vera, completa, complessiva. Quello che ho detto, quello che ho visto e quello che mi ha raccontato quello che ho visto, cioè la mia visione mi ha fatto mettere in evidenza determinate cose. Qui invece lui non si è preoccupato, ha pensato che la sua testa fosse più importante dell'esperienza.

LB: Mm

G.P: Infatti, torna in studio magari a Como dopo aver fatto 300 chilometri, crede di riprodurre e di disegnare correttamente e sbaglia

LB: Sì. Mm

G.P: Cioè, essere in possesso, di possedere un'esperienza...

LB: Mm-hm

G.P: ...completamente è una qualità molto importante. Dare la possibilità a chi visita l'architettura di essere consapevole della propria esperienza è un dono che tu fai a chi visita la tua architettura. Cioè, nel momento in cui chi visita la tua architettura si accorge che è seduto nel padiglione e sente il suo respiro.

LB: Sì, o sente...

G.P: Perché il silenzio, perché la visione, perché dà serenità gli ha dato questa possibilità. Questo è un regalo che ha fatto l'architetto. Dunque, il poeta ha regalato questa possibilità di incontrare sé stessi, di capire che cosa c'è...

LB: Che bello questo. Molto bello

G.P: Cioè, credo che questa sia la grande qualità di un'alta... di una buona architettura

LB: Mm

G.P: Può essere altissima evidentemente ma l'architettura deve ricongiungere il corpo. Dopo possiamo parlarne molto ma... adesso mi viene in mente una cosa...

LB: Sì

G.P: Ci sono delle favole forse indù o cinesi che raccontano di mostri ...

LB: Sì

G.P: Esseri mostruosi no? Tu vai in viaggio, cammini, vai in un certo posto a un certo punto vedi questo mostro, no?

LB: Sì

G.P: E questo mostro è mettiamo testa, una testa, poi manca il busto

LB: Sì

G.P: Ci sono le gambe

LB: Sì

G.P: Sono pezzi di corpi umani tenuti assieme solo con piccoli fili

LB: Sì

G.P: E sono mostruosi perché manca tutto il corpo completo

LB: Sì

G.P: Allora è una testa che va per conto suo

LB: Mm-hm

G.P: Uno stomaco

LB: Sì

G.P: Oppure solo uno stomaco che cammina con le gambe ma senza testa, no?

LB: E queste favole raccontano quello che siamo noi, cioè noi siamo solo testa niente cuore solo stomaco senza testa, solo ritmo frenetico ma senza pensare dove andiamo. Il compito del poeta è di mettere assieme, rimettere assieme le parti del corpo, secondo me

LB: Molto bello questo

G.P: Mm

LB: Grazie di questo pensiero...molto...

G.P: Io penso che questo sia un lavoro difficile ma importante, insomma, che... ci vuole

LB: C'è...volevo, volevo dire adesso mi viene in mente anche questo discorso dell'effetto non so se... in italiano sinestetico

G.P: Sì, certo

LB: Che proprio è il discorso della metafora

G.P: Sì

LB: Adesso stanno anche facendo ricerca sulla mente, come il cervello proprio mette insieme e crea questo effetto diciamo poetico, della sintesi

G.P: Dell'esperienza

LB: Diversi sensi, sì...Non so se ha presente Frascari, Marco Frascari

G.P: Sì, certo, sì. È stato mio compagno di scuola

LB: Ah, sì?

G.P: Più vecchio di un anno, un anno, o due più vecchio di me

LB: Sono andata c'era il symposium...

G.P: A Londra, sì. Della Mary Johnson e Federica

LB: Goffi

G.P: ...Federica Goffi, sì

LB: E allora lui parla di Scarpa, fa questo discorso. Lui crede che Scarpa sia, abbia questa qualità di sinestesia...

G.P: Sì

LB: ...Mettere insieme

G.P: Certo, sì

LB: Quello che io penso Lei...

G.P: Sì, penso che sia così

LB: C'è questo, c'è in un libro, magari lo conosce, "The Architect's Brain" è abbastanza

recente, è di Harry Mallgrave

G.P: Uh-hm, sì l'ho sentito nominare

LB: Sì

G.P: Ma non c'è traduzione italiana

LB: Forse no, è abbastanza recente. E portano insieme l'architettura neuroscienza...

G.P: Uh-hm

LB: ...Per vedere anche come funziona il cervello. C'è questo capitolo sulla metafore...

G.P: Sì

LB: ...Che parla proprio di questo... e menziona mi sembra Frascari e Scarpa...

G.P: Uh-hm

LB: ...Di questo...di questa capacità di mettere insieme e di *combinare* ...

G.P: Sì, combinare

LB: ...I sensi...

G.P: Io...

LB: ...Proprio perché il poeta fa esattamente questa cosa

G.P: ...Penso che il poeta ha questa funzione

LB: Mm

G.P: Io sto leggendo, ho letto, adesso lo riprendo...questo...lui è un premio Nobel sullo studio del cervello, proprio

LB: Ah sì?

G.P: Sì, e lui studia tre artisti importantissimi di Vienna che sono Gustav Klimt, Egon Schiele, e li studia dal punto di vista della...

LB: Ah, Sacks...Sì. Neuroscienza, sì

G.P: Ed è un modo di approccio, un modo di avvicinarsi al...per capire di più la ... ma penso che, semplificando, la qualità del poeta è quella di far ritornare, abbiamo detto che c'è la testa, il corpo eccetera tenuti insieme con piccoli fili

LB: Mm

G.P: E questa è la mostruosità delle...

LB: Mm

G.P: ...Di queste persone di queste entità che io incontro. E il poeta deve cercare di ricomporre il corpo di queste persone, insomma... E dunque anche la mente, anche il cervello insomma

LB: L'età dell'inconscio

G.P: Mm

LB: E sì. Perché alle volte mi chiedo come mai questo cimitero offre questa esperienza...

G.P: Certo

LB: ...Che non è nemmeno, come si dice, monolitica

G.P: No.... monodirezionale, sì

LB: Ecco. È molto...all'inizio io penso... non è... diciamo la prima volta che sono andata

G.P: Mm-hm

LB: Quell'esperienza che ho avuto con la compagnia che siamo andati tutti insieme...

G.P: Sì

LB: ...Era un'esperienza abbastanza felice, diciamo. Poi sono andata un altro giorno con la pioggia, forse anche io ero in uno stato d'animo diverso

G.P: Mm-hm

LB: Ed era un'esperienza non era triste ma era più profonda...più...aveva un altro gusto...

G.P: Sì, certo

LB: Ma comunque...allora mi ha messo in pensiero anche come...com'è che questo spazio...

G.P: Come può cambiare, sì

LB: Ma comunque c'è sempre...non ho risposta ancora...

G.P: Uh-hm

LB: Sto cercando. C'è sempre questa qualità umana, molto umana che ti senti parte di una conversazione, no? Umana, come un poeta ti mette in un...

G.P: Sì, perché il poeta vede nell'altro non una persona qualsiasi ma 'la persona'. Cioè, noi adesso stiamo parlando ma sarebbe diverso la conversazione con un'altra persona. E c'è solo questa possibilità, in questo momento che stiamo parlando tra di noi. Cioè, è quello che Benjamin chiamava l'hic et nunc cioè, questo momento che è simile perché ho parlato con altre persone, Lei ha parlato con altre persone...

LB: Sì

G.P: ...Però questo momento è solo questo momento. E il poeta capisce la verità di questo, che è diversa da un'altra verità di un altro momento. Quando Scarpa dice "io faccio la lezione ma però la mia lezione cambia perché io guardo fuori e non mi guardo il cervello" vuol dire che dice "io sono connesso" connected, con l'esperienza di quel momento

LB: Sì. Mm

G.P: Mentre Tafuri non è connected, he is connected with himself, not with the other people. Cioè, è sempre questo forte collegamento tra io che sento quello che avviene e quello che c'è fuori di me insomma. Probabilmente, ma mi veniva in mente il discorso del racconto della

seconda visita Brion

LB: Mm

G.P: Forse può essere anche collegato a un fatto fisico evidente che diceva anche Scarpa, che il cemento...

LB: Sì

G.P: Quando è bagnato è brutto. Concrete when is wet...

LB: Uh-hm

G.P: È terribile. Al contrario della pietra che quando è bagnata è bella

LB: Hm

G.P: Se si va da un marmista...marmista è uno che vende...

LB: Marmi

G.P: ...Vende marmi, no, e si vuole giudicare comperare una lastra qualcosa, no?

Normalmente il marmista fa una cosa o due cose. Se è un po' elegante, diciamo almeno, prende una bottiglia d'acqua e butta l'acqua sul marmo

LB: Ah, sì

G.P: E allora il marmo diventa bello, molto bello

LB: Ah

G.P: Se invece è un po' rude, un po' rospo sputa e fa così, bagna il marmo con la sua saliva

LB: Sì

G.P: L'effetto è sempre quello. Il marmo è bello bagnato, tutte le pietre naturali sono bellissime bagnate, il cemento sembra ammalato

LB: Mm

G.P: Sembra *sick* quand'è bagnato, perché prende colori poi si bagna in maniera non uniforme

LB: Mm

G.P: Allora, questo credo che aggiunga un senso di *sadness*, di tristezza...

LB: Mm

G.P: ...Perché è meno bello di quando è asciutto, mentre è molto bello asciutto

LB: Mm

G.P: Anche la pietre asciutta, ma la pietra è ancora più bella bagnata.

LB: Sì, ma...era diversa...era diversa l'esperienza...

G.P: Mm, sì

LB: Non so...

G.P: Ho cercato di...

LB: Ma, uhm, come si dice...valuable

G.P: Sì,certo

LB: Diversa ma sempre importante...per uno poi che vuole, che è aperto in quel momento

G.P: Sì, certo

LB: Perché alle volte non...

G.P: Sì, capisco

LB: E a proposito, ho visto l'ora e sono già le...

G.P: Ma tra poco, tra poco

LB:(risata) Sì, grazie

G.P: Ci salutiamo, ok?

LB: Ho tanto da pensare adesso

G.P: Mm, spero che siano pensieri sereni

LB:(risata) Mah, sono in una fase nella mia ricerca che so non sono molto serena, diciamo

G.P: Perché io penso che le cose, come si dice 'risolvere' no? Solution

LB: Mm

G.P: Vuol dire che si sciolgono, no?

LB: Sì

G.P: Perché vuol dire che...

LB: Sì

G.P: ...Per fare una soluzione in chimica

LB: Sì

G.P: Si deve avere un liquido e poi materiale

LB: Sì

G.P: E allora questa cosa diventa sciolta

LB: Mm

G.P: E si può anche bere ma finché invece è dura non, non si può mangiare, no? E allora bisogna dare tempo al liquido di sciogliere le cose, di sciogliere di... sciogliere vuol dire anche togliere i nodi

LB: Mm ... mm ... sciolto, come

G.P: Sciolto, sì. Noi come, diciamo, intellettuali o, diciamo, persone che amano la poesia, vogliamo sciogliere le cose. Un politico non vuole sciogliere le cose probabilmente.

Alessandro Magno grande conduttore etc. capisce che questo nodo gordio, no?

LB: Ah, sì

G.P: E capisce che non si può sciogliere, no?

LB: Sì

G.P: Allora lo taglia... sì e lui capisce che ...lo taglia perché non si può sciogliere. Nessuno riesce a sciogliere. E l'unica possibilità è quella di tagliare. Allora un politico taglia. Un poeta cerca di sciogliere invece. Sono due atteggiamenti diversi. Uno è più vicino alla natura perché sciogliere vuol dire mantenere le parti, tagliare vuol dire cambiare completamente vuol dire...

LB: Che bello... mm... sta metafora

G.P: Penso che sia così, insomma. Cioè, mi sono sempre chiesto perché questo qui va lì con la spada, trac...

LB:(*risata*)

G.P: ...Allora magari vuole fare...vuole offendere, vuole trattare male queste persone e dire "che stupidi che siete stati, non vale niente", invece lui capisce che era importante. Era talmente importante che non poteva essere risolto separando le parti, bisognava (*suono di taglio*) tagliare...

LB: Mm ...

G.P: Mm ...forse (*risata*)

LB: Forse (*risata*) Grazie

G.P: Prego. Sono cose che vengono fuori se c'è il giusto interlocutore

LB: Grazie

G.P: Sì, cioè, non... sembrano discorsi fatti da una parte, invece sono fatti da tutte e due le parti perché non vengono fuori se...con un'altra persona forse non avremmo fatto questi discorsi

LB: Sono contenta

G.P: Sì, certo

LB: lo apprezzo tanto

(*piccola pausa per discorso con dati personali*)

G.P: Hm, chi hai incontrato su questo argomento a parte l'Alba di Lieto?

LB: In Italia?

G.P: Anywhere

LB: Ah (*risata*) non tante persone... cioè sono andata in tutti gli archivi Treviso Castelvechio e Maxi

G.P: Sì

LB: Quindi ha incontrato le...

G.P: Le varie persone

LB: Sì

G.P: Cioè al Maxi avrà (?) incontrato la Elena Tinacci

LB: Tinacci...non in persona

G.P: Uh-hm

LB: Però abbiamo parlato perché...

G.P: Elena è una persona speciale

LB: Ah, sì?

G.P: Sì, davvero importante e poi è molto gentile, è molto speciale

LB: Hm, perché ho una difficoltà per capire la scritta, la calligrafia di Scarpa. E allora c'erano dei pacchetti di sigarette...

G.P: Ah, sì

LB: ...Le abbiamo chiesto gentilmente se poteva magari fare una piccola traduzione

G.P: Mm-hm

LB: Di una selezione così perché lei ha fatto il suo dottorato

G.P: Sull' Olivetti

LB: Sull' Olivetti?

G.P: Lei...credo che abbia fatto il dottorato su Corbusier sull'Unità d'Abitazione

LB: A allora, perché...

G.P: E lei...e dopo, ha fatto su Olivetti perché ha scritto anche...dopo è venuto fuori un libro della Elena che è...che ho di là, tra l'altro, che è sul rapporto tra Scarpa e Olivetti. Olivetti sia fabbrica sia company...

LB: Ah, sì

G.P: ...Che Adriano Olivetti, cioè il...

LB: Sì ...Hanno fatto anche una mostra, mi sembra? O no? E un'altra cosa?

G.P: Ma si hanno fatto mostre anche lì a come si dice, a Treviso

LB: A Treviso, sì

G.P: Ma il libro è direi abbastanza, direi molto buono

LB: Mm

G.P: Però è più sul fatto, diciamo, politico

(pausa per trovare il libro)

G.P: Questo qui

LB: Grazie

G.P: Io ho criticato un po' Elena perché secondo me ha formato un po' piccolo

LB: Sì

G.P: come *size*

LB: Sì

G.P: Siccome io amo fare appunti, annotazioni, scrivere

LB: Sì, anche io (*risata*)

G.P: Sì, e allora lì non ci sta niente per cui è molto grosso e piccolino per cui...allora ho detto fallo un po' più grande la prossima edizione

LB: Sì

G.P: Ma è molto buono come libro, perché tratta dei rapporti...la Olivetti Company fu una industria molto importante

[...]

G.P: Lui riesce a comperare un'industria americana anche. Fa fare poi il l'edificio della nuova fabbrica Underwood, lo disegna Louis Khan

LB: Ah

G.P: Per cui lui cerca sempre i migliori progettisti ma non solo dal punto di vista dell'efficienza e del minor costo dell'edificio e tutti i criteri di un'industria ma anche della qualità proprio architettonica. Olivetti finanzia molte mostre di arte italiana in tutto il mondo e che poi soprattutto diventano importantissimi negozi

LB: Mm

G.P: I negozi che fa, noi li chiamiamo negozi monomarca, cioè adesso non esistono normalmente

LB: Sì

G.P: Forse altre grosse industrie hanno negozi monomarca ma Olivetti...

LB: Apre, sì

G.P: ...Sì, era presentato nel mondo e ad esempio un negozio famoso di monomarca era stato fatto nella Fifth Avenue a New York...

LB: Ah

G.P: ...dai BBPR, che erano dei progettisti, Belgioioso, Peressutti, quelli che hanno disegnato il Castello sforzesco, il museo

LB: Ah

G.P: O la Torre Velasca a Milano

G.P: E loro addirittura per la prima volta mettono su delle specie di piedistalli di pietra le macchine da scrivere fuori dal negozio

LB: Davvero?

G.P: E allora tu potevi passare potevi scrivere una tua roba, provare la macchina da scrivere direttamente

LB: Sì

G.P: E ogni negozio, a New York, a Boston, a Chicago, Venezia, ad Amsterdam etc., aveva... non aveva il concetto che ha Apple di riconoscibilità, cioè tu devi capire che un negozio è Apple immediatamente perché è sempre uguale...

LB: Sì

G.P: ...E sempre lo stesso

LB: Sì

G.P: Tu capisci che era un negozio Olivetti perché era di altissima qualità formale

LB: Mm

G.P: Di grande, come si dice, aggiornamento, up to date...

LB: Mm-hm

G.P: ...E di grande qualità architettonica umana all'interno. Allora queste tre cose messe assieme erano il vero, come si dice, significato che lui voleva trasmettere

LB: Mm

G.P: Però lasciava gli architetti, che erano diversi, di produrre il proprio negozio Olivetti non era...il Negozio Olivetti di Piazza San Marco è unico ma non c'è...è Olivetti non ha detto "Carlo Scarpa, io voglio il negozio fatto così". Quando Scarpa ha chiesto " benissimo, io farò un negozio, ma come devo farlo?"...

LB: Sì

G.P: ..."Vuole vendere". Lui ha detto "Io voglio solo un biglietto da visita in Piazza San Marco". Biglietto da visita è il...come si dice...il piccolo biglietto dove c'è scritto il tuo nome e tu dai...e lui ha detto "Io voglio essere presente in Piazza San Marco con un negozio e poter dare il mio biglietto da visita". E Scarpa è stato libero, ha fatto quello che ha voluto. E perché abbiamo parlato di Olivetti ? ...Perché...

LB: Ah, sì (*risata*)

G.P: ...Ah per dire, del...di quello lì. E Olivetti ha molto aiutato perché aveva capito che era una persona molto importante e molto capace. Ma, che ha aiutato il Professore anche nel periodo più difficile. Perché...non so se è noto ma Scarpa non era architetto

LB: Sì

G.P: Sì. E Lui in quei anni in cui fa il negozio Olivetti ha due processi...

LB: Sì

G.P: ...Che se si andavano male quei processi avrebbero obbligato a chiudere lo studio. Chiudere lo studio vuol dire che lui non poteva più progettare, far nulla. E allora niente Querini Stampalia, niente Castelvechio, niente tomba Brion, niente Banca Popolare di Verona perché il risultato di questa azione legale sarebbe stato obbligarlo a non...

LB: Mm

G.P: ...Non disegnare, non produrre. Invece Adriano Olivetti lo aiuta, gli dà questo lavoro, gli permette di fare... e questo lavoro e diventa un grande... diventa la showroom di Carlo Scarpa, lui mostra...

LB: Cos' è showroom?

G.P: La showroom

LB: Ah, showroom sì

G.P: Sì, diventa lui...

LB: Mm

G.P: ...Viene lanciato nuovamente nel panorama internazionale attraverso questo negozio. Ed è una figura, ha una funzione molto importante perché ha fiducia rispetto in questa persona, Olivetti...

LB: Eh...

G.P: Mm-hm ...

LB: Mm

G.P: Ma ci sarebbero tante cose, che probabilmente tante cose...

LB: Tante cose (risata)

G.P: Probabilmente ci vedremo ancora, no?

LB: Io con tantissimo piacere se Lei ha tempo

G.P: Mm, va bene

G.P: Sì, per carità, certamente

LB: La prossima volta magari Le faccio sapere quando vengo...

G.P: Sì, certamente. Magari possiamo anche vederci a Brion...

LB: Sì

G.P: Ma io sono ormai abbastanza spesso, perché stiamo facendo questo ...pulizia, cleaning, maintainance e altre cose. Per cui per tutto l'anno io sono sù a...una, due volte la settimana

LB: Ah, proprio molto sovente, sì

G.P: E beh sì, per forza, sì, perché...

LB: Sì

G.P: Perché stanno lavorando, per cui bisogna seguire quello che fanno, insomma...

LB: Deve essere un'esperienza molto, ehm, interessante essere lì, dopo tanti anni...

G.P: Ma è un'esperienza interessante

LB: ...come...

G.P: All'inizio ero molto preoccupato

LB: Ah, sì?

G.P: Sì, perché hai tutti gli occhi delle persone che ti guardano

LB: Ah

G.P: E che si chiedono se fai bene o fai male, no?

LB: *(risata)*

G.P: E se fai male stai tradendo, sei traditore, no?

LB: Sì *(risata)*

G.P: Non... stai. Allora è una responsabilità...

LB: Lo so

G.P: ...Evidentemente. Però adesso un po' andando avanti poi...mi pare che abbiamo, ho brave persone che lavorano, per cui...mi pare che il risultato può essere buono, insomma. Ma è un risultato di pulizia...

LB: Sì

G.P: ...Il lavoro più, più... come si potrebbe dire...più eversivo più, insomma più radicale, ecco radicale è la parola giusta, è stata fatta nel tempietto. Il tempietto era completamente...

LB: Ah, sì?

G.P: Era molto, molto in cattive condizioni, cioè bad condition. Perché il materiale è un materiale più fragile, wood, è legno, metallo...e poi perché il mantenimento non era stato fatto bene...

LB: Il tempietto o il padigli...?

G.P: Il padiglione sull'acqua, scusa, scusa, il padiglione sull'acqua

LB: Sì

G.P: Sì

LB: E bellissimo, comunque. Io l'ho visto ultimamente...

G.P: Sì, ci sono... beh, li bisognerebbe aprire un'altra finestra, per parlare di questo argomento qui ma... è stato via un anno a Venezia nella falegnameria Capovilla...diciamo un anno, due anni fa. Se uno entrava a Brion, non lo vedeva perché l'avevamo smontato completamente

LB: Ah

G.P: E portato a Venezia. Ed era restata solo the iron structure

LB: Ah

G.P: Cioè, solo la parte in metallo ma tutta la cassa

LB: Quando questo...?

G.P: È un anno e mezzo

LB: Un anno e mezzo fa

G.P: L'abbiamo rimontato, credo...adesso saranno due anni, forse

LB: Mm

G.P: Due anni che è rimontato. Ma tutte le, le tavole di legno erano quasi tutte marce perché Scarpa aveva scelto un legno molto corretto, che si chiama larice, non so in inglese come si dica

LB: Larch, no?

G.P: Larch

LB: Forse

G.P: Sì, può darsi. E questo legno che è una conifera ha una caratteristica che appartiene anche al tek e anche al red cenar che resiste molto bene all'acqua e diventa argento, *becomes silver*. Cioè, il colore del legno originale è questo. Con il sole, con l'ossidazione, con il passare del tempo diventa color argento. Se si va in montagna...

LB: Sì

G.P: ...Ci sono molte piccole costruzioni, barn, costruzioni rurali e sono fatte in larice senza nessuna protezione. La tavola, sembra una tavola d'argento, completamente argento. È proprio un'esperienza. E Scarpa voleva che la cassa, il cassone diventasse argento, silver. Ci sono poi all'interno dei disegni con delle parti in ebano. E allora argento ed ebano nero, black and silver avrebbe dato un disegno ancora più bello. Io sto seguendo il restauro da quattro anni ormai ma prima il mantenimento e la cura del luogo ce l'aveva un impresario, un uomo in pensione anziano

LB: Ah, sì?

G.P: Che era anche una brava persona, non era... però lui credeva di dover proteggere il legno e ha dato delle pitture...

LB: Ah...

G.P: Per cui era diventato tutto marron, tutto scuro, tutto brown. E queste pitture hanno diciamo accelerato la distruzione perché è come se il legno avesse detto "Io mi proteggo da me. Perché mi dai questa cosa?" E allora ha reagito...

LB:(risata)

G.P: ... In maniera opposta, e marcito in tante parti, è diventato marcio. Prendi il pezzo di

legno e si sbriciolava...mentre forse avrebbe resistito se lasciato al naturale come voleva Scarpa. Adesso noi abbiamo utilizzato un 40 per cento delle tavole originali

LB: Ah, sì?

G.P: Sì. E il resto sono tutte nuove. Più passa il tempo più dovrebbero diventare uniformi, cioè, diventare tutte grige argento...Appena l'abbiamo montato c'erano, si vedeva una grande differenza tra le tavole vecchie

G.P: Sì. E le tavole nuove. Adesso invece vedo...

LB: Piano piano

G.P: Sì, piano piano che si sta...perché sì è una forma di ossidazione, oxidation

LB: Sì

G.P: E questo favorisce questo processo. Nelle tavole vecchie abbiamo tolto la vernice protettiva, sono tornate naturali e speriamo insomma, il risultato mi sembra che sia andando bene insomma, correttamente. E qui, è stato il lavoro più radicale, non so se si può tradurre in inglese

LB: Mm

G.P: Radicale vuol dire, proprio dai fondamentali...

LB: Dalle, sì

G.P: ...Perché è stato quasi rifatto, completamente

LB: Mm

G.P: A parte il metallo, no? È stata la stessa, ma la parte in legno è...

LB: Sì

G.P: E stata rifatta. Io... adesso è un po' tardi

LB: Un po' sì (*risata*)

G.P: Potrei, si ho molte fotografie di quando l'abbiamo portato dal *cabinet maker* dal falegname, e come abbiamo trovato delle tavole... per esempio, una tavola molto lunga era marcia, era guastata qui, e, e allora l'abbiamo tagliata e utilizzata per le parti in cui servivano delle tavole più piccole...

LB: Ah

G.P: Per cui è un originale, però non è nella stessa posizione, è in una altra posizione

LB: Ho capito, sì

G.P: Cioè, abbiamo cercato di adoperare la maggior quantità del materiale originale...

LB: Mm...originale

G.P: ...Che però poteva essere o doveva essere portato in un'altra posizione perché qui era... si sbriciolava e qui era buono ancora. Così, insomma, sono tutte...

LB: Bello questo...

G.P: sì, beh conservare la materia originaria il più possibile è la prima...

LB: Mm

G.P: ...La prima indicazione

LB: Mi ricorda anche un po' il concetto di *wabi - sabi* filosofia giapponese

G.P: Sì

LB: Anche...ha presente anche il vaso *kintsugi*

G.P: Quello...quello rotto?

LB: Quello rotto, sì

G.P: Sì, con le... con le giunzioni d'oro?

LB: Sì

G.P: Sì, lì c'è una...

LB: L' idea di...

G.P: Sì, lì c'è l' idea di... si passa da una forma d'arte a un'altra forma d'arte

LB: Mm

G.P: Però il concetto è quello di conservare il più possibile

LB: Mm. E del...la bellezza

G.P: Beh anche una forma rotta, può avere una bellezza...beh il concetto anche...anche della rovina, no? Dell'Ottocento...

LB: Ah, sì

G.P: Per cui un'altra cultura avrebbe detto "distruggiamo perché ormai è perso" invece una cultura storicistica dice "ma no, c'è un...un altro punto di vista che si aggiunge, un'altra qualità, un'altra memoria, il tipo di memoria che si aggiunge"...

LB: Mm

G.P: Sì, è *wabi-sabi*, sì certamente

LB: Mm

G.P: In questo caso però no... la mia intenzione era quella di restituire il più possibile l'edificio...

LB: Sì

G.P: ...Com'era

LB: Sì

G.P: È quello che normalmente ...cioè c'è differenza tra restauro e mantenimento...

LB: Sì

G.P: Diciamo che il mantenimento è il lavoro che fa il proprietario, pulisce, mette un colore,

non cambia le cose insomma...

LB: Mm

G.P: Cioè...però dà la possibilità all'edificio di continuare nel tempo, meditando

LB: Sì

G.P: Hm. Questo è un po' l'atteggiamento . Va bene. Ci salutiamo

LB:(risata)

G.P: Ci salutiamo?

LB: Ci salutiamo, sì

[...]

G.P: Ok. Va bene.

LB: Grazie lo apprezzo tantissimo...

G.P: Bene, son contento...

LB: ...In questo tempo

G.P: ...Di essere utile

LB: Certamente poi...

G.P: Sto cercando di restituire quello che ho ricevuto

LB: Ah

G.P: No, nel senso che

LB: Sì, no, capisco

G.P: Ho ricevuto molto per cui ... Poi è inutile fare piccole...come si dice...alzare muri, insomma, no? Non serve a niente

LB: Grazie, sì ...Eh...allora...

G.P: Io ho la mail e le manderò questa...

LB: Sì, grazie...

G.P: È più o meno non è tanto diverso, diciamo che però questo...

LB: Da più

G.P: ...è il mio primo approccio a quel tema lì, che faccia anche Lei l'esperienza quando va con altre persone, provi a chiedere "Come siamo arrivati qui?"

LB: Lo farò, sì

G.P: "Da che parte?"...

LB: Da che parte

G.P: ..."Dov'era la scala?"

LB: Hm

G.P: Perché noi non guardiamo più. Guardiamo...

LB Mm

G.P: ...Non...pensiamo solo a un fatto concettuale non... pensiamo che non è importante insomma. Sappiamo che c'era una scala. Ma se uno la mette qui o la mente là, avrà un significato

LB: Non, non, non facciamo domande

G.P: Sì, ma non...non...non, non ricordiamo neanche bene...

LB: Hm

G.P: ...Non. È difficile insomma

LB: Hm

G.P: C'era Hugo von Hofmannsthal che ha scritto una cosa, un aforisma molto semplice che dice "Dove nascondere la profondità?", "Where, may I hide the deepness..."

LB: Sì

G.P: ...In the surface!", in superficie!

LB: Mm

G.P: E questa è la superficie. Però noi non sappiamo vedere la superficie

LB Hm

G.P: No? Sì, sono cose semplici, apparentemente...

LB: Mm

G.P: ...Ma non, non riusciamo più a vedere le cose evidenti.

LB: Sì, osservare proprio e sentire

G.P: Sì, ricordare

LB: Ricordare, sì

G.P: Ricordare correttamente, insomma, no? Noi ricordiamo pensiamo che il concetto sia importante e invece importante è il fatto proprio. Insomma, chiudo qui dopo...

LB: Sì (*risata*)

G.P: L'ingresso di architettura...

LB: Sì

G.P: ...Che è postumo, abbiamo detto quello che ha realizzato Sergio Los, ha una scritta in latino che è "Verum Ipsum Factum"

LB: Sì

G.P: Che è una frase di...

LB: Vico...

G.P: ...Giovambattista Vico, sì e che vuol dire la verità è in quello che tu fai.

LB: Mm

G.P: “Verum” la verità, “Ipsum” coincide...

LB: Mh-mm

G.P: ...È la stessa cosa, nel fare

LB: Sì

G.P: Oppure se vogliamo dire “tu puoi arrivare alla verità facendo le cose”...

LB: Sì

G.P: ...Doing the things

LB: Sì

G.P: Eh, no? Dopo Scarpa ha avuto un colpo di genio e intelligenza perché in questa scritta latina siccome i Latini scrivono la U...

LB: Sì

G.P: ...la lettera U e la V sempre uguale e sempre V no.

LB: Mm

G.P: Allora, ha fatto dare l'oro, adesso l'oro è andato via, al...a certe lettere. Per cui viene fuori dentro la scritta IUAV

LB: Ah, sì

G.P: Istituto di Architettura Di Venezia

LB: Sì

G.P: Allora questo... lui dice “guarda che tu puoi raggiungere la verità solo facendo le cose”, doing. Però quanti professori di architettura hanno letto questa frase entrando, uscendo e insegnano ai loro studenti ad arrivare alla verità facendo le cose? Pochi.

LB: Mm

G.P: Mm. Beh, in ogni modo è facendo le cose, cioè, facendo, avendo un'attenzione attiva in quello che fai...

LB: Attenzione attiva

G.P: Sì

LB: Giusto

G.P: A quello che stai facendo. Perché, quando fai sei per forza attivo. Non stai raccontando

LB: No. E trovi davanti anche tu...tutti i problemi le difficoltà

G.P: Eh, sì certo.

LB: Quindi capisci, devi...

G.P: Certo

LB: ...Fare altre domande nel processo, devi, fare prendere un'altra strada

G.P: Certo

LB: E solo

G.P: Sì

LB: Quando sei lì

G.P: Certo. Cioè, tu puoi avere un'idea. Però il processo ti può portare a destra e sinistra

LB: Mm, mm

G.P: E il processo quando è risolto, quando sei arrivato è diventato più ricco

LB: Mm

G.P: Non è diventato più povero...

LB: Mm

G.P: ...Per le difficoltà, le difficoltà hanno arricchito il processo. E questo è là...ma se uno rifiuta la fatica o il dolore, o il problema, fa tutto più semplice, insomma, e dunque più banale, più stupido. Va bene, insomma

LB: No (*risata*)

G.P: Va bene

LB: Allora...ah...

G.P: Buon rientro

LB: Grazie

G.P: Questo è suo

LB: Questo è mio, lo metto dentro. È stato veramente un piacere

G.P: Bene, sono contento

LB: Ma anche, devo dire che non trovo tante persone come Lei e...(*risata*)

G.P: Vabbè

LB: Però è ...per fare questi discorsi...

G.P: Io ho avuto la fortuna di vivere, di stare by side...

LB: Eh sì

G.P: Poi dipende anche da...Io credo che per avere una visione di Carlo Scarpa come uomo bisogna parlare con tante persone

LB: Ah

G.P: Perché ognuno ha raccolto una parte

LB: Una parte sì

G.P: È come un diamond, un diamante in cui ognuno ha ricevuto un po' di luce da un certo punto di vista. E ognuno vede nelle sue architetture un punto di vista diverso

LB: Hm

G.P: Dopo, per avere tutto forse bisognerebbe avere molti punti di vista

LB: Hm, sì

G.P: Può darsi

LB: Può darsi, eh. No, ma a parte anche Scarpa...

G.P: Aha

LB: Questi discorsi, questi concetti, no?

G.P: Sì

LB: Sono discorsi che...

G.P: Hm. Eh, la poesia è importante, io credo. La poesia vuol dire arte, vuol dire architettura, vuol dire pittura, anche perché c'è poesia

LB: Mm

G.P: Se non utilizziamo questa possibilità, restiamo dei mostri, solo testa, solo stomaco, no?

Pensa

LB: Sì. Va bene

G.P: Va bene?

[...]

LB: Allora. Grazie mille

G.P: Buon rientro...

ARCHITECTURAL STUDENTS

Informed Consent Form (Anonymised)

Consent Form - Confidential data

I understand that my participation in this project will involve:

1. On-site observations of the participants, on behalf of the researcher.
2. Very brief interviewing (maximum three questions) after the visit (first stage interviewing), which might take less than 10 minutes to complete.
3. Semi-structured interviews, at a later stage, of around 10 questions. These interviews should take no more than 30-60 minutes of my time.

All the above methods might include audio visual recording and photography, for the observations and for the transcription of the interviews. The anonymity of the participants will be respected in every case.

I understand that participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I can withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason.

I understand that I am free to ask any questions at any time. I am free to withdraw or discuss my concerns with Dr. Mhairi McVicar.

I understand that the information provided by me will be held confidentially, such that only the Principal Investigator and Irini Barbero (barberoi@cardiff.ac.uk) can trace this information back to me individually. The information will be retained for up to the end of the researcher's (Irini Barbero) PhD completion, when it will be deleted/destroyed.

I understand that I can ask for the information I provide to be deleted/destroyed at any time and, in accordance with the Data Protection Act, I can have access to the information at any time.

I, _____ [PRINT NAME] consent to participate in the study conducted by [*name of student/researcher*], Welsh School of Architecture, Cardiff University with the supervision of [*name of supervisor*].

Signed:

Date: