

El Raval - A Manifesto is based on the *El Raval Towards An Architecture of Desire* project, produced at the Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation at Columbia University during the spring academic semester 2017. This project was part of the Seven Deadly Sins project that has been conducted by Cristina Goberna since 2014.

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RAVAL - MANIFESTO

TOWARDS AN ARCHITECTURE OF DESIRE

THEORY OF URBAN LUST

El Raval - A Manifesto

- | | | |
|-----|---|---------------------------------|
| 007 | 1 | Introduction |
| 011 | 2 | Defining Lust |
| 017 | 3 | Story of El Raval |
| 031 | 4 | Church a Ritualistic Procession |

Towards an Architecture of Desire

- | | | |
|-----|---|----------------------|
| 048 | A | Zues Sex Store |
| 052 | B | La Paloma Love Hotel |
| 058 | C | Darling Club |
| 062 | D | Bacon Bear Club |
| 066 | E | Casa de la Pradara |
| 070 | F | Madam Jasmine |

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|-----|-------------------------------|
| 073 | <u>A Theory of Urban Lust</u> |
|-----|-------------------------------|

- | | |
|-----|-----------------|
| 081 | <u>Glossary</u> |
|-----|-----------------|

007	1	Introduction
007	1.1	Lust in El Raval
007	1.2	Fast Lust
008	1.3	A Processional Typology
011	2	Defining Lust
011	2.1	How to Define Lust
011	2.2	William Shakespeare
011	2.3	Simon Blackburn
013	2.4	Oxford Dictionary
013	2.5	Gabriel García Márquez
013	2.6	The Bible
013	2.7	Milan Kundera
015	2.8	Slavoj Žižek
015	2.9	Jacques Lacan
015	2.10	Arthur Schopenhauer
017	3	Story of El Raval
017	3.1	Imaginary of the 50s and 60s
019	3.2	Realities of Barrio Chino
023	3.3	Many Ravals
029	3.4	Stalemate and Resistance
031	4	Church a Ritualistic Procession
000	4.1	Spatial Experience
037	4.2	Ritual of the Light
039	4.3	Sculpture as Supplementary Architecture

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AVAL - IFESTO



1

Introduction

1.1

Lust in El Raval

Lust ≠ sexually explicit images, actualized desire, the space of pornography, or the space of a brothel.

Lust = the sexually implicit image, embodied sexual desire, the space of feelings, the space of imagination.

Lust has long had a home in El Raval. Over time, the neighborhood developed corners, narrow streets, small houses, and unplanned free grids. Its spatial, cultural, and political logics contributed to the emergence of a local sex industry, in which prostitution peaked during the 1970s. Up until the cleaning for 1992 Olympics, and still afterwards, El Raval was a port for travelers and locals seeking sexual gratification.

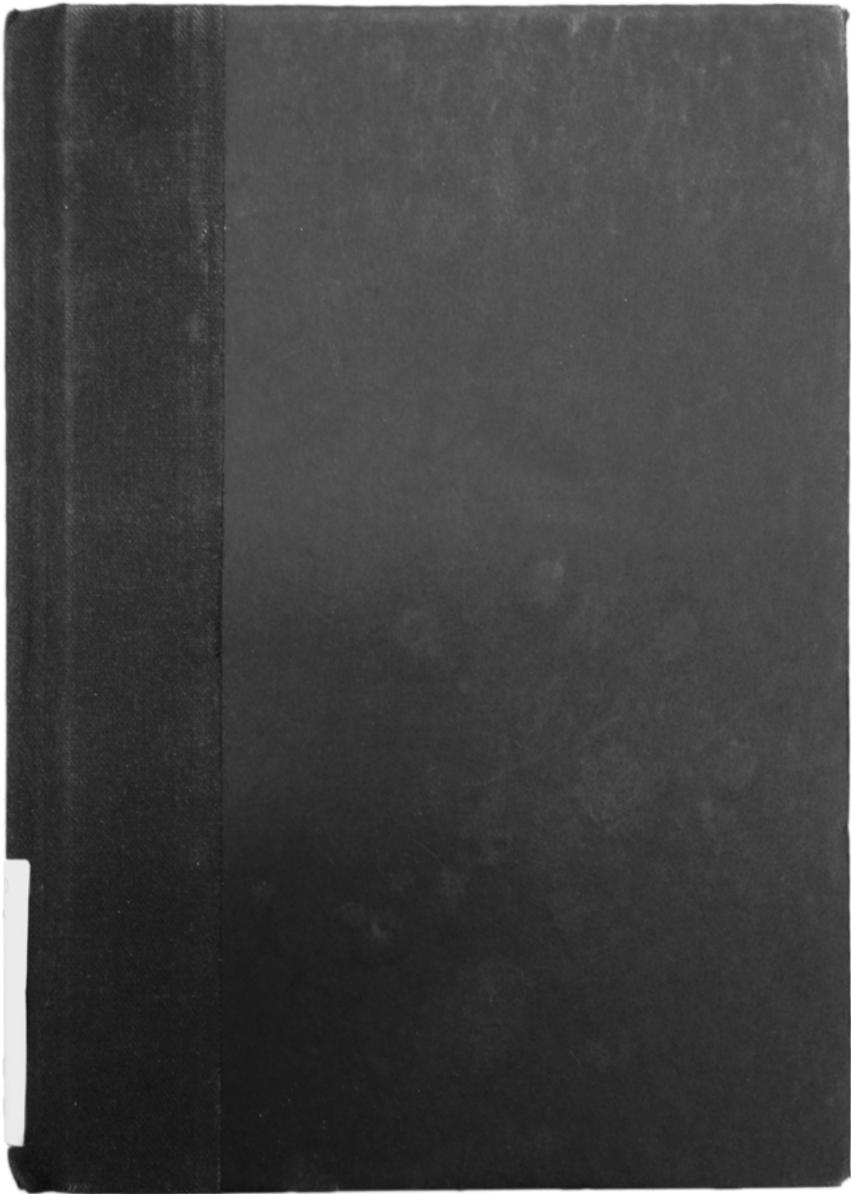
Nowadays El Raval is as much a virtual port as physical port. The local sex industry, aided by high-speed transportation and communication networks, draws in consumers, who travel long distances, very quickly, and at great cost, to fulfill latent desires in the neighborhood. In this system, we observe sexual desire projected from the virtual space of the internet into the nooks and crannies of El Raval. The resultant imaginary is that of El Raval, a forest of “dark rooms” wherein one can procure fast, convenient sex, mediated by technology.

1.2

Fast Lust

The 21st-century market for lust in El Raval is a transpatial conflation of sexual desire, internet media and urbanism across multiple scales. It has corrupted our architecture of lust in El Raval, formulating a typology of desire to be experienced within a minimum time at a maximum cost for space. We, architects of lust, challenge this fast lust and its relation to boundaries and coexistence within the existing urban fabric of El Raval. We argue for a more nuanced understanding of sexual desire and its relationship to space and the speed of life. We believe the magic power of lust is a function of gratification delayed, so we are against the instantaneous consumption of sex facilitated by this system.

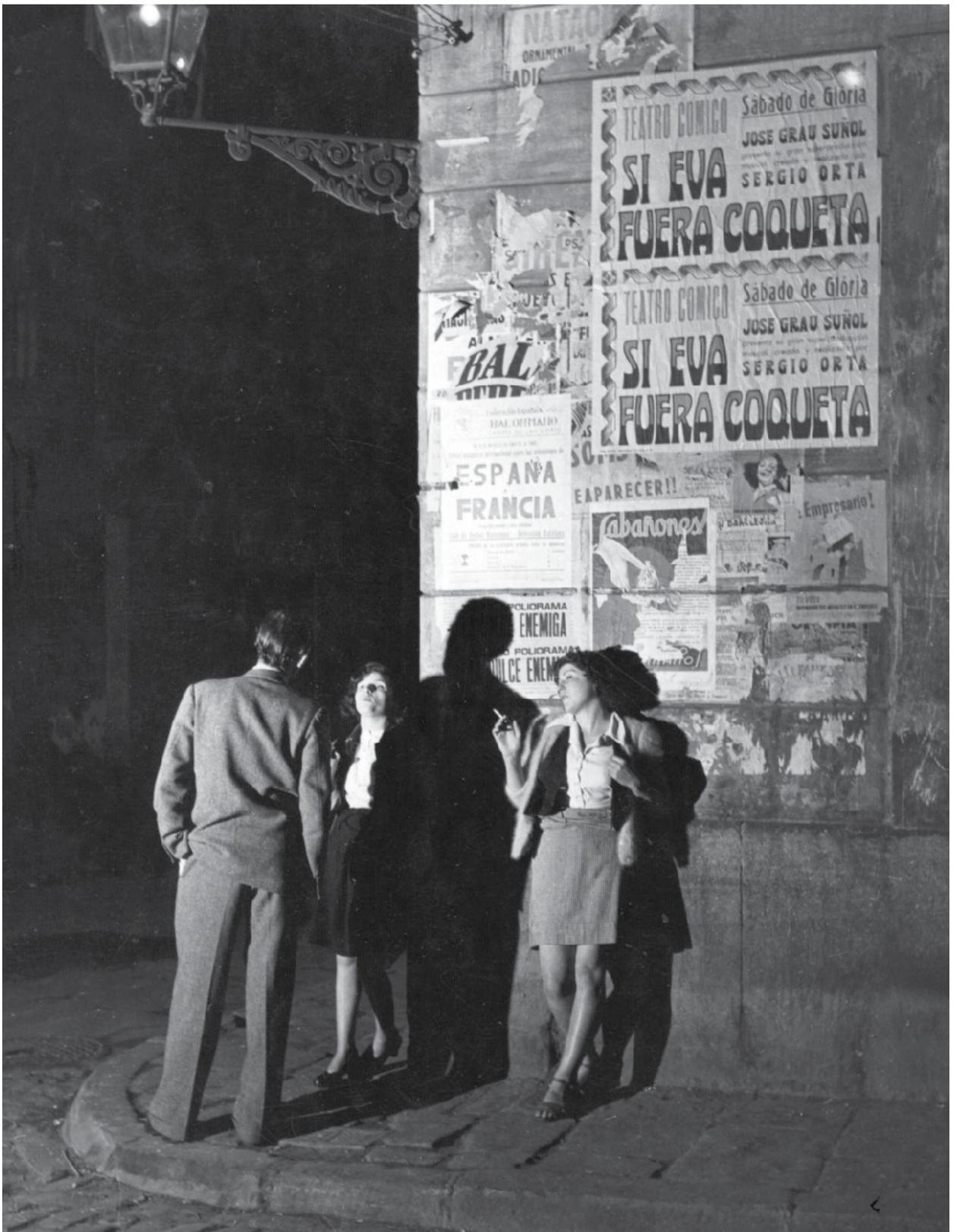
We say NO to the commercially driven, architectural stage-sets of the globalized sex industry in Barcelona - don't corrupt our lust with your hasty, bullshit, extortionate tourism!



A Processional Typology

The usual polemics of lust are gross oversimplifications. On the one hand, lust is reduced to romantic clichés, invoking baroque sentimentalities. On the other, it is religiously moralized, inducing shame. We believe in a multicentric, all-inclusive conception of lust that reflects the plurality of 21st-century urbanism; our urban imaginary is neither the overt expression of sex nor its covert repression. Rather, we argue an architecture of lust in El Raval that is based in the typology of processional architecture and the rituals of religious ceremony---sequences of spaces and technologies that create slow spaces, shifting between revealing and concealing, producing extreme tensions, unspeakable urges, and slow-burning desire.

We say YES to a future of lust in El Raval that is slow, sexy, spontaneous, worldly, and free!



Bert Hardy. "Barcelona a City in Ferment - Two prostitutes talking to a client on a Barcelona street corner." 1951

2

Defining Lust

2.1

Before we begin an intensive examination of Lust as it relates to architecture we must first come to an inference about its meaning. So first we look at how lust has been described over time.

2.2

Th'expense of spirit in a waste of shame
Is lust in action; and till action, lust
Is perjured, murd'rous bloody, full of blame,
Savage, extreme, rude, cruel, not to trust,
Enjoy'd no sooner but despised straight,
Past reason hunted, and no sooner had
Past reason hated, as a swallowed bait
On purpose laid to make the taker mad;
Mad in pursuit and in possession so,
Had, having, and in quest to have, extreme;
A bliss in proof, and proved, a very woe;
Before, a joy proposed; behind, a dream.
All this the world well knows; yet none knows well
To shun the heaven that leads men to this hell.

William Shakespeare, Sonnet 129.

2.3

Lust is "enthusiastic desire, the desire that infuses the body, for sexual activity and its pleasures for their own sake..."

Simon Blackburn, Lust .



Merry Alpern. "Dirty Windows." 1995

2.4

Strong sexual desire: A passionate desire for something: A sensuous appetite regarded as sinful

Oxford Dictionary

2.5

“Sex is the consolation you have when you can’t have love”

Gabriel García Márquez

2.6

Sinful longing; the inward sin which leads to the falling away from God (Rom. 1:21). “Lust, the origin of sin, has its place in the heart, not of necessity, but because it is the centre of all moral forces and impulses and of spiritual activity.” In Mark 4:19 “lusts” are objects of desire.

The Bible

2.7

“Making love with a woman and sleeping with a woman are two separate passions, not merely different but opposite. Love does not make itself felt in the desire for copulation (a desire that extends to an infinite number of women) but in the desire for shared sleep (a desire limited to one woman).”

“Flirting is a promise of sexual intercourse without a guarantee.”

“Physical love is unthinkable without violence.”

Milan Kundera



Joan Colom. "Fotografias De Barcelona". 1958-1964

2.8

“...we are never alone with our partner in sexual relations, as a third party, our fantasy, always sneaks in.. The sexual act is experienced in a detached manner and thus remains a kind of imaginary representation for each of us for we experience a narrative split in which we are simultaneously part of a scene and observers of that scene. The scene, the place – meaning the physical design of the space or the atmosphere – are a substantial part of the fantasies that we project in our sexual relations on our journey between desire and pleasure.”

Slavoj Žižek

2.9

“The necessary and sufficient reason for the repetitive insistence of these desires in the transference and their permanent remembrance in a signifier that repression has appropriated – that is, in which the repressed returns – is found if one accepts the idea that in these determinations the desire for recognition dominates the desire that is to be recognised, preserving it as such until it is recognised”

Jacques Lacan

2.10

Schopenhauer speaking of coitus as it is forbidden by some churches “For if the coitus be no longer desired for its own sake, the negation of the Will-to-Live has already appeared, and the propagation of the human race is then superfluous and senseless, inasmuch as its purpose is already attained. Besides, without any subjective passion, without lust and physical pleasure, with sheet deliberation, and the coldblooded purpose to place a human being in the world merely in order that he should be there – this would be such a very questionable moral action that few would take it upon themselves; one might even say of it indeed that it stood in the same relation to generation from the mere sexual impulse as a cold-blooded deliberate murder does to a death-stroke given in anger.”

Arthur Schopenhauer

“RAVAL. It 's a neighbourhood with multiple names: 'distrito 5' or 'Barrio Chino', and now that they've made it respectable, it 's called El Raval, which is a return to its old name, the real one. But what's important is that at the time it was a defeated neighbourhood, more dominated by Francoism than others, a neighbourhood which was too much for the city's middle class”

Manuel Vazquez Montalban

3

Story of El Raval

3.1

Marta Gili
Winning back the Barrio
Joan Colom's Raval

Imaginary of the 50s and 60s

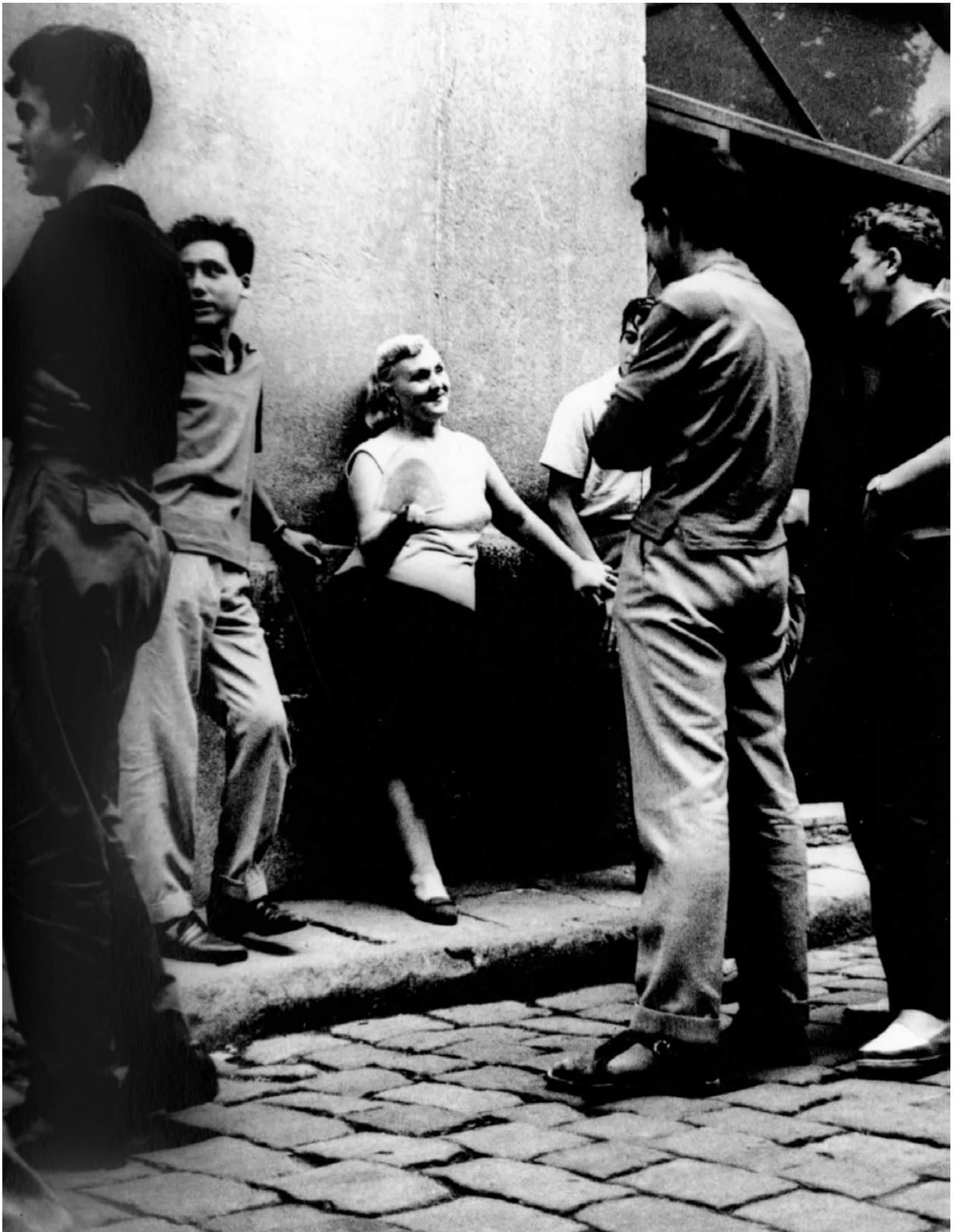
El Raval took on such immense proportions for Francoism: a place where intimacy was negotiated in public and where the streets were a refuge for wandering bodies and souls in search of one another.

Avoided by the majority of God-fearing residents on their Sunday strolls along the Ramblas, the Barrio Chino of Franco's Barcelona brought together many of the stereotypes emanating from the petty bourgeois' Christian vision of Hell: a dark, smelly, sordid place inhabited by pimps, thieves and prostitutes; in short, a bonfire for the flesh of the syphilitic, not for the blessed. Ultimately, the Barrio Chino - like many other 'defeated' neighbourhoods in many other cities - was the territory where citizens locked away their fear so as not to find it written on the palms of their own hands.

For children growing up in Barcelona under Francoism, the Barrio Chino of their imaginations was bounded on the north by prohibition and on the south by divine punishment. For the most unruly teenagers, and especially those of us whose lot it was to live the contradictions of late-Francoist society, embarking on the discovery of El Raval implied a gesture of resistance to indifference and resignation.

We would sneak into that 'wicked place' with a stupid smile on our lips to ward off the fear and shame. The incursion was rapid, the way out sometimes difficult to find. The narrow, twisting back streets were filled with men who gave us sly looks, with haughty women, with children and dogs, all crowded together on the tiny strip of pavement. Sometimes we stopped in front of a shop window piled up with merchandise which was, for us at least, quite out of the ordinary. Much later, we would understand what a condom, a rubber, a douche or a grifota was.² But that didn't matter at the time. The fact was that we had accomplished our first profanation, in transforming the inferno which had frightened us as children, the neighbourhood which — as Vazquez Montalban perceptively wrote — was 'too much' for our elders, into the paradise of our adolescent rebellion.

To be sure, today's Raval is not the Raval of fifty years ago, but rather, a compendium of metaphors for the complex relationships between economics, politics, urban planning and community in our global society. Nonetheless, it is still the same place which inspired Pepe Carvalho, the famous anti-hero of Manuel Vazquez Montalban's detective novels, to declare: 'In all the places I've been, I've never seen as many things as when I used to go up on the rooftops of these houses where had the private lives of each and every one of us at my disposal. In the far distance there was Montjuïc or the sea or the Tibidabo mountain side. What more could anyone want?'¹⁰



Joan Colom. "Raval." 1958 - 1961

Realities of Barrio Chino

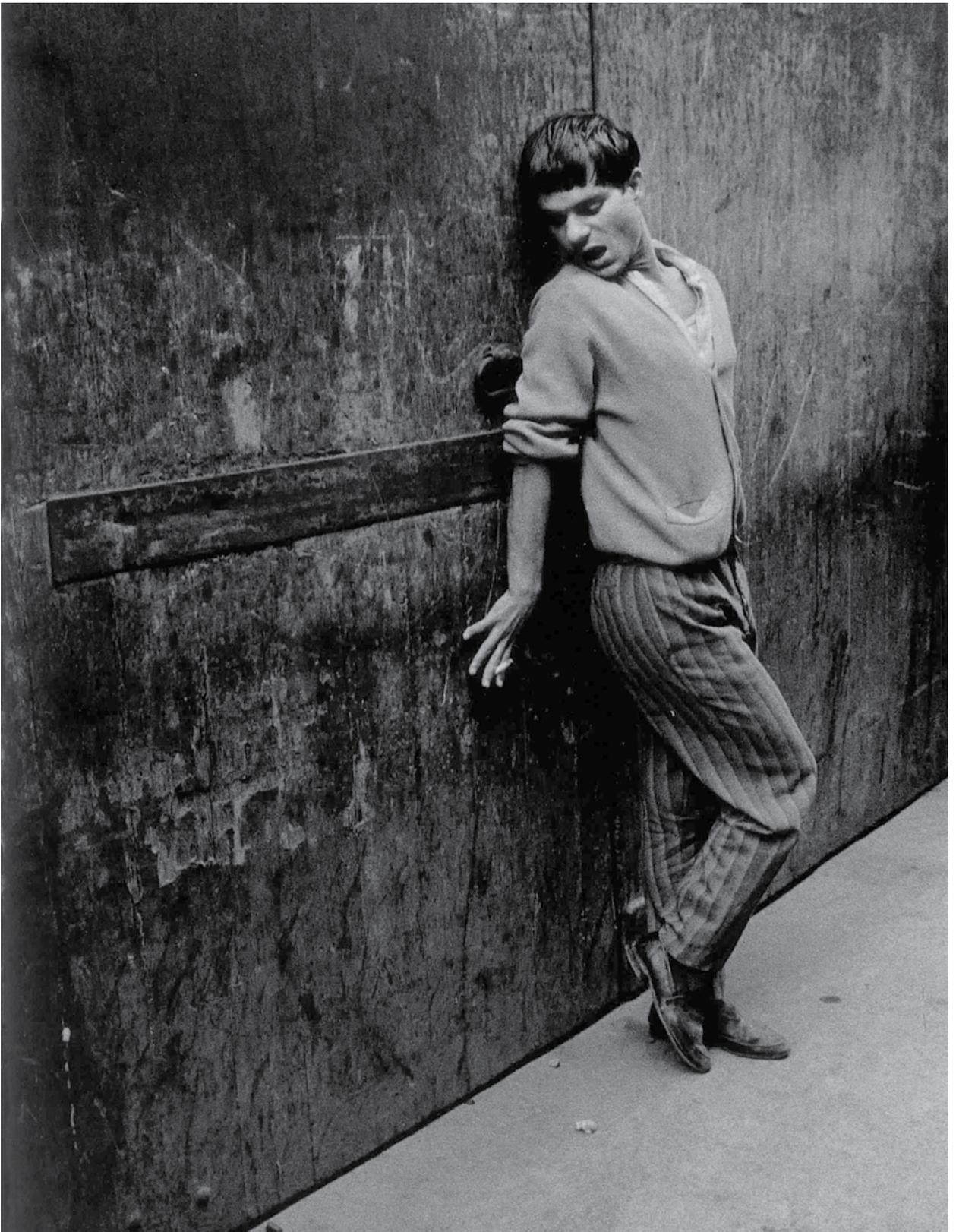
During their fieldwork in the the 1970s Gaspar Maza and Gary McDonogh have differentiated three other types among the hundreds of bars that have played a role in the Raval since the turn of the century. These types are distinguishable in their ambience, historical origin, clientele, admission criteria, hours, and their interaction with barrio and city. We categorize these types as (2) business bars (*bares de negocio*), entailing prostitution and drugs, (3) special interest bars/clubs, and (4) neighborhood bars." Only the business bar appears with any frequency alongside spectacles in mass media depictions of the barrio; special interest bars occasionally play a corollary role as *muvavarkers* in political discourse about immigrants, leftists, or racial groups. Yet all can only be understood within a network of social use and cultural meaning in which the neighborhood bars predominate."

Although prostitution has been associated with the *barrio chino* since the fourteenth century, legal brothels contained prostitution until the 1950s. Many brothels were located in the *barrio chino*, serving transients in the harbor district as well as the rest of the city. When brothels were closed, prostitution moved to the street and the bar. One of the bar-types that appeared in this period earned the name *barra americana* (American bar) in an alternate identification of geography and vice. Such bars resemble dimly-lit cavernous tunnels with bare counters where prostitutes await clients. Prostitutes generally make some agreement with bar owners, who also profit from sales to male clients. Unlike spectacle bars, in which commercial sex may be available or implicit, these bars evidently offer nothing else, no ambiguities which could otherwise explain a client's presence. In the past few years many have been closed by municipal action, although prostitution in other zones is tolerated and even graphically advertised in city newspapers.

Even so, these bars of the *barrio chino* have attracted a literary and journalistic gaze. Nobel-prize winner Camilo Jose Cela (1964) described the sad and weary urban prostitutes in the 1950s and 1960s in much the same way that they appeared until recent campaigns. Others have identified them street by street, such as the older (mid-fifties) prostitutes along the Carrer de les Tapirs, whose very name suggested a particular type in a 1980s dramatic monologue, *Dolca de les Tapies* (Valls 1984; see Draper Miralles 1982; Carendell 1982). Ironically, Tapirs almost lacked many bars and even buildings, except for a hotel which served as a house of assignation and social center for the community of prostitutes who work the street.

Today [1992], most prostitution bars concentrate in three or four streets in the north of the *barrio chino* and in clubs having access to the Rambles, the major downtown thoroughfare. In the 1980s the narrow passage of Carrer d'En Robador was lined with one bar after another, hotels, and clinics, with the prostitutes moving outside on warmer to draw in clients. Male prostitution was prohibited under Franco, but some transvestite prostitutes concentrated near the Rambles during the late afternoon and evening.⁹

These bars tend to follow the hours of the spectacle bars, built around nighttime



Joan Colom. "Raval." 1958 - 1961

activities, although some prostitutes and bars work from early morning on. These bars specialize in hard liquor and rely on prostitutes' earnings and inflated prices to survive. An indication of the spatial specialization of such bars is evident in the activities of prostitutes outside their working hours, who eat and relax in neighborhood bars, where they may talk with friends and neighbors, or joke about the day's tricks. Such offstage activities would not be allowed in working bars.

Prostitutes may or may not live in the *barrio*, although the latter case seems more common from scattered data I have obtained. The clientele generally comes from outside the *barrio*. Despite legends of the bourgeois patron, especially in the days of the brothels, most of their clients seem to be working class and immigrants (Draper Miralles 1982).¹⁰ Indeed, the origin of the clientele is often difficult to define—Robadors is famous for its *mirones* (men who stand outside the bar and stare, or windowshop from bar to bar for hours), Tapirs for its retired men on limited pensions. Generally prostitutes in this area are perceived to be older and in poorer physical shape and to charge less than those in more elegant zones of the city.

Urban knowledge of working prostitutes, male or female, belongs primarily to males outside of the *barrio*. Nonetheless, in 1990, I was taken aback by a startling comment from an elite woman in her fifties: "En Robadors had prostitutes that were not available anywhere else in Spain." This remark was not, however, based on first-hand knowledge, but on conversations and reading, reflecting an inverse pride in urban life. Inside the *barrio* males and females may know prostitutes as neighbors, within social limits already mentioned.

Prostitution as a gender-related service has in recent years been linked in mass media to another publicly-labelled vice: drugs. There are mentions of cocaine trafficking in the *barrio* between 1910 and the 1930s (Paquer 1962: 85-89; Boatwright and Da Cal 1984; Romani 1982), but few reliable statistics exist. The imagery of cocaine then was that of the enticement of upper-class women into a world of depravity. Cocaine and heroin reappeared in Barcelona in the 1980s, however, with visible traffic again localized in part the *barrio chino*, within a more complex European trade. Newspapers, television and police signled out bars as zones of sale and other activities, epitomized in the image of the hooker-junkie.

In newspaper reports and political rhetoric, moreover, the critique of drugs and action against them often have merged with a new discussion of race and immigration. Drug trafficking is associated in the press and the public mind with Arab and African immigrants, many of them illegal, who have concentrated in the Raval. Even bars that remained "clean" were heavily policed if their clientele included black or Arab males." The association of race and drugs also permeated some comments by *barrio* residents who rejected these immigrants as harbingers of problems, while commenting on the "young middle-class women" who frequent them as companions and clients.

As noted, not all prostitutions involve male and female relations. Yet the interpretations of a transvestite bar and a famous female impersonators show in the area again reflect class patterns. The most elegant transvestite prostitution in Barcelona in the 1970s operated in the bourgeois Rambla Catalana/Diagonal area, next to a zone of young male hustling. Much of this today has moved to another suburban area near the University campus. Yet the public identification of male transvestites, whatever their sexual orientation, often focuses on the *barrio*

chino. Public fear of AIDS and its identification with “illicit” sexuality and drugs has also medicalized visions of gender, drugs, and deviance in reference to the barrio.

It is important to note, however, that the barrio chino apparently lacks any male and/or female gay bars, although there are gay book/sex shops nearby. Gay centers are also more likely to be found in more middle-class areas such as Gracia. This, too, seems to reinforce negative rather than merely difficult male gender roles: in the Mediterranean, a male who adopts an active role in homosexual liaisons proves more acceptable socially than a passive or feminized male (Brandes 1981). Both the resources and political consciousness of the middle class may also facilitate gay identity in areas where bars will escape other negative attributes.¹² Prostitution, drugs, and transvestites in bars serve to justify images of the barrio chino as a problem zone for many outsiders. For those in the neighborhood, these bars are workplaces which may elicit ambivalent responses, especially in the case of drugs which are increasingly perceived as a problem permeating the entire neighborhood. Like spectacle bars, then, these bars and their workers are integrated into barrio society with difficulty despite the generalizations drawn by outsiders.

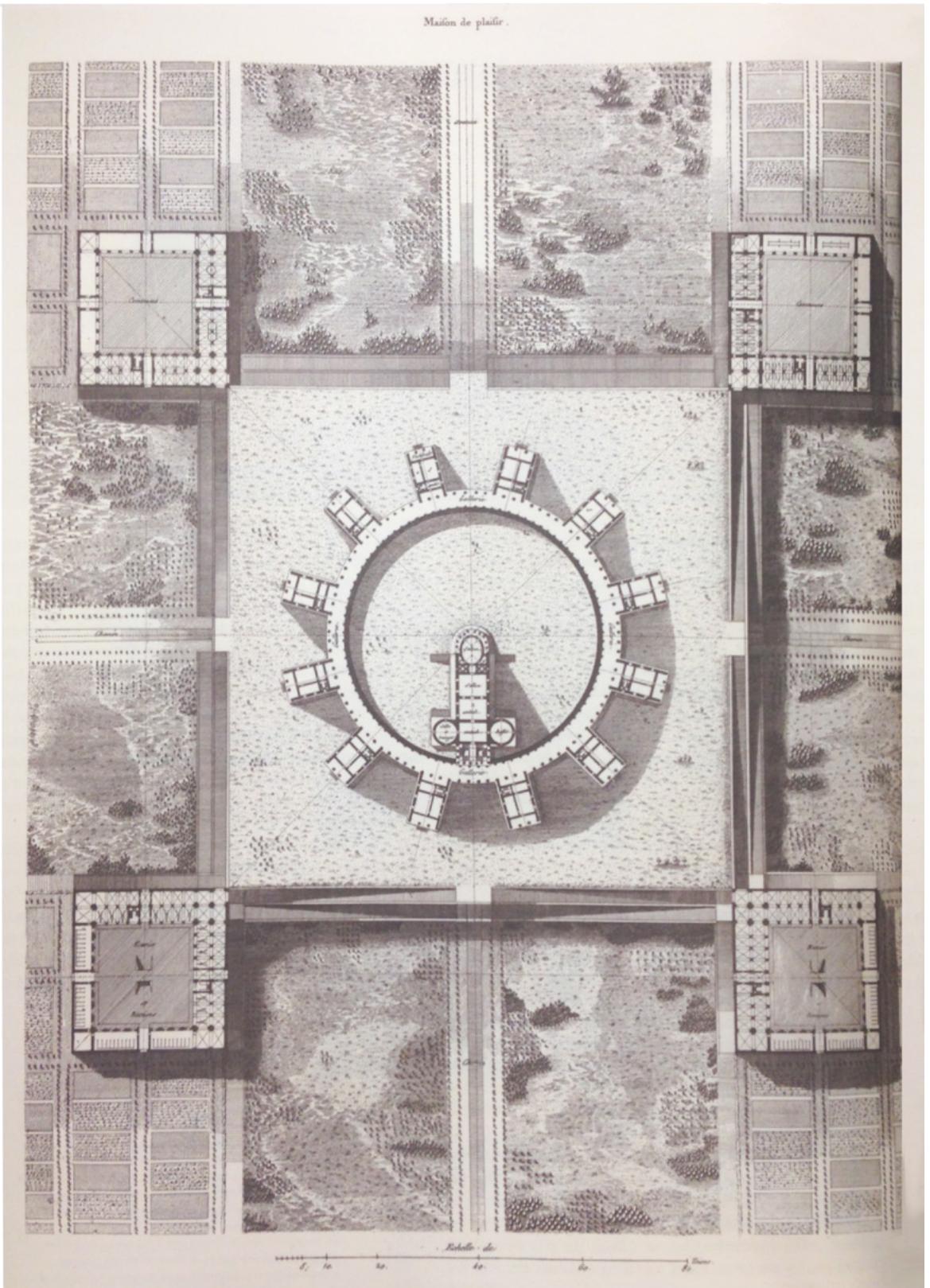
3.3

Joan Subirats, Joaquim Rius and others
From Xino to Raval
Culture and Social Transformation in Central Barcelona

Many Ravals

Gay Community

Among the collectives or communities attracted by this type of neighbourhood are gays and lesbians. One need not think of the Marais, which is known all over the world as a destination of pink tourism. The case of the Raval, however, is not as clear as that of its Parisian counterpart. In the south of the neighbourhood, in the Xino, was one of the well-known homosexual meeting places of the city, which Jean Genet starkly describes in *The Thief's Journal*. Despite the repression of the Franco dictatorship and the degradation of the area today, some of these bars and clubs still endure, for example La Concha and the Cangrejo en Carrer de Guàrdia. Moreover, if in the 1970s it seemed (although the area was the centre of the libertarian-underground scene led by Nazario and Ocaña) that the whole phenomenon was going to disappear, it has embarked on a new phase of glory today. La Concha, now refurbished by new Maghrebi owners, and the Cangrejo, with its transvestite shows, feature in the pages of *Lonely Planet* and *Time Out* and are full of tourists. Again, the underground bar Labata de boatiné, which is in the now-mythical street of Robadors, has been recommended by a magazine such as *Cosmopolitan* (October 2004). However, gay and lesbian businesses are more or less concentrated in the blocks known as the “Gayxample” (in the Eixample neighbourhood). The Raval continues to be the neighbourhood of the poorer homosexuals and, since the 1970s, those who are most politically engaged. In fact, La bata de boatiné is run by the radical sector of the gay movement, the Front d'Alliberament Gay de Catalunya (Gay Liberation Front



Claude Nicolas Ledoux. "House of Pleasure Montmartre." 1847

of Catalonia – FAGC). In interviews and discussion groups we have seen that there are a significant number of gays and lesbians who have been attracted by the bohemian and socially mixed milieu of the old quarters. The Raval has not become an explicitly gay zone and nor are there any signs of community affirmation (rainbow flags) as in some districts of other European capitals. In any case, however, they do form one of the constituent elements of the new middle-class strata who have been attracted by the Raval and who have altered its social physiognomy and symbolic content.

Future utopias as a mélange

The idea of a future that would be a mélange, a blend or heterogeneity of social groups is central in many visions of the Raval. This might refer to uses, origins and cultures, social classes and generations. In any case, the most significant differences among these points of view are between those that see a conflict-free coexistence in diversity and those that warn of its potential for conflict.

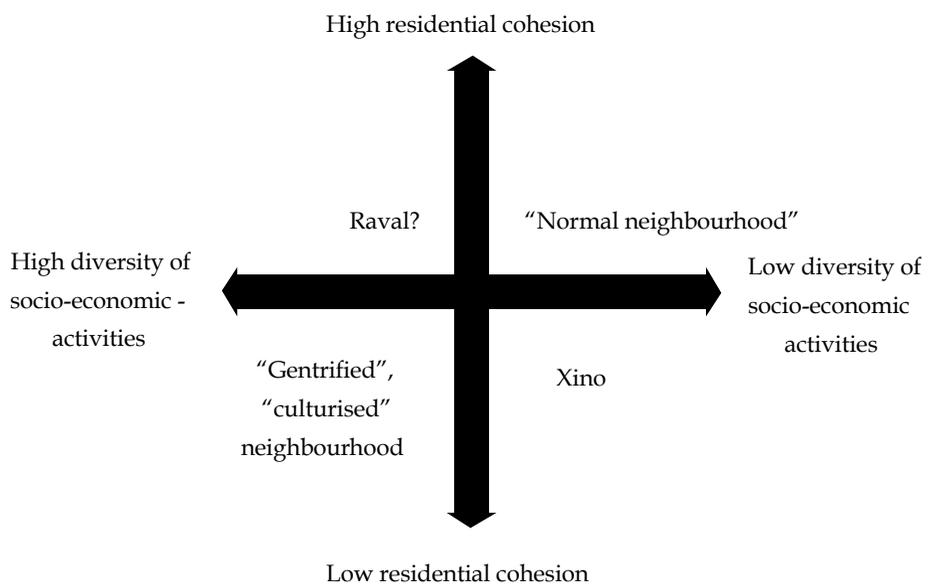
The idea would be to achieve a well-balanced combination between housing, offices and day-time and night-time businesses [...] And this would have to include from the Pakistanis through to the local people. It's not easy. *Interview with Emili Álvarez, art gallery owner and vice-president of FTR (Fundació Tot Raval – All-Raval Foundation), 28 June 2004.*

I think it's good that there's a mix in the neighbourhood [...] Probably you have a lot more to do with your neighbour who's Moroccan than with somebody from two streets over who is from Sant Gervasi and who has another attitude and has come here in a different way. I think this isn't a bad thing, and that the mixing is good and that it's very important that new people should come in and that it's very good to have a balance in the neighbourhood, but it should be in the awareness that there is a social problem that will take much longer to resolve. Washing the face of the neighbourhood doesn't make the problems disappear. And the problems are very big, very subtle and very deep-rooted. *Interview with Macarena, Almazén, 13 May 2004.*

I think that this heterogeneity is conflictive but not dramatically so, or overly obsessive, or pathological, or perverse, which is what they have in other places. Here one lives with conflict but it is part of everyday life, without becoming a big deal. And I would like it to go on like this. *Interview with Mikel Aramburu, anthropologist, 22 July 2004.*

The utopias of the cultural neighbourhood

The cultural neighbourhood is seen as a possibility of social mixing or of a certain mild bourgeoisification, which is to say, without people being expelled. It is considered that creative people can live with other communities and that their arrival does not necessarily mean a brusque or radical change in the social uses of the neighbourhood. The Raval's becoming a cultural neighbourhood is a desired future, although talk about this is not very clearly defined. There are no plans, measures or campaigns aimed at favouring this outcome beyond awareness of the fact that there are unused spaces that artists could occupy (ever scarcer and evermore expensive because of price rises in real estate). The Raval as a neighbourhood of artists is thus seen



more as an individual expectation than as a phenomenon that is encouraged by private agents or any specific and clearly articulated policy.

To tell the truth, I don't know if this is a period that might be called a transition in historical terms. I mean that as long as other groups with more acquisitive power are not definitively settled here, and so on and so forth, we have this intermediate phase of people who take risks, who are pioneers and then they end up going off to colonise other neighbourhoods that are also undergoing transformation, etcetera, etcetera. I don't know if this is the situation or if we really are being a cultural neighbourhood, or a cultural district in which the identity and the personality of the district will end up being that. I would like to think it could be this second option, in part. *Interview with Carles Martí, councillor for the Ciutat Vella District, 25 March 2004.*

It'll turn out all right, you'll see. In the end it'll be a success. And ...a cultural neighbourhood, the Raval... it should, really should be that! Listen, let's see, there are lots of things that could be done, and they could ...now look here, we have to see to it that, and this is what I've always been saying to the Fundació Tot Raval [All-Raval Foundation], a lot of craftspeople should come to live in the Raval and set up their workshops. If not to live, then to bring their workshops here. With all the ground-floor places that are empty ... because if something isn't done with these ground-floor places - I don't know what, but something has to be done with them - because they can't be used for housing [...] There are some here (designer studios)...just over there ... yes, yes, yes. This would be the key for turning this neighbourhood into a residential-cum-housing area for artists, more or less. *Interview with Lluís Cabrera, Taller de Músics (Musicians' Workshop), 20 April 2004.*

The dystopias of the theme park

The risk of the neighbourhood's becoming a theme park aimed at tourists, as well as becoming gentrified so that the old residents are pushed out with upper-middle and upper-class people moving in, predominates among the pessimistic views on the future of the Raval.

I can see that danger that this could all end up as a theme park, well, maybe not quite that, but they were talking about the touristisation of the city and here we do run that risk, not so much because of tourists but because the residents have this same sensation [...] I think that in about ten years this could all turn into a showcase, a nice, shiny, clean neighbourhood, which wouldn't be too bad, but there would still be some corners tucked away. I'm afraid that it could be a neighbourhood designed with business in mind, with an image in mind [...], and perhaps here the risks of this process of dualisation of society can be seen, and this is a risk, the dual society. *Interview with Carmen de Dios, head of Personal Services for the zone, 15 June 2004.*

What worries me [...] are the lines the transformation is taking, which I see more and more clearly: a centre-city neighbourhood, quite a lot more of a tourist attraction and habitable and more concerned with the city itself than with its residents. *Interview with Rosa Balaguer, director Casal dels Infants del Raval, 3 June 2004.*

The dystopias of the gentrified neighbourhood

Other points of view query the



'Entre el Liceo y las Olimpiadas para El Raval no queda nada' ('Between Liceo and the Olympic Games there won't be anything for El Raval') (Photo: J.S. Jauhiainen)

neighbourhood's future starting out from the idea of gentrification, the expulsion of its present residents and replacing them with others who are better off economically. In any case, they address a gentrifying process that is neither "over the top" nor "aggressive" (in contrast with the Born neighbourhood) but still tempered with the true characteristics of the neighbourhood.

That's right, it won't be like the Born. That's clear. And it has to do with the neighbourhood's associative life. For example, there are the choir groups that are never taken into account because people have a rather stereotyped view of the Raval, but there are lots of choir groups here, and this is also associative life. And yet they are there and these are "autochthonous" people too. I think it won't be like the Born and that's very clear. It won't become a super-modern neighbourhood, even though it's going that way and real-estate speculation being what it is. Nobody's going to stop that. There's "mobbing", all these different scenes and there are lots of real-estate businesses here. You're not going to stop that. Even if there's immigration. *Interview with Vladimir Olivella, president of TEB (Youth Association), 11 June 2004.*

The differences among the interviewees appear in their greater or lesser confidence in the capacity and continuity of the mobilisations, resistance and pressure exerted by the inhabitants with regard to the process of reform.

I don't know, but I'm a bit pessimistic because at the level of response there's not [...] There are moments when there are demonstrations or different kinds of resident action with proposals about participation and getting their decisions respected, but there's no continuity and ... *Interview with Jesús, Masala magazine 11 May 2004.*

The future? It doesn't look good to me, because there are lot of interests there. But yes, I do have the hope that, even if it's not organised, there's still a certain resistance and maybe that's making it harder for them than they anticipated. *Interview with Iñaki García, El Lokal, 27 May 2004.*

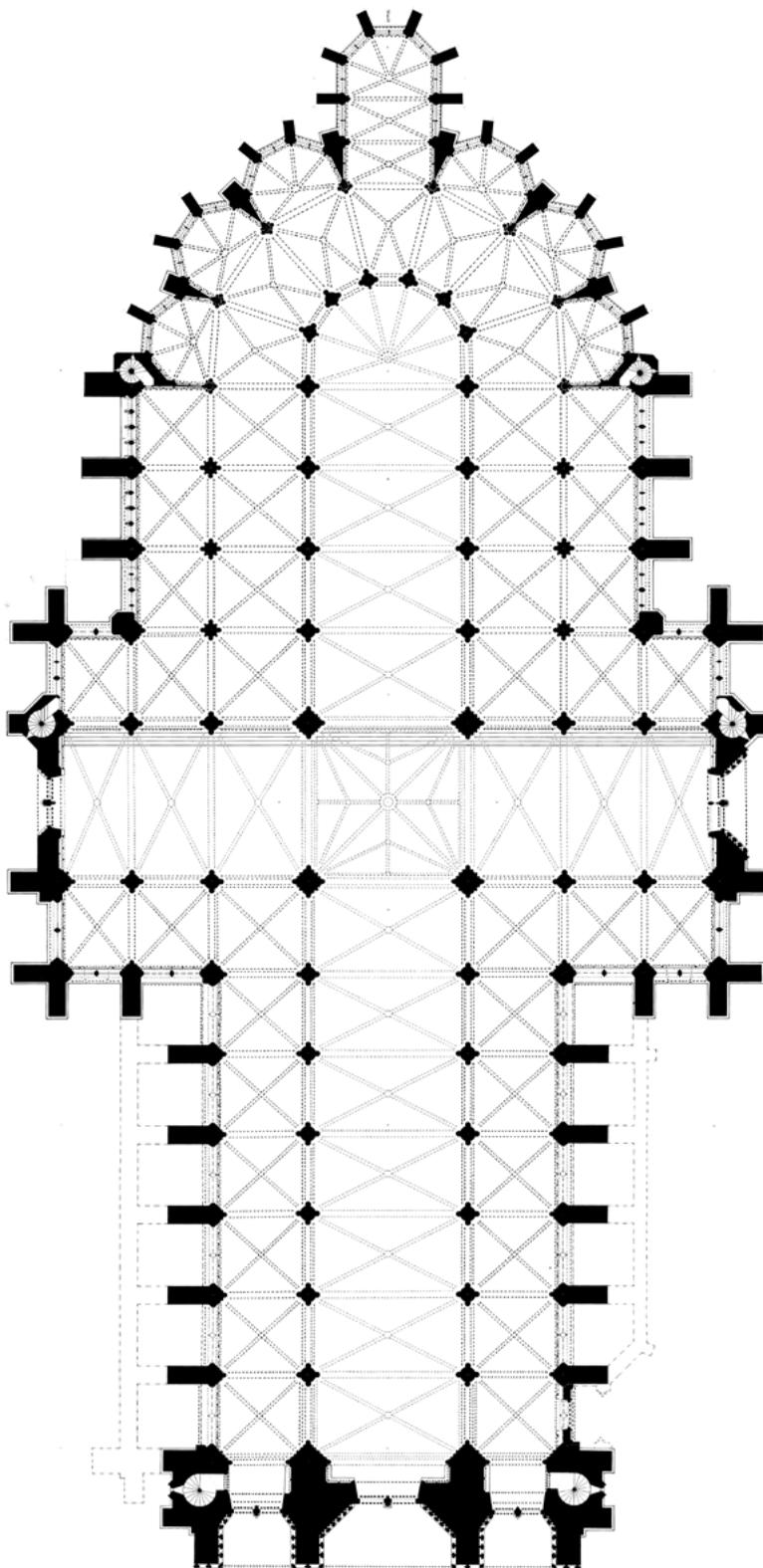
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Joan Subirats, Joaquim Rius and others
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Stalemate and Resistance

Notable among the reflections of the interviewees is talk of a kind of "stalemate" between the gentrifying forces and the anti-gentrification people and this is connected with a moment of lack of definition and uncertainty as to how the future will be settled.

I think that while there's no permanent watch, or permanent follow-up, the idea of the mix or the *mélange*, of non-gentrification, really, can be maintained and made sustainable in the Raval but the gentrification can also appear at any moment and irrupt here because the real-estate market is very powerful, very strong and the big real-estate agents in the Raval are taking a position of being always on the lookout. We're now in a stalemate situation between the gentrifying forces and those who are trying to maintain the mixtures. Stalemate doesn't mean that there's no gentrification, because there is, but there's not as much as the gentrifying forces would like because there's public activity that slows them down. But how long can this permanent stalemate situation go on?



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James Addiss and Stephen Murray. *Plan of Amiens Cathedral.*

Interview with Ricard Gomà, Councillor for Social Welfare, Barcelona City Council, 29 April 2004.

I think we're at a wait-and-see point now and it can go one way or the other. *Interview with Joan Leandre, OVNI collective, 1 June 2004.*

The Raval we have now is at a halfway stage [...] and right now it's perhaps in a situation of lack of definition or I'd say transition. [...] I wouldn't hazard a guess at where it's going. *Interview with Octavi Alexandre, Veïns en Defensa de la Barcelona Vella, 25 May 2004.*

Yes, the physical change is very big and the population change is impressive too. Now I can see that, with regard to its character, there's a firm base, but the overall change has been radical. It's in process. I think no one really knows what's going to happen and the lines it will take are unpredictable. I love this. I think that in the institutions no one imagined that so many Pakistanis, for example, would come here. They did the reforms looking for another kind of person, and they didn't expect the ones who came. *Interview with Iñaki García, El Lokal, 27 May 2004.*

4

Church a Ritualistic Procession

4.1

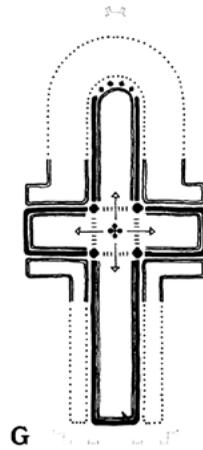
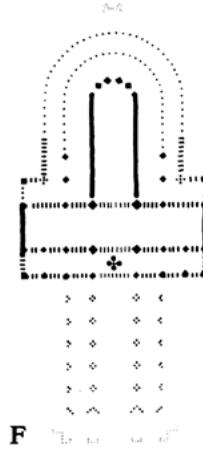
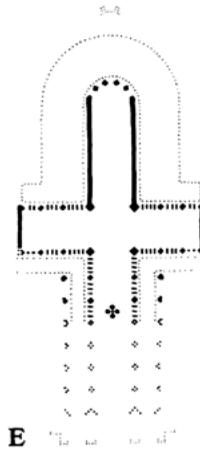
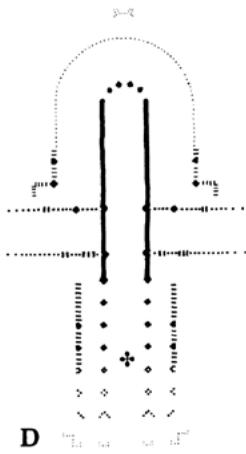
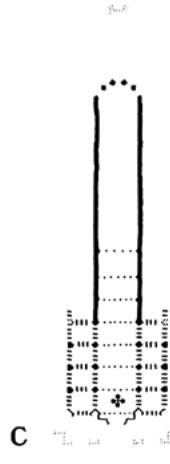
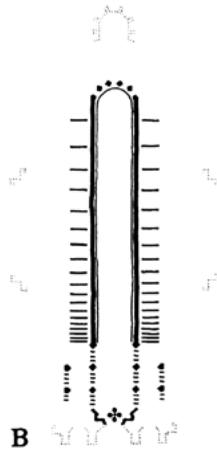
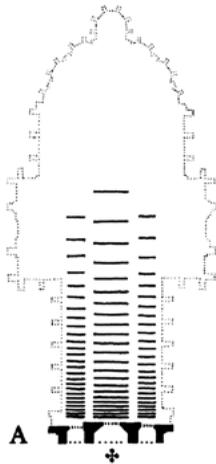
Stephen Murry and James Addiss
Plan and Space at Amiens Cathedral: With a
New Plan Draw by James Addiss

Spatial Experience

It is this action of movement that energizes space, causing it to "soar" as attention passes from the lower to the upper parts, or to "expand" as we become aware of the relationship between central and peripheral spaces.

The visitor entering at the west portal and progressing to the east will experience the spaces of the nave, transept, and choir in a particularly dramatic way.¹⁴ The church is more than an abstract plan and a physical structure: it is an experienced spatial entity. In this processional path the spaces gradually and progressively reveal themselves as a set of transformations of the initial order. It is possible to reconstruct this essentially mobile viewing experience in a sequence of schematic plans.

As the visitor enters at the west end of the nave the limitless bounds of the exterior world and the vast spread of the west facade are reduced by the funnel-like effect of the portal (*a*). In the interior, the great spare forms of the nave focus the attention of the beholder directly toward the altar at the end of the long spatial axis (*b*). You see and are immediately made part of this long axis down to the bright choir. You also see the vertical axis of space up to the bright clerestory and the horizontal axis formerly framed by the bright aisle windows (now transformed through the addition of lateral chapels). Of the solids perceived at this point, most important are the first free-standing piers of the nave, the



responds of the great piers at the base of the towers, the thickened walls of the entrance portals, and the grouped responds of the aisle colonnettes and vaults. Above, the triforium and its rich foliage band, the clerestory, and the nave vaults appear in steep perspective.

These forms and their spaces seem like an apparition, different in color, shape, vocabulary, coolness, and height from the outside world. **Standing still, the interior induces the sensation of various kinds of motion, a rush along three different axes: width, height, and length. The length of the nave seems infinitely distant in the sense of being uncountable units long, and its width is unexpectedly generous.** Most of all, its height is far greater than the blocky forms of the exterior implied. The cathedral has created a new kind of reality which obviates for the moment the dictates of a uniform and consistent physical world.¹⁵

15. It is the creation of a new kind of reality through the undertaking of a journey that lends mythological dimensions to the experience of our visit. As a result, the visitor or pilgrim becomes a type of hero. We are encouraged to entertain the idea of myth partly through the presence of the decorative labyrinth, known in the middle ages as the "House of Daedalus," in the tiles of the nave floor. It should be remembered that Daedalus, the inventor of wonderful things, was the first man to fly. H. Birenbaum, *Myth and Mind*, Lantham, 1988, defines myth in terms of space, time, and wonder.

At Amiens this experience is powerful in an unusual way because there is no separately defined transitional zone between outside and inside. The abrupt transition at the west entry is the result of the unusual design of the towers, each open to the interior on its east side at its lower stage. In the central portal the visitor experiences the thickness of the west wall (more than two meters) only as a diaphragm, not as an opaque longitudinal plane defining the inner side of a tower. The complex transitions from exterior to interior of earlier medieval architecture—Carolingian, Romanesque, and early Gothic—are rejected in favor of a radical simplification which enforces a shock of experience.¹⁶

Away from the portals to the east the main axis to the altar remains dominant, reiterated through the repeated uprights of the piers and their shafts and the rhythm of the vaults above. The transept arms and the choir aisles remain invisible. All the way down the nave, the supports, lines, planes, and bay openings repeat themselves endlessly, enveloping you in a complex three-dimensional system of clearly demarcated lines and (less clearly expressed) planes that frame the repeated spaces of the bays. The faceted diagonals of the vault ribs above, and the sliding planes of the walls, whose locations are always changing from one level to the next, lend a dynamic, moving quality to the system. The system seems to envelop you completely, not only because you are surrounded by it, but also because of the **hypnotic effect engendered by the multiplicity of the elements, especially the linear elements, that compose it.**

This dynamic regularity prepares you for the eventual contrasting transformations of the opening spaces of the transept and the concentrated radially of the hemicycle. The experience of the nave serves to intensify the effect of what follows to the east. Bourges, without a transept, Beauvais, without a nave, and Poitiers, without a clerestory, must necessarily be experienced very differently from Amiens, Chartres, or Reims.

Let us now recreate the spatial experience of the path down the nave in some more detail. From the first (westernmost) bay the view east is laterally limited,

This rich sequence starts out by being cumulative; in the first bays you can carry the memory of the totality of what you have seen.

Eventually, however, these memories become too many to retain. They compress and overlap, creating a fusion of the experiences of repetition and transformation.

and the beholder seems drawn into the repetitive system (c). From the east side of this first bay the transept can barely be perceived; it is but a hint within the overall consistent frame of the nave and choir.

In the second bay the view of the transept closes down again. Then, from the forward area, the choir aisles begin to appear.¹⁷ In the third bay of the nave the transept and outer choir aisles become visible (d), and at the eastern edge of this bay, both outer bays of the transept and the east crossing piers are completely revealed.

From the fourth bay the beholder sees for the first time the bounding north and south walls of the transept façades, and hence the entire width of the cross axis. The transept clerestory and the space between the east and west crossing piers also become visible, that is, the transept becomes the potential equivalent of the nave. The converging spaces induce a sensation of being engulfed.

In the fifth bay the transept arms open up as a set of spaces aisles and main vessel, with constituent piers, arches, and walls (10e). The tops of the vaults are still hidden.

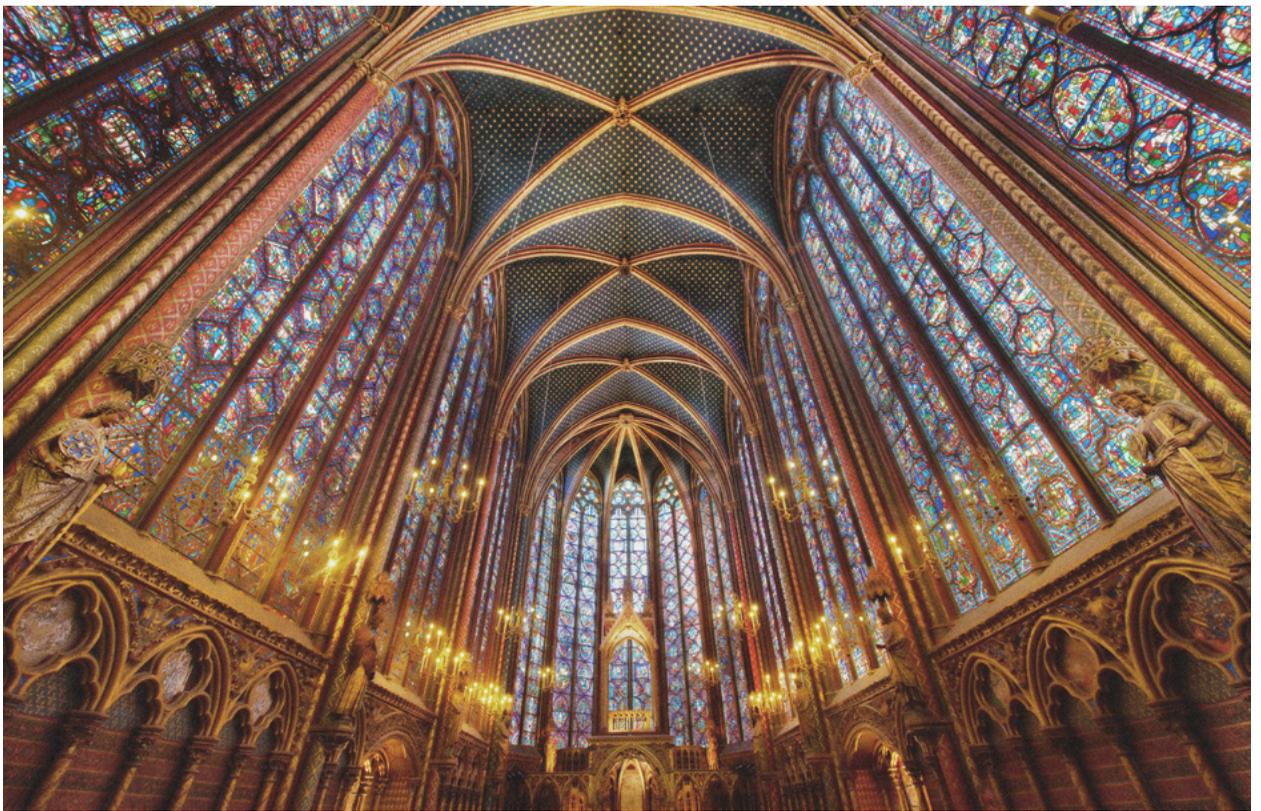
From the sixth bay, the penultimate one, the full set of transept spaces and choir aisles are visible. At the eastern edge of this area the full transverse rhythm of the transept piers comes into play. And finally the transept is experienced as the full equivalent of the nave, with all of its spaces and solids, and its vaults overhead. This bay of the nave was of particular significance in functional terms, since it was here that the clergy and people would assemble to listen to sermons.¹⁸

In the seventh and last bay you are still in the nave, but also in the transverse axis of the transept, since the ends of the west aisles of the transept arms are visible (10f). The aisles seem extremely open, partly because of the increased width of this bay, but mostly because they are three bays deep. Now the total spatial organization of the church seems clear, especially since the choir ahead has appeared the same throughout. But a new surprise appears: the choir aisles—a hall space without visible connection to the still mysterious set of spaces behind the hemicycle arcade. So the choir, until now the seemingly simple and well-understood beacon at the end of the approach axis, is now understood as having a complexity yet to be experienced.

The crossing bay is above all a great intersection of two colossal axes of space (10g). It subordinates and simplifies. The differences in the lengths of the axes are less important than the similarities in their cross sections and elevations.

The five colonnettes and the angles of the stepped bodies of the great crossing piers rise in a single sweep at the four corners of the central space (Fig. 17). Beyond the crossing piers open the biggest aisle bays of the cathedral—big not only because of their dimensions, but even more because they are seen across their diagonals and open out into the adjacent spaces. The crossing is thus, by far, the most open part of the church, not only because of the intersection of the four great spaces, but also because its base opens diagonally into the subordinate Ls formed by the aisles. The peripheral walls of these aisles were all punctuated by great windows, so the crossing is flooded with light from its surrounding spaces, lower as well as higher.

Our processional path down the nave has brought us into a new kind of reality that is progressively transformed. The initial extraordinary awareness of spatial expansion in three dimensions is transformed into the experience of the eastward leading tunnel, with its regularly repeated spatial units. The transformation of this regularity begins at an early point in the path eastward.



Sainte Chapelle. "Color Gradient."



Sainte Chapelle. "Color Gradient."

First perceived as potentially limitless, the transept spaces progressively reveal themselves. The culmination of the experience is reached in the penultimate and last bays with the realization of the identity of the transept and the nave (their spaces are the same in cross section) and the power of orthogonal transformation.

4.2

Stephen Murry and James Addiss
Plan and Space at Amiens Cathedral: With a
New Plan Draw by James Addiss

Rutial of the Light

The story of light in mediaeval places of worship makes it quite clear that its particular character was directly related to architectural form. In the classic Gothic cathedrals its quality, abundance and distribution contributed decisively to the design of the interior. Unfortunately Gothic light has rarely survived in its pure form, since the windows of most churches have lost their original decoration glazing or contain only fragments of the early glass. The effect is not the same when a thirteenth-century interior is filled with fourteenth- or fifteenth-century light, for Gothic light changed its style in the character of the colour.

If we want to understand the grandeur of cathedral light as it was known to the thirteenth century, we must first turn to Chartres, the sole instance of a High Gothic cathedral which still preserves the original light as a whole (with the exception of a few windows) from the period when the cathedral was built. Besides Chartres, the choirs of Beauvais, Le Mans and Bourges deserve mention. **They reveal, firstly, that Gothic light is not a “natural” light and, secondly, that this “unnaturalness”, when experienced in conjunction with the inspiring power of the architecture, becomes a “supernatural” light. The Gothic interior is bathed in a dark, reddish violet light, which has a mysterious quality difficult to describe, and which, in particular, does not come from a single source, seeming to fluctuate in its brightness according to the weather of the natural world outside, now swelling, now swelling, now receding, now filling the twilight colours with an unimaginable incandescence.** That this is not transparent light, but that the windows themselves are its source, has been stressed by Wolfgang Schöne, who describes the light of the stained glass windows as “combining an artificial light of their own developed to the highest possible intensity with colour developed to the highest possible intensity (darkness, brilliance, depth)”.¹

in some respects this light takes the place of architecture under certain conditions. Anybody who has seen Chartres Cathedral without its stained glass² – in a natural light, that is to say – will grasp this at once. The coloured light softens the sinewy lines of the architectural framework until it merges into a physical solid structure, in which architecture and coloured light make the containing sides of the lofty nave into a luminous wall. For, until Chartres was built, with its new design of clerestory, windows had never been extended to such a width to form panels of coloured light filling the entire wall. **With the coloured light acting as an essential element in the containment of space,** the mystical enchantment of the thirteenth-century interiors becomes and



Reims. "The Last Judgement." 1230

architectural expression, a feeling of having “overcome the world” of material things.

The importance of light in the design of the cathedral interior, so far as its real nature is concerned, is only partly understood. The “unnatural” Gothic light confronts us also with a pictorial world of the richest imagery, its silent power exercising enormous influence over mankind. But reference to this world of pictorial allegory and symbolism must be reserved for a special chapter.

4.3

Hans Jantzen
High Gothic : The Classic Cathedrals
of Chartres, Reims, Amiens

Sculpture as Supplementary Architecture

WE CANNOT fully comprehend a Gothic Cathedral without taking into consideration the imagery in the form of sculpture and stained glass, which constitutes an important ingredient of the architecture. With the sculpture, the object was not so much to enrich the architectural effect by decoration, although this requirement was also fulfilled, but to bear visible witness to the canons of Christian belief and to reflect the intellectual climate in which medieval men felt at home. The scope was nothing less than a general history of mankind with Our Lord as the central figure, man’s beginning and end as the twin poles of the story of his salvation, and a panoramic exposition of the entire religious life of the thirteenth century.

Not every Gothic cathedral succeeded in this dedicated task. But the three great classic cathedrals of France seem to have had inexhaustible resources in pictorial narrative. Chartres Cathedral alone has some 1,800 works of sculpture, and it is much the same at Reims and Amiens, so that we are offered a most remarkable view of the metaphysical fabric of the thirteenth century and of its attitude towards art, even when we confine ourselves exclusively to these three cathedrals.

This iconographical pageantry is subordinated to a strict and most carefully considered plan, both in subject matter and artistic treatment, which is not readily intelligible without some appreciation of its medieval genesis. Gothic, like all Christian art, uses the human figure to embody certain definite ideas, but develops in the process a language of its own and finds opportunities, in comparison with the early medieval period, of giving tangible expression to new factors. Gothic sculpture was closely and fundamentally related to architecture. It could not have existed without it, and had no place as an independent art, as it did in the classical age, or does today. The starting point for this alliance between sculpture and architecture was the portal, as indeed it had been in Romanesque days. Thus, in the classic cathedrals the entrance to the holy places is also an introduction to the world of religion symbolism and pageantry.