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Title: ‘Misremembering architecture: contesting and constructing memory in architectural discourse’

Date: 2006


Misremembering architecture: contesting and constructing ‘memory’ in architectural discourse

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ABSTRACT

At the end of the nineteenth century, Freudian psychology’s theorising of the unconscious constructed an understanding of the mind which cast memory as a contestable terrain. However in recent decades the rising interest in memory within a number of disciplines has seen the contestable aspects of memory extend from a distrust of what the mind recalls to, what this paper argues, should be a distrust of the term ‘memory’ itself. The term ‘memory’ has in recent decades come to represent many understandings beyond its traditional use in relation to the practices of the mind. In architecture, concepts of memory are most often employed without substantial consideration of the way in which the term is being applied, and little effort to distinguish between the way in which the author uses the terminology in either a conventional sense or to assert something more profound about human nature and values. With particular reference to the writings of Peter Zumthor, this paper will critically examine the terrain of memory as it is expressed in architectural practice and discourse.

MEMORY AND THE INVISIBLE CITY

In his novel Invisible Cities [1972], Italo Calvino composed a series of fictional conversations between Marco Polo and Kublai Khan. In these Polo describes his visits to the territo ries of Khan’s empire. Khan hopes that by ‘knowing’ these cities, he will be able to ‘possess’ them, on a level beyond merely having conquered them. Each city is categorised into a genre according to its experiential, formal or spatial qualities. In the novel Marco Polo tells of his travels to Diomira, Isidora, Zara, Zora and Maurilia, which, scattered throughout the text, form the genre of Cities and Memory. Embedded in the description of each of these places is a different way of understanding memory through an experience or reading of the city. For example, the city of Diomira speaks of dejá vu and the comforts of the familiar. Isidora, emerging from the desires of the weary traveller, responds to feelings of nostalgia. In Maurilia, visitors are invited to examine representations of the city as it once was, on the understanding that they should prefer the city represented in postcards to the one that they occupy. Zara is a repository of memory, brought to life by the narratives of its history. Finally, the city of Zora is the built embodiment of what Frances Yates labelled the art of memory – being a techne employed by ancient orators where imagined architecture is invoked as a means of extending their capacity to remember. As the narrative unfolds the distinctions between these imaginary places slowly disappear, and an understanding emerges, that all of the places described are in fact representations of one place - Venice.

Calvino’s reflections upon ‘Cities and Memory’ invite further historical and philosophical consideration of the nature of memory and its representation in architecture and more broadly the city. Polo’s accounts of ‘Cities and Memory’ overwhelmingly demonstrate that memory – like the city of Venice itself – is not one, singularly definable thing, but rather something that can be interpreted in countless ways to multiple ends. Memory, as manifest in the city, is as much an ancient art for extending one’s powers of recollection as it is a representation of a past that no longer exists, or the sense of comfort given with a romanticised engagement with what once was. While this availability of memory to multiple interpretations has long been regarded as the source of its richness: this paper argues that it has instead resulted in a problematisation of the notion of memory itself.

ACCOUNTING FOR MEMORY

Recent decades have seen the emergence of an interest in the role of memory in relation to architecture and place, particularly in reference to the city. The interest in memory amongst writers on architecture has in some respects been inherited from eighteenth century theories of associationism – expressed for example in the psychological writings of David Hartley, in the designs of Archibald Alison, and in the literary thoughts of Marcel Proust – or nineteenth century thoughts on the commemorative aspects of architecture - such as that exemplified in the work of Ruskin. However the closing decades of the twentieth century also saw a discernible rise in the predominance of memory as a concern in its own right in architectural discourse.

This surge of interest in memory as an architectural concern was generally a response to a number of external factors. For example, the incorporation of
ideas of collective memory (largely inherited from Maurice Halbwachs) saw public and social memory being addressed in readings of the city. These ideas were manifested in the writings and architecture of Aldo Rossi (who was also influenced by Jungian psychology) and most notably in M. Christine Boyer’s seminal text \textit{The City of Collective Memory} [1994]. Similarly, post modernism’s reaction against the anti-historicist agenda of modernism subsequently saw memory embraced as an important concern. A concern again present in New Urbanism’s neo-traditional approach to town planning. New Urbanism’s reaction to the perceived alienation resultant from the modern city and attendant urban and suburban lifestyles has also drawn on the potential for buildings to aid individual and public acts of recollection (albeit nostalgically) as a means for creating a sense of place and community. This concern with memory was further heightened in the 1990s when the approaching millennium provoked in many, particularly in conservative America, a tendency for reflecting back upon the past, rather than looking forward, as exemplified by the construction of the idealised community of historical pastiche, Celebration, in Florida.

The interest in memory from architecture reflects and parallels a revival and reinvention of the term in other disciplines, such as literature, history and the social sciences. As Kerwin Lee Klein outlined in his paper ‘On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourses’ [2000], such disciplines were profoundly influenced by the conceptualisation of collective memory in the work of, first, Hugo von Hofmannsthal and, later, Halbwachs. However as Klein also noted, it was largely Pierre Nora’s conceptualisation of les lieux de mémoire [1981], and a number of contemporaneous studies which emerged whereby memory became a way of re-interpreting Jewish history, which resulted in a veritable scholarly boom in the 1980s, leading to memory being widely adopted as an antithistorical discourse.

This explosion of multidisciplinary interest in memory has seen the term come to represent a number of broad understandings from various disciplines. In addition its fundamental function as a faculty and process of the mind related to retention and recollection, the disciplines of psychology and philosophy have cast memory as a significant determinant of social and personal identity. Both the disciplines of history and literature have linked memory to autobiography. The former has also formulated memory—particularly in its collective form—as sometimes a sub-set and at other times an antithesis to history.

Within the discipline of architecture memory is often regarded as something quite different, and while equally available to multiple interpretations it is generally less precise than those arising from other disciplines—such as rigorous historical exploration, empirical study or positivist science. Furthermore, in philosophical terms, the link between architecture, memory and identity is rarely articulated. More commonly, memory denotes a datum of human experience whereby the past is represented through architecture, as its forms express cultural norms and ideals.

Valued for its capacity to imbue buildings and interior spaces with meaning, despite a general lack of theoretical precision, memory has become both a design tool and a way of reading architecture—both analytically and experientially. Accordingly, buildings are ‘read’ like texts, considered as representations of and mechanisms for individual and collective recollections.

The interest in memory has yielded a number of exemplary discussions, particularly in relation to the city, most notably the work of Boyer, in addition to a number of brief or generally more limited discussions, such as Adrian Forty’s undertaken in his monograph \textit{Words and Buildings} [2000] which locates memory, alongside terms such as language, character, space and order as one of the key terms in the vocabulary of modern architecture. More recently Sébastien Marot’s publication \textit{Sub-Urbanism and the Art of Memory} [2003] constituted the first significant discussion of the art of memory from the perspective of architecture, landscape and urbanism. Beyond these works, ideas of memory have generally been applied without substantial theorisation, which has eventuated in memory becoming something of a problematic in architectural discourse. This is exemplified by the varied thoughts on memory presented in a number of themed issues of architectural journals, such as: Oz [1990], Daidalos [1995], \textit{Harvard Design Magazine} [1999], and A + T [2000, 2001]. These journal issues contain a range of articles on architecture and memory, though generally fail to come to terms with the broad philosophical basis for the theme and the issues it provokes. Memory is generally treated inconsistently in terms of how it is engaged. For example, the 1990 issue of Oz tackled themes ranging from the memory of place through to Mnemonics, without any concerted effort to distinguish between the two or the variations falling between. On the other hand, the theme issue of Daidalos, among other aspects, addresses issues of mnemonics, memorials, collective memory, spoliation, and museums—all falling under the guise of memory. In contrast, the 1999 theme issue of \textit{Harvard Design Magazine} was more limited in its scope, engaging largely with aspects of commemoration.

Thus, although concepts of memory are broadly referenced, this is usually done without substantial consideration of the way in which the term is being applied, and little effort to distinguish between the way in which the author uses the terminology in either a conventional sense or to assert something much more profound about human nature and values. This becomes especially problematic in anthologies of writings on memory, such as these journal issues cited or the recent text \textit{Memory and Architecture} edited by Eleni Bastéa.
Like the invocation of memory in Calvino’s cities, as these sources indicate, the concept of memory in architectural discourse is cast in a number of different ways. Memory is often evoked as a means of discussing a personal connection with a building site or elements in an architectural design: a means of discussing ideas of commemoration - such as through an ‘intentional’ monument - or as an allusion to the psychological dimension of the built environment. It is also frequently used as a simile for history, and a surrogate term for nostalgia. In terms of this latter usage, one encounters references to historical ‘entities’ such as the past itself. Cultural or collective memory is portrayed in quasi-sentimental terms - invoking a longing for days gone by.

In being problematic, the term ‘memory’ is often employed not for its value as a concept or a mental practice, but rather, indistinctly, for imparting a nostalgic gloss to past events. In this manner, the term is frequently employed in three chief ways: firstly, as a subjective, poetic or rhetorical device; secondly, in the evocation of the past as an ideal to be emulated - particularly in terms of the illusion of better values and times - and thirdly, as a reference to the enduring legacy of architecture, and particularly architectural forms. In each of these contexts, the use of the term can be seen as ‘poetic’, meaning emotive and ultimately untenable or unreal. A significant proportion of the studies that have emerged in recent years which discuss architecture and memory use the term memory as an adjective to embellish work with traces of such poetic engagement as opposed to engaging with the concept and practices of memory in a thorough, consistent and theoretically rigorous manner. Consequently, memory is in danger of being reduced to a mere cliché.

While an interest in memory in relation to architecture can be partly explained by an interest in, for example, time, context or history. The use of memory from practitioners and theorists alike has often expressed a preoccupation for determining origins - whether this be the origins of a creative idea or the origins of memory itself. The following discussion explores the captivation with memory as a means to make reference to an idealised origin - or basis - for the creative process, as embodied in two quite different examples. Namely the discussion of a number of common paradigms that frequently feature in discussions of memory and the way in which memory has been written of in relation to the creative process of Peter Zumthor.

THE SEDUCTION OF PARADIGMS

Contemporary discussions of architecture and memory are characterised by what has - through frequent use - become custom and convention. Perhaps the most common starting point in discussions of architecture and memory is the work of Frances Yates and her book The Art of Memory (1966) in which she describes the role of architecture in the classical memory arts. Recourse to this book is often made without proper consideration of the broader implications of Yates’ work or the relevance of the system of the artificial memory to architecture, both historically and for the present day. Instead the book mainly serves to inspire architects who maintain an understandable interest in the potential of buildings to fulfi a role in representing and communicating thoughts.

Accompanying this interest in the work of Yates, contemporary discussions of memory (especially in relation to the memory arts) from the humanities, and particularly architecture, traditionally draw from one of two longstanding mythological episodes to describe its origins. These have become paradigms for discussions of the nature of memory, particularly from an architectural perspective. The first is the account of Mnemosyne, in Greek mythology Mnemosyne - the goddess of memory - was the mother of the nine Muses, and thus by association, memory, was regarded as the matrix of both the arts and sciences - seeing history, art and science in debt to memory.13

The second anecdotal episode and paradigm for memory rests in the story of Simonides of Ceos, who is credited as the father of the memory arts. Described by both Cicero and Quintilian, Simonides was a poet who was the first to acknowledge the power of spatial arrangement as an aid to recollection. In the sixth Century B.C., Simonides of Ceos was a guest at a now ‘infamous’ banquet where he fortuitously evaded a fatal accident that killed and rendered unidentifiable his dinner companions. Simonides was able to identify their remains by the place they occupied at the dining table. This incident was seen to highlight the principle that ‘things’ are more easily memorised when associated with visual and spatial qualities - such as the position of a chair and the space of a table. As Cicero noted, “the best aid to cleanness of memory consists in orderly arrangement.”14

These episodes are repeatedly referenced in writings on architecture and memory, both by theorists and practitioners. In addition to aligning memory with the arts, these paradigms, in accounting for memory through mythology (however, cursory or humorous these citations may be) relieve writers from having to account for the complexities of memory itself, and furthermore, from having to undertake the onerous task of sitting through the various perspectives and historical moments which describe the character of this faculty to arrive at a single, workable understanding of just what memory is. Interestingly, these episodes (particularly the first) formulate a connection between memory and creativity and specifically, how memory is cast as a basis and means for creative expression.

Entangled with such paradigms, works such as Bastéa’s Memory and Architecture tick off references to Mnemosyne, Yates, Bachelard and Proust - constructing discussions largely through the conventions of architecture and memory. The recourse to such oft-repeated paradigms, without substantial elaboration of their importance, furthermore contributes to the degree of indistinct-
ness that has come to represent the treatment of memory from architecture.

An interesting case study through which to conduct this discussion, is the work of Peter Zumthor, who frequently employs the term memory as part of the rationale for his designs. This discussion also highlights the difficulty in assessing such works against rational criteria, which contributes to the perception of this vagueness.

DESIGN, MEMORY, ZUMTHOR

Zumthor frequently makes reference to notions of memory in relation to his architecture, particularly in interviews and in his own writings. His use of the term memory is interesting, as in many ways his references typify the use of ‘memory’ - as both a term and a series of concepts - in contemporary architectural practice and writings. Zumthor employs the term ‘memory’ as part of his design rhetoric, forming part of the rationale publicly circulated to legitimate his work.¹⁶

In 1998 Zumthor wrote of the importance of memory, stating it to be an underlying concern of his works and an integral element of the design process. He wrote:

> When I try to identify the aesthetic intentions that motivate me in the process of designing buildings, I realize that my thoughts revolve around themes such as place, material, energy, presence, recollection, memories, images, density, atmosphere, permanence, and concentration. During the course of my work, I try to give these abstract terms concrete contents relevant to the actual assignment.¹⁷

Zumthor’s differentiation between memories and recollection, is indicative of the importance he assigns to these notions, assigning significance to not just that which is ‘preserved’ in memory, but also the associational processes that evoke a particular memory.

Three years later, this same statement was itself recalled in two different contexts in relation to a competition entry for the Cornell University College of Architecture [2001].¹⁸ The quotation was republished as the ‘design philosophy’ behind the entry in both Architecture and Urbanism and on Cornell’s Website. The matching of this text to the scheme is a curious alliance, bearing little relevance to the architectural proposal itself. The text, as published in Architecture and Urbanism, neglects to address the context or motivations behind the scheme. Rather it includes an abstract description which fails to in any way illuminate the accompanying drawings - which are themselves, somewhat vague.¹⁹

Zumthor again discussed the importance of memory as a generative tool during the design process in his essay ‘A Way of Looking at Things’ [1988].²⁰ Stating that when designing:

> I frequently find myself sinking into old, half-forgotten memories, and then I try to recollect what the remembered architec-

tural situation was really like, what it had meant to me at the time, and I try to think how it could help me now to revive that vibrant atmosphere pervaded by the simple presence of things, in which everything had its own specific place and form.²¹

Zumthor’s memories are of experiencing a particular time, place or habituation and it is this recollection which is his inspiration. The vagueness - in both execution and intent - characterising Zumthor’s employment of the term is exacerbated by the fact that it is generally not applied in terms of specific experiences or projects, and thus simply becomes part of his design rhetoric. A theory strengthened by the fact that the same descriptions are often republished in reference to different projects, seeing such writings become a matter of convention, rather than offering particular insight into the work or, more broadly, the relevance of memory for architecture.

Zumthor’s writings about his architecture, as typified by these examples, are in many ways reminiscent of those of Aldo Rossi whose fascination with memory has been well documented.²² Zumthor harnesses memory, and particularly ideas of associationism, as a design tool in a similar manner to the way Rossi wrote of memory in theorising his own works – as demonstrated anecdotally in A Scientific Autobiography [1981], while also recalling Bachelard’s tone in The Poetics of Space [1958].

Both Rossi and Zumthor employ memory as a tool in their design rhetoric, writing about their design philosophies in a manner resembling a form of creative ‘confession’, which, through references to personal memories and associations, is inherently autobiographical. In short, these memories tell us as much about the identity of the architect (as an individual and a professional) and their intended audience (their reader or the prospective inhabitant of their buildings) as they do one or the other building or idea about architecture.

Despite similarities in the appropriation of memory of Zumthor and Rossi, the former notes that, while inspired by the Italian Architect’s work, there are some essential differences in their handling of architectural form. Zumthor professes to be disinterested in elements of form which he perceives as essential to Rossi’s work, rather stating a preference for creating atmosphere.²³ Thus Zumthor’s reliance on memory is not a literal translation of memory images, rather the extraction of an emotive ‘essence’ from his memory images, as opposed to a communicative one, such as that conveyed through Rossi’s interest in building type. In each case references to memory allow each architect to identify in some way with the work. Thus Zumthor’s notion of memory is both a personal and a pragmatic one. It does not seek to instil or to deliberately evoke a particular memory in the inhabitant; rather he creates spaces which are redundant with the ubiquity of personal experiences, thus overcoming a number of exclusionary issues that
may arise from evoking experience bound with personal or culturally formed memories.

In a 1998 interview, Lynette Widder and Gerrit Confurius questioned Zumthor in relation to the role of memory in his work. Here Zumthor stated:

Images are a means to creating architecture, and may even be my most primary means. Memory is stored in images. It can, of course, be stored in smells too, but these smells then immediately turn into an image, memory doesn’t remain abstract. My internal images can be stimulated by a film, by some interior in a film, or by a photo, or a book, or when I read a book where something is described, the same process takes place, and that’s the way I work.

Widder and Confurius endeavoured to determine whether or not the memory of a particular space can be transposed from one building type to another, in Zumthor’s work, in order to instil meaning in a programmatically dissimilar space – for example could the memory of a house be used to design a library or a factory. In response to which, Zumthor stated:

It’s difficult for an architect to be arbitrary. There are many things which one can describe exactly. Architecture always has its place and this place has a history, it is physically existent and every building project also has a specific function. Those are three things which I can relate to my mental images; the building project itself then has its own history, the topology of the project, etc. I am at every moment situated in a particular place within historical flow, or put more pretentiously, within time. It’s this constellation which starts to free images within us.... Something happens in the course of work whereby that which is familiar suddenly appears in a new light through some shift, some change.

Interestingly while Widder and Confurius assert that memory is a readable quality in his spaces, such concepts are in general, strangely absent from writings on the work. Concepts of memory and ubiquitous experience are generally made by the architect himself, rather than through a critical response to his work.

Zumthor refers to the imaginative elements of the design process as being inspired by memory. The ambiguity in the evocation of memory in his writings demonstrates a captivation with the poetic qualities of memory, appealing to qualities more like sentiment than a rigorous, scholarly approach. Memory images are ascribed with qualities of a poetic point of origin for his work. This idea is fortified in Zumthor’s elaboration on the role of memory in his design process in ‘The House Without Form’ [1999]. Here he wrote:

Designing to me is probably more re-discovery than inventing; it means to re-configure, to recognize, to re-assemble impressions and emotions which I have experienced and now consciously try to recall.... The images remembered are not fragments frozen in a definite form and stored in the architects of my mind. The process of remembering is dynamic and creative. It might be called an imaginative reconstruction which always produces new aspects and qualities of the remembered depending on the actual way I look at it. Every time my mind touches my memories, they change a little.

Memory, for Zumthor, is somewhat akin to the romantic’s muse - a source of inspiration for his creative energies. Redolent with a captivation with the poetic possibilities of memory, his writings lack a consistent, rigorous application of the term or association with concrete forms. Memory is most significantly employed in a personal capacity, by the architect in the design stages.

Zumthor’s employment of ‘memory images’ in the design process is vastly different from the way in which memory has been theorised in relation to, for example, projects by Dimitris Pikianis or Francesco Venezia, whose experiments with spoliation have been discussed in relation to ideas of memory, as a matter of convention. Both Pikianis and Venezia experimented with incorporating traces of collective historic and social sentiment rather literally – weaving rescued artefacts into the fabric of the built form in order to speak of history and cultural origins. In such works ‘memory’ takes on a literal, and almost decorative role, while also raising a number of questions whether the incorporation of archeological fragments constitute an architectural embodiment of memory. The way in which memory is evoked in the architecture of Peter Zumthor is much more difficult to associate or identify visually, than in the study of spoliis. Rather it relies on an association or essence that brings forth a quality, moment or understanding stored.

Zumthor’s approach to memory is inherently through the role of sentiment and association - an intuitive, and subsequently less visible one. Like its role in his design methodology, traces of memory are mostly discernible in the potential of spaces or materials, to trigger memories in the inhabitants. It is this relative invisibility of memory, in the work of architects like Zumthor, which often generates a problem in the use of the term. The lack of association with a particular form or aesthetic is part of what makes its association with architecture both interesting and inherently problematic. By not being associated with a particular form it gives the concept of memory greater flexibility in its application and greater longevity - in so far that the concepts have the potential to outlast style.

While superficially, projects which make use of spoilation or nostalgic architectural forms, such as, for example, a sentimental borrowing from the architectural styles of the past, exemplified in the example the main street in Disneyland, would seem an obvious manifestation of memory in architectural form - and have often been discussed in these terms - such an interpretation is symptomatic of the indistinct application of ideas of memory in architecture. While nostalgia has many conceptual affiliations with memory, it is something that can be
cast quite distinctly from the invocation of memory in works such as those of Peter Zumthor, and as such has been theorised separately. While concepts of memory were often invoked in past modern architecture, memory - as an architectural thematic - has outlived the style.\footnote{1}

The invocation of memory through emotive or 'intuitive' means - such as the way in which Zumthor calls upon the term - results in elements of memory being unavailable for rational or 'operational' assessment, and thus leaves the work, and more generally the idea of memory itself (in relation to architecture) open to both criticism and misuse. Writings of memory in architecture, partly due to the nature of memory - as an emotional response - often lack rationality and theoretical rigour. Issues which are amplified by the lack of distinction in the terminology employed.

CONCLUSION

To recapitulate, the ambiguity surrounding the term memory in an architectural context is not confined to the lack of distinction between history and memory. There is also a lack of distinction between memory in terms of commemoration, connections to the past, personal recollection, tradition, heritage, cultural or collective memory, and traces of past forms. Furthermore, as Forty noted, the meaning of memory in relation to architecture has undergone a series of transformations, which have exacerbated the lack of clarity in its application. The term memory was used to invoke quite different meanings and in vastly different contexts when comparing the application of the term in, for example, the writings of Saint Augustine, John Ruskin, in relation to post modernism, or in the writings of Zumthor. The term memory is as often employed in the manner of Zumthor, as it is to describe traces of past forms, issues of commemoration or, more generally, history itself.

Given the broad scope of use and interpretation available to theorists and architects when 'fixing' memories within buildings, the concept and terminology has become 'chameleonic'. Being able to draw from and embody many of the diverse understandings offered by the term, its use is problematic and meaning hardly clear. The multifaceted nature of memory has necessitated clarity in the use of the term yet somewhat paradoxically has also contributed to the vagueness endemic in its application.

There is a richness to the discussions of memory evident in other areas of the humanities that does not currently exist in the engagement of these ideas in architectural writing. While commemoration and intentional monuments have both been well theorised, more generally, the work of Patrick Hutton, Frances Yates, or Kerwin Lee Klein is largely unparalleled in architectural discussions. Furthermore, perhaps the most interesting interpretation of memory in relation to architecture is the one that has been almost entirely overlooked. Specifically, an understanding of memory which incorporates a reflection not just on the past, but also a reflection on the self - hence addressing the relationship between memory and identity, and subsequently the links this relationship is capable of forging with architecture and place.

If memory is to transcend the confusion endemic in its usage, it needs to be addressed deliberately. Theorists and practitioners alike need to be methodical in the clarification of its usage. Furthermore, an argument could be made for the creation of a genre - denoted by a phrase such as meta-memorial discourse - which discusses the all encompassing, collective readings of memory in its varied interpretations.

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\footnote{2} Such categories include: Cities and Desire, Cities and Signs, Thin Cities, Cities and Eyes, Cities and the Dead, Cities and the Sky, Continuous Cities, and Hidden Cities.

\footnote{3} Calvino, *Invisible Cities*, p. 7.


\footnote{5} This paper forms part of a much larger study of architecture and memory, and thus due to the scale of the project, this paper is necessarily a rather fragmented overview of the subject. For further elaboration of these ideas see: Nicole Sully, *Architecture and Memory: A Philosophical and Historical Inquiry*, [PhD Dissertation]: University of Western Australia, 2004.

\footnote{6} Such influences were also detectable in Mumford's *The City in History* [1961].


An exception to this in architectural writing would be Marot, Sub-Urbanism and the Art of Memory. Yates’ work was also the catalyst for Mary Caruthers’ investigations of medieval memory systems, where the influence these mnemonic techniques exerted on architecture is perhaps more tangible than in Yates’ discussion. In The Craft of Thought Caruthers discusses monastic spaces where certain architectural features were included for their associative value in the creation of monastic prayer. See Caruthers, The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400-1200, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, pp. 272-3.

This relationship between memory and the arts and sciences was further fortified by divisions in the classical art of Rhetoric.


Anemosyme is cited by Daniel Abramson in Harvard Design Magazine and Jan Pleper in Daidalos the theme issues on memory. The account of Simonesde, amongst other sources is cited by Gerard Cofurilus in Daidalos.

Zumthor has in the past decade published a number of lectures, articles and books delineating his approach to architecture and design. A number of these essays have been republished in different contexts. Of the five major publications on Zumthor’s work, he is listed as an author on all, thus much of what has been published is substantially drawn from his own views. In these brief descriptive texts Zumthor frequently refers to memory as an integral element in his design process. Interestingly the fact that Zumthor’s tendency to republish the same design rationales for different projects, sometimes years apart, seems to indicate the adoption of a ‘convention’ for the ways he discusses his work.


This statement appears in A + U’s overview of the competition schemes for Cornell University’s College of Architecture (2001) and also in Cornell’s own publications charting the competition’s progress. See: http://128.253.143.14/newsevents/pressreleases/newbuilding.htm, accessed 05 August 2002. While A + U published only a single paragraph the complete essay was provided by Cornell, under the title ‘Design Philosophy for the Cornell Architecture Project’. This essay repeats text originally published as ‘Lightness and Pain’ in Peter Zumthor: Works, with the only modification being the omission (in the Cornell essay) of two paragraphs which particularly referred to dwellings.

While the text reproduced on the Cornell website was accompanied by a more extensive and illuminating selection of images, the text still seems out of place.


Wadler & Confuris, ‘Questioning Images’, p. 90.


Such as with the critical comment evident in the architectural writings on Rossi or someone like Scarpa, whose work is also often discussed in relation to memory.


Pikionis’ Pathway to the Acropolis ([1950-57] incorporated relics from antiquity into the paved surface: Venezia’s Museum in Gibellina (1981-1987) re-mounts and incorporates fragments
from the façade of the Di Lorenzo place, which was destroyed in an earthquake. For a discussion of spoliation see Thomas Raff, "Spolia - Building Material or Bearer of Meaning?" Daidalos, no. 58, Dec., 1995, pp. 65-70.

29 Spoliation, while often discussed in terms of memory, is perhaps more aptly described as a quotation - insofar that the forms or components of spoils themselves are not re-created (as one does when one remembers), they are simply transplanted into another context.

30 For a discussion of the lack of association between form and memory see Forty, Words and Buildings, p. 206.

31 This notion also responds to a point made by Forty, in relation to the commemorative function of architecture, whereby he asserts that: "Buildings have often been an unreliable means of prolonging memory; all too often the object has survived, but who or what it commemorated has been forgotten." Forty, Words and Buildings, p. 206.