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Richard Krautheimer at the Institute of Fine Arts

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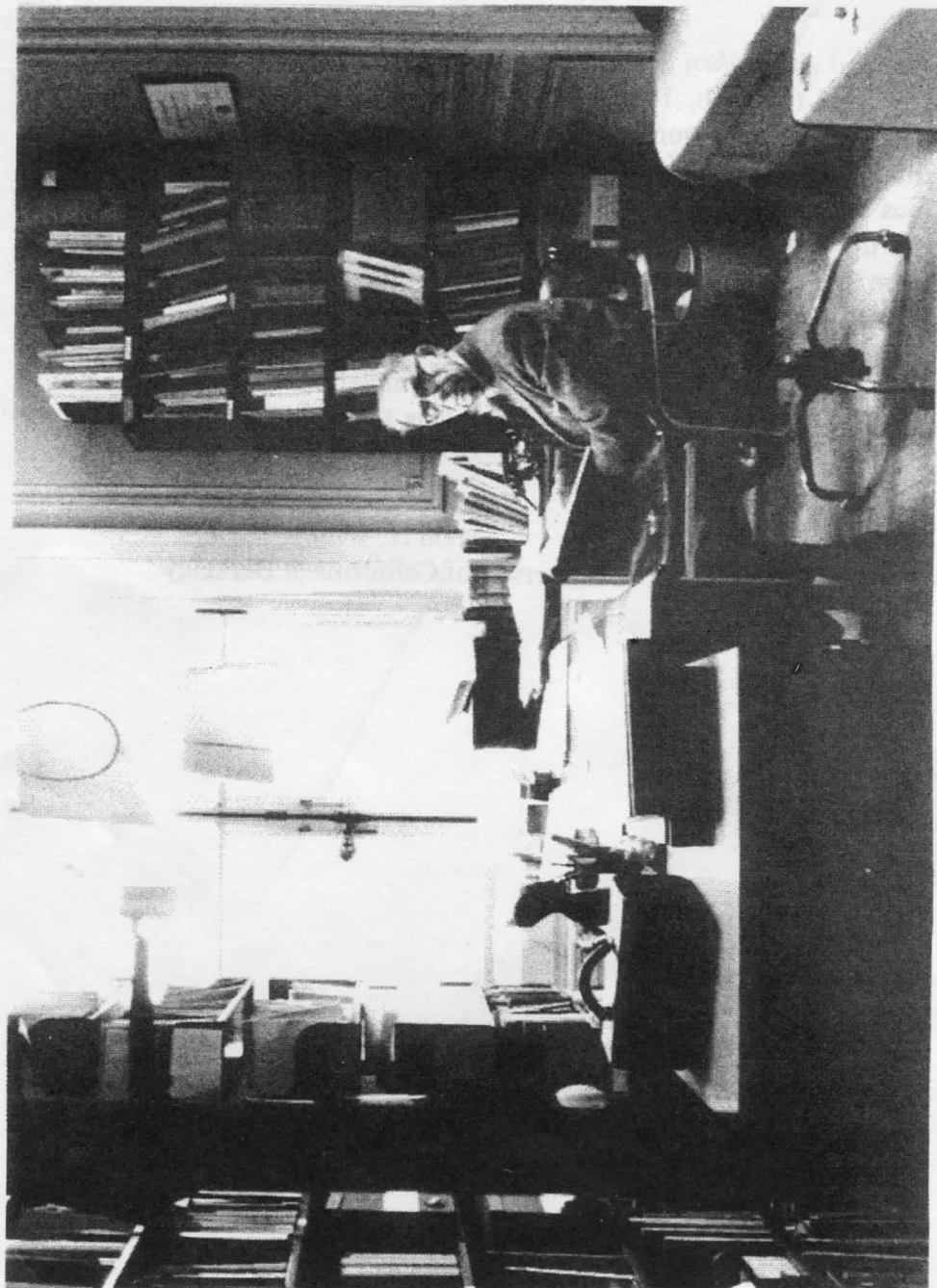
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2002



KRAUTHEIMER, RICHARD (1897-1994)

RESEARCH AT DUNDAS TORONTO
WILLIAM KYRIEL AND THE ORIGINAL PLAN FOR

DALE KINNEY

Richard Krautheimer at the Institute of Fine Arts

Richard Krautheimer was not really a Byzantinist, for all the weight of his contribution to that discipline; he was an architectural historian who taught and wrote about Byzantine architecture, as well as about early Christian, Carolingian, Renaissance, and Baroque. *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture* is just one of his twelve or so books, depending on how you count them, and very nearly his only publication on a strictly Byzantine topic.¹ *ECBA* (known to colleagues and students as "the Pelican") has been called "the single most comprehensive, reliable, and amply documented handbook of early Christian and Byzantine architecture, secular and ecclesiastical, covering the Latin West, the eastern Mediterranean, Armenia, Georgia, and Russia ... a staggering achievement in scholarship."² It is not my goal to elaborate on this judgement, nor to offer an historiographic account of the book's antecedents and impact; others

¹ See the bibliography in *Rome. Tradition, Innovation and Renewal. A Canadian Art History Conference 8-13 June 1987 Rome in honour of Richard Krautheimer ... and Leonard Boyle O.P....* (University of Victoria, 1991), 127-136. I am counting his dissertation, *Habilitationsschrift*, and the five separate volumes of the *Corpus Basilicarum Christianarum Romae*, but not his collected essays (1969), nor the three revisions of the Pelican, nor the multiple translations of *Rome. Profile of a City* (1980). Except for book reviews, Krautheimer's few other strictly Byzantine publications were mostly spin-offs from the Pelican, e.g., "Zu Konstantins Apostelkirche in Konstantinopel," in *Mullus. Festschrift Theodor Klauser* (1964); "A Note on Justinian's Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople," in *Mélanges Eugène Tisserant*, II,1 (1964); and "Die Decanneacubita in Konstantinopel. Ein kleiner Beitrag zur Frage Rom und Byzanz," in *Tortulae* (1966). See W. Eugene Kleinbauer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture; an annotated bibliography and historiography* (Boston, 1992), Nos. 1528/1627, 1529, 2546.

² Kleinbauer, *ibid.*, 78.

are considerably better qualified than I to do that.³ Rather I am taking another option offered by John Barker, to write of Richard Krautheimer as a teacher.

I will define "Byzantine" as Krautheimer did, as beginning with the reign of Justinian. What came before is early Christian (or late antique), a realm that Krautheimer controlled for fifty years. His contributions to the study of early Christian architecture have been definitive for several generations, but for the purposes of this paper, they belong to another field, contiguous with Byzantine but distinctive.⁴ "Byzantine" begins with Justinian and ends in 1453.

If one wanted to study this architecture in the U.S. in the 1950s and 1960s, almost the only place to do it was the Institute of Fine Arts of New York University, where Krautheimer had been teaching part-time - one course a year - since 1939 and full-time since 1952. There were Byzantinists in other art history departments - notably at Harvard and at Princeton - but generally speaking specialists in the figurative arts did not "do" architecture. Krautheimer's full-time appointment at the Institute coincided almost exactly with the invitation from Nicholas Pevsner, in 1953, to write the Pelican volume. By his own account, he commenced work on this volume by traveling to Greece and Turkey in 1954; he revisited Greece and Istanbul in the following years, and also went to Israel, Tunisia, and Spain.⁵ The intense mental work of correlating raw observations

³ See Kleinbauer, *ibid.*, cix-cxii; Cecil L. Striker, "Richard Krautheimer and the Study of Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture," in *In Memoriam Richard Krautheimer. Relazioni della giornata di studi, Roma, 20 febbraio 1995, Palazzo dei Conservatori, Sala dell'Ercole* (Rome, 1997), 27-40. I am indebted to Dr. Julian Kliemann for kindly sending me a copy of the latter publication.

⁴ On some of Krautheimer's early Christian contributions see my papers "The Church Basilica," forthcoming in *Acta ad Archaeologiam et Artium Historiam pertinentia, series altera*; and "Krautheimer's Constantine," forthcoming in *Ecclesiae urbis. Atti del Congresso Internazionale di Studi sulle Chiese di Roma (IV-X secolo)*.

⁵ Richard Krautheimer, "And Gladly Did he Learn and Gladly Teach," in *Rome. Tradition, Innovation* (as in n. 1), 117-118.

with bibliographic research and structuring the results must have been done chiefly in the late 1950s and early '60s, and this is when most of the future Byzantinists among his dissertation students began their training: Lee Striker, Tom Mathews, Jim Morganstern; only Slobodan Ćurčić came later.⁶ Gene Kleinbauer, though a student at Princeton, was another one inspired by Krautheimer during these years.⁷ The Pelican volume went to press in late 1963. By the time I arrived at the Institute in 1965, what would be the first of four editions had already been published.

The Institute of Fine Arts, located since the 1930s in the Fifth Avenue mansion of Paul Warburg, moved in 1958 to another mansion very near the Metropolitan Museum, the James B. Duke house.⁸ Designed by Horace Trumbauer for the "tobacco tycoon" around 1910, the Duke house is "an abstracted, overscaled version" of the eighteenth-century Château Labottier in Bordeaux.⁹ It is a

⁶ Cecil L. Striker, dissertation 1968 (*The Myrelaion (Bodrum Camii) in Istanbul* [Princeton, 1981]); Thomas Mathews, dissertation 1970 (*The Early Churches of Constantinople: Architecture and Liturgy* [University Park, PA and London], 1971); James Morganstern, dissertation 1973 (*The Byzantine Church at Dereagzi and its Decoration* [Tübingen, 1983]); Slobodan Ćurčić, dissertation 1975 (*Gračanica. King Milutin's Church and its Place in Late Byzantine Architecture* [University Park and London, 1979]). I am not counting other future Byzantinists who took courses with Krautheimer but wrote dissertations under Hugo Buchthal or later, Tom Mathews. James Morganstern's interest subsequently went west, and presently he is conducting a major study of the eleventh-century church at Jumièges.

⁷ Walter Eugene Kleinbauer, "The Aisled Tetraconch," Dissertation, Princeton University, 1967.

⁸ On the move see Craig Hugh Smyth, "Richard Krautheimer: The Institute of Fine Arts years," in *Rome. Tradition, Innovation* (as in n. 1), 78; Annabel Wharton, "Gender, Architecture, and Institutional Self-Presentation: The Case of Duke University," *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 90 (1991), 184 and 211, n. 13.

⁹ Robert A.M. Stern, Gregory Gilmartin and John Montague Massengale, *New York 1900. Metropolitan Architecture and Urbanism 1890-1915* (New York,

cold and haughty building, dominated by a cavernous marble vestibule overlooked by a sweeping grand stair. Lectures were given in a mirrored ballroom off the vestibule, seminars in a room adjoining it. The library was on the second floor, where the books were distributed by subject in studies installed in the majestic bedrooms. Faculty offices were mostly in the old servants' quarters on the third floor, while the Conservation Center and the slide room were in the basement. The only place a student could relax was in the relatively tiny first-floor kitchen tucked away below the grand stair. Every year a group of the especially hard-pressed, finishing their dissertations or studying for exams, ate both lunch and dinner there, in a nook under a tarnished replica of Guido Reni's *Aurora*.¹⁰ Lifelong friendships formed in that confined space.

In this setting of faux-European grandeur the largely echt-European faculty seemed at home, though some of them probably thought it rather silly. In 1965 the faculty were of three categories: the ancient, the old, and the young. The ancient were the likes of Walter Friedlaender, aged 92. They and the old were mostly German emigrés, forced out in the 1930s and snatched up by the Institute's then-director, Walter Cook.¹¹ The young were their American students, with a few outsiders trained at Yale or Princeton. The ancient and the young were impressive enough, but the old gave the place its overwhelming aura. Famous, accomplished, unfathomably knowledgeable, powerful far beyond the scene in New York, many of these men -- they were all men -- were still in, or in barely perceptible descent from, their prime. They included Erwin

1983), 339; the epithet "tobacco tycoon" is from John K. Winkler, *Tobacco Tycoon: the Story of James Buchanan Duke* (New York, 1942).

¹⁰ Much remains today as I describe it, although the Conservation Center has moved across the street, and the expansion of the library has caused an invasion of stacks into all parts of the house, domesticating the once formidable foyer.

¹¹ For this story see Colin Eisler, "Kunstgeschichte American Style: A Study in Migration," in *The Intellectual Migration. Europe and America, 1930-1960*, ed. Donald Fleming and Bernard Bailyn (Cambridge, MA, 1969), 569-575.

Panofsky, Peter von Blanckenhagen, Bernard Bothmer, Richard Ettinghausen, Peter Janson, Hugo Buchthal, and Richard Krautheimer, then in his sixty-ninth year. These eminences stalked, strode, or shuffled across the glistening foyer, often on their way to the unmarked, beautifully panelled elevator waiting discreetly at the foot of the grand stair (Krautheimer, however, climbed the steps). The atmosphere crackled with palpable emanations of greatness.

In this galaxy of strong personalities, Richard Krautheimer was a major constellation. The building filled with his presence, not least because of his well-known habit of loud soliloquy.¹² He talked to the card catalogue, to the books in the stacks, to himself, and, if you chanced to intersect his trajectory, to you. He occupied what must have been a prime office in the northeast corner of the second floor (Fig. 1).¹³ It was accessible via the Architecture study, which was, therefore, his anteroom. On his way through he would stop to notice what the students working there were reading, commenting *ad alta voce* on their choice of authorities or the pace of their work. If he addressed you directly the effect was daunting. He spoke emphatically and right at you. "Hmmm?" He expected a response. It did not have to be agreement - on the contrary, it was clear that he enjoyed a show of spirit - but it had to be cogent, or at least amusing. He did not seem very patient.

I did not meet him until the spring of 1967, when he offered concurrent courses on Byzantine architecture, a lecture course and a seminar. I signed up for both. Admission to seminars was by permission only, so a research assistant was dispatched to interview

¹² James Ackerman, "Richard Krautheimer: An Homage," in *Rome, Tradition, Innovation* (as in n. 1), 85; Christoph Liutpold Frommel, "Richard Krautheimer alla Bibliotheca Hertziana," in *In Memoriam* (as in n. 3), 127. The tale of Krautheimer singing in the library, located by Ackerman at Vassar, is also told of the Biblioteca Vaticana.

¹³ The photograph of Krautheimer in his office is from the archives of the Institute of Fine Arts. Thanks to Allen Ellenzweig for helping me to find it, and to James McCredie for permission to publish it.

me; this is how I met the now very eminent Patricia Waddy. Her questions revealed that I was not very well qualified: no prior study of architecture, no study of Byzantine history; however, having taken a six-week summer course at Hunter College, I claimed to read Greek. Dubiously, I'm sure, I was allowed to slip in. My first memory of Richard is from that seminar, poring over Procopius' description of Hagia Sophia.

Both courses met once a week for thirteen weeks. In the first session of the lecture course Krautheimer summarized Byzantine historiography from Petrus Gyllius through Ostrogorsky; history, commencing with the question, when does Byzantine history start?; and art history, including a list of periodicals to "keep an eye on": *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, *Byzantion*, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, *Archaiologikon Deltion*, the *Praktika tes Archaiologikes Hetairias*. Janin, van Millingen, Diehl, Ebersolt, Schneider, Millet, Strzygowski, Dalton, Bréhier, Wulff, Ward Perkins, MacDonald, and Kitzinger all were mentioned. One book was "not recommended": Michelis' *An Aesthetic Approach to Byzantine Art*, apparently because of an excessive preoccupation with "mystical symbolical qualities."¹⁴

The following four weeks treated Justinianic architecture, including an entire session on the Hagia Sophia. In weeks six and seven we transitioned into cross-domed churches, then in week eight into the "borderlands" of Armenia and Bulgaria. In week nine we arrived at Middle Byzantine, which continued for three more weeks. Late Byzantine merited a single, closing lecture; its architecture was "nothing great" and "less than exciting"; most of the creative energy came from Thessaloniki, and the "capital [became] a province of the provinces."

¹⁴ P.A. Michelis, *An Aesthetic Approach to Byzantine Art* (London, 1955). The author's "aesthetic approach" is subjective and unhistorical, qualities Krautheimer did not admit to scholarship. F.W. Deichmann panned the book as well, though he commended the author's "love [of the monuments] and enthusiasm"; *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 53 (1960) 146-149.

The structure of the course mirrored that of the second half of the Pelican, with an even more exaggerated tilt toward the first three centuries: roughly 61% of the course devoted to Justinianic architecture and its progeny and 31% to Middle Byzantine, versus 56%-33% in the book. Late Byzantine was all but ignored in both: 8% of the course, 11% of the book. Krautheimer had little sympathy for Palaeologan architecture, which he described as derivative, fussy, "nervous," over-decorated, precious. He especially disliked Mistra, a "Byzantine Williamsburg" with "second- or third-rate" buildings appealing only on account of their landscape setting. In his memoir he describes the disappointment of seeing it on a trip with his wife Trude, and Millard and Miggy Meiss: "a Greek Williamsburg, touristy and second-rate, and we nearly came to blows because I had insisted on the visit."¹⁵ I think he was suspicious of the buildings' small scale. Small size bespoke small ambition. As he expressed it in the Pelican: "never is Late Byzantine architecture monumental ... and never is it great."¹⁶ Krautheimer appreciated greatness.

The content of the lectures also closely resembled the Pelican, although the argument is clearer in the book. It is the book's colossal achievement to order hundreds or thousands of individual buildings on an integrated armature of chronology, typology, and geography, and to translate that multi-dimensional order into perfectly linear prose. The clarity of the armature was facilitated in the original edition by the relative paucity of illustrations; with some exceptions, there were at most three illustrations per building, often fewer and sometimes none. One could attend to the words. In the classroom the situation was different: in two hours, we could be shown well over a hundred slides, and the form and character of each building

¹⁵ Krautheimer, "And Gladly Did he Learn" (as in n. 5), 117.

¹⁶ Richard Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture* (Baltimore, 1965), 294. Cf. H. Hallensleben's tart objection to his "stiefmütterliche" treatment of this architecture: *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 66 (1973), 128. Krautheimer ultimately compensated for his bias by taking on S. Ćurčić as collaborator on the Pelican's fourth and final revision, published in 1986.

could be brought out. We were expected to look and to recognize each building if and when it appeared again. Like most lecture courses at the Institute, "Byzantine Architecture" aimed to provide us with a comprehensive visual repertoire of the objects embraced by the field. The importance of this aspect is evidenced by Krautheimer's final exam, which was dominated by tests of visual recall: drawing plans and longitudinal sections of four buildings; identifying slides of five buildings; dating five unidentified capitals by style. The demand to sketch plans and sections came as a total surprise, and many of us did poorly on that portion. "You draw like a child" was the unrelenting comment on one friend's exam.

There were other distractions from the taut economy of the armature, including value judgements and amusing asides. Krautheimer was given to quoting aphorisms attributed to Walter Friedlaender, many of which were not originally Friedlaender's at all; I later encountered one of them while reading Pliny. I think it was "no book is so bad you can't learn something from it," which I have repeated to my own students as, of course, coming from Krautheimer. Occasionally he offered dismissive assessments of buildings we might otherwise have thought all right; Sts. Sergius and Bacchus, for example, "doesn't click"; its plan is "askew" and there is a disappointing contrast between the "incredibly beautiful" carved ornament and the defective design. The design of the church at Daphni is marked by extreme simplification, "not to say poverty." At Nerezi a Constantinopolitan groundplan was "transformed in the most horrible way."

Rarely there was a methodological exposition, notably the review of opinions on the origin of Hagia Sophia and its cognates in week four. Strzygowski, Rivoira, Andreades, Sedlmayr, Weigand, Grabar, Ward-Perkins; all had different theories because all looked to different aspects of the buildings as explanatory. Krautheimer's solution was that all of these opinions could be partially correct, because structure, design, and function need not all be traced to the same origin or source. He expressed special appreciation for Grabar's innovation of looking for the functional associations of

certain types of groundplans; this enabled his own postulation of a "palace-church type" represented by the double-shell design in tetraconchs, the Antioch Octagon, San Vitale, and Hagia Sophia.¹⁷

It was a shock to me to read that in the late 1950s Krautheimer refused to meet a student of Sedlmayr because of his moral and political repugnance for the teacher.¹⁸ Ten years later biography, including autobiography, was never a factor in his classroom; then, at least, he believed in the possibility of scholarly detachment. Implicitly, never explicitly, we were taught that historical inquiry should and could be disinterested, driven by empirical study rather than by ideological conviction. Sedlmayr's observations, if verifiable, were no less useful than Grabar's. I think that this attitude explains, in part, Krautheimer's own untroubled forty-year collaboration with the archaeologists of the Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia Cristiana, obviously driven by ideological motives unlike his own, with whom he felt he shared an ability to bracket such biases in the pursuit of archaeological truth. By the time I was finishing my dissertation, postmodernism had appeared to denigrate objectivity (as well as truth) as an impossible goal, symptomatic of willful or naive ignorance of the historical and political imbeddedness of all conceptual formulations. Krautheimer had no truck with such philosophizing. He was quite aware of situational determinants; witness the musing at the end of the Pelican volume on why the precious surface and spatial effects of Palaeologan buildings, so admired by nineteenth-century scholars, failed to convince him ("obviously these qualities have less meaning to a generation which grew up with Le Corbusier and the Bauhaus"). He acknowledged

¹⁷ The idea that the Antioch Octagon should be classed with sixth-century examples of the "palace-church" type was first published by a student at the Institute, working under Krautheimer's aegis in the early 1960s; Kleinbauer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture* (as in n. 1), No. 1000/2065. Deichmann and Cyril Mango both hotly opposed the concept; Kleinbauer, Nos. 2064, 2067.

¹⁸ Frommel, "Richard Krautheimer" (as in n. 12), 120-121; cf. Krautheimer, "And Gladly Did he Learn" (as in n. 5), 111.

that historical truth could never be recaptured ("... possibly because of the visual habits thus engendered, we now underrate the quality of Late Byzantine architectural design").¹⁹ But to his mind, the fact that a goal seemed impossible was no reason not to attempt it. I think we absorbed the moral lesson that as historians, it is better to try to transcend our situatedness than to dwell in it.

Transcendence was not, as the word may now imply, a matter of transhistorical levitation. It was constructed, a mental bridge between what is directly accessible by experience and observation and what can only be proposed by interpretation and imagination. His distinctive approach can be illustrated by comparing the description of Hagia Sophia written for the Pelican - very like the one we heard in class - with those found in earlier publications by Kenneth John Conant and William MacDonald, of 1942 and 1962 respectively. All three present essentially the same understanding of the building, as a brilliantly simple design in which a virtually independent structural core is surrounded by subsidiary spaces to create mysteriously complex effects. But Conant's structural description is hard to follow, partly because it is not keyed to any particular illustrations; and his spatial analysis is a celebration of the catenary curve:

In both the original and the later construction [i.e., before and after 558, when the first dome collapsed] approximate catenary curves were used, due to oriental influence received through Syria, and doubtless to the fact that Anthemius was a theoretician aware that the catenary is the perfect form of arch, the only one free of internal stress in the arch ring, and consequently capable of greater strength with less material ... The catenary appears in the underground Mystery Temple outside the Porta Maggiore at Rome ... but remains very unusual in Roman work owing to the prestige of Greek

¹⁹ Krautheimer, *Early Christian & Byzantine Architecture* (as in n. 16), 293.

forms. Periods of breakdown or contamination of classicism give it its opportunity.²⁰

MacDonald's spatial description is ekphrastic:

The interior achieves an unequalled effect of majestic weightlessness and profound harmony through a paradoxical, even contradictory apposition of architectural phrasing ... The observer standing on the marble pavement of the nave is under the immediate influence of the horizontal plane of the longitudinal axis: a hundred and eighty-five feet above him soars the canopy of the dome. Between these two areas is a transitional space which belongs to both. The satellite half-domes of the middle level are axially connected, while their spreading surfaces and the adjacent pendentives are harmonic to the central vault above. The floated in-between world which these shapes suggest more than form is the key to the inseparable simultaneous operation of both axes.²¹

Krautheimer was not trained as an architect, as was Conant; he approached buildings as an archaeologist and an historian. His long account of Hagia Sophia begins with history, including structural history, proceeds to the "bold but simple" geometry and physics of the system, and climaxes in a description of the interior effects couched, like MacDonald's, in terms of an imagined observer:

... Within the inner shell, both the spatial volumes and their sequence are all intelligible. But beyond this core, space remains enigmatic to the beholder who is restricted to the nave. The form and interplay of spatial shapes is first established, then denied... The piers are massive enough if seen from the aisles; but they are not meant to be seen. Their bulk is denied by their marble sheathing...

²⁰ Kenneth John Conant, *A Brief Commentary on Early Mediaeval Church Architecture, With Especial Reference to Lost Monuments* (Baltimore, 1942), 14-15.

²¹ William L. MacDonald, *Early Christian & Byzantine Architecture* (New York, 1962), 35-36.

... Seen from the aisles and galleries, the nave remained always half-hidden behind screens of columns ... Curtains hanging between the columns provided a further screen. Hence the nave, from the aisles and galleries, presents itself only in fragments. Parts of the main dome, parts of the half-dome, parts of the concave conchs or straight arcades, parts of piers are seen by the beholder, who is never allowed to understand the whole design of the nave, or indeed, of the building. In short, the beholder relegated to aisles and galleries sees the nave, but is denied its intelligibility.²²

Krautheimer's description, with its guiding principle of "statement and denial," is based on Procopius, that is, as an historian would naturally do it, on a primary source. But the source has been doubly translated, linguistically and rhetorically: into English, and out of Procopius' elliptical and florid style. Krautheimer's own style in English was artfully transparent. He wrote what seems to be plain English, "plain" in the sense that applies to prose like that of the brilliant American anthropologist Clifford Geertz: meticulously crafted but jargon-free, unlabored, giving the impression of orality and spontaneity without the awkwardness or banality of real speech.²³ Krautheimer would not have written, as MacDonald did, "an energizing heliophany plays through the coronas of windows, adding a final visual and spiritual dimension"; "heliophany" is far too *recherché*.²⁴

Nor would he have written that the central structural baldachin of Hagia Sophia and other buildings "expressed in its forms the domical image of heaven and the ancient canopied symbol of divine

²² Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture* (as in n. 16), 157-158.

²³ For his pleasure in the clarity of English see himself, "And Gladly Did he Learn" (as in n. 5), 104.

²⁴ MacDonald, *Early Christian & Byzantine* (as in n. 21), 36.

approval..."²⁵ It is not that the inventor of the "iconography of architecture" doubted the reality or importance of architectural symbolism, but he considered symbolism to be a culturally specific investment in a neutral form. In week seven of the course, summarizing developments of the seventh and eighth centuries, symbolism was introduced as an innovation of the period, with reference to the Syriac hymn on the cathedral of Edessa and the writings of pseudo-Dionysios, Maximos the Confessor, and the Patriarch Germanos. The notion that the dome or any other form was essentially or intrinsically symbolic never arose. Ethnic and racial essentialism were equally beyond the pale. Conant's claim that Hagia Sophia represents "a rare and perfect combination of Roman largeness with Greek inventiveness and subtlety, touched with oriental enchantment" sounds vaguely lunatic to anyone trained in Krautheimer's contextual approach.²⁶

Contextualism did not entail or authorize impersonation. Krautheimer's Procopian observer, reconstituted in plain English in the lecture hall or on the page, was entirely anachronistic. Neither a Byzantine panegyrist nor neo-platonic cleric, he was a projection of the twentieth-century rational pragmatist. It would be naive to suppose that this projection was not deliberate. The Krautheimerian historian's account of Hagia Sophia is not a repetition of historical sources but a colloquial translation, into an idiom as comfortable for the translator as for his audience. Despite its individuality, there is little that is strictly personal. A striking feature of Krautheimer's descriptive language -- unusual among writers who deal with perceptual intangibles like space -- is that it nearly lacks a psychological dimension. Presumably, he decided to project only the least subjective aspects of his thinking. Perhaps this explains why his work so easily became and remains normative, and why it

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 33.

²⁶ Conant, *A Brief Commentary* (as in n. 20), 13. On the contextual approach see Ackerman, "Richard Krautheimer" (as in n. 12), 81-91; *idem*, "Richard Krautheimer's 'Method'," in *In Memoriam* (as in n. 3), 67-71.

has such extensive cross-over utility for scholars in other disciplines and other fields.

So much, then, for the lectures. The seminar was different; the safe spectatorial distance of the lecture hall was unavailable, and we were engaged at very close range. For a novice it required steeling. Krautheimer was direct. Comments ventured without sufficient authority or reasoning were subject to unmitigated public correction. But he was also genial. He laughed, and sometimes guffawed. The combination of energy, rigor, frankness, and warmth was irresistible. He claimed that he was attracted to his own teacher, Paul Frankl, as much by his personality as by the subject he taught, and I think that many of us similarly were drawn to Krautheimer.²⁷ It was instantly clear that no moment spent in his company could be dull; uncomfortable surely, intimidating almost always, chastening on occasion, but also hilarious, instructive, and inspiring. In his touching obituary, John Mitchell wrote that Krautheimer "loved company, particularly that of the young, the intelligent and the lively."²⁸ That is exactly right. While we were not really "company" in the seminar, it was clear that he enjoyed the conversation. He loved the topic. He loved the discipline. He loved life.

The seminar was loosely controlled. Although it was announced that the subject would be Justinianic standard building -- the churches outside the family of "double-shells" like Hagia Sophia -- it dealt mostly with Hagia Sophia itself and with buildings of a later generation, the "cross-domed churches" of the Pelican's chapter 12. Krautheimer suspected that the type might have originated in the Justinianic era. The buildings offered as topics for our reports were Hagia Sophia in Thessaloniki, St. Clement in Ankara, Dere Ağzı, the Koimesis church in Nicaea, and Hagia Eirene.²⁹ Many of the reports

²⁷ Krautheimer, "And Gladly Did he Learn" (as in n. 5), 94.

²⁸ John Mitchell, "Rome, sweet Rome," *The Guardian*, 26 November 1994.

²⁹ Little was known at the time of the related buildings at Sige and Vize; see Kleinbauer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture* (as in n. 1), Nos. 1296 and 1301. The church at Sige was imperfectly integrated into the discussion of the

spanned two weeks, and Krautheimer himself took charge of only the two initial sessions on Hagia Sophia in Constantinople. We spent most of these four hours struggling to interpret primary sources. I still have my careful transcriptions from Agathias, Malalas, and Evagrius, with interlinear translations of nearly every word. Some might have said that after only six weeks of formal study my Greek could not have been up to this task, but the approach to languages throughout the Institute was pragmatic; you learn by doing.³⁰

The point was not to produce philologists in any case, but to give us real historical work and the experience of real research. Reading sources in translation was not considered real research. Summarizing secondary literature was not research. Research went right to the evidence. All of the buildings given as topics posed unresolved problems, mostly of date, usually answerable, if at all, by physical examination. We could not inspect them in person, but we could pore over every published photograph, read every published archaeological report, study every architect's graphic analysis. And we could reason our way to a conclusion.

The defining moment of the seminar for me occurred early on, when I was required to go to Krautheimer's office to discuss my topic, Hagia Sophia in Thessaloniki. I cannot remember what I expected from this visit, perhaps additional bibliography or suggestions on how to proceed. Instead, he went to a filing cabinet, opened a drawer, removed a folder and gave it to me, telling me to copy what I needed and bring it back. That file made an indelible impression. Everything in it was raw material, personal,

cross-domed type in later editions of the Pelican: *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*, revised by Richard Krautheimer and Slododan Ćurčić (New York, 1986), 288-289. Vize is mentioned only in passing: *ibid.*, p. 423.

³⁰ Colin Eisler's advice on reading bibliography in Dutch was to "read fast and pretend it's German;" it often works. Compare Ackerman's account of learning Spanish: "the term was twelve weeks long, which allowed six weeks for learning Spanish, and six for doing the paper" ("Richard Krautheimer" [as in n. 12], 85).

irreplaceable raw material, including notes and sketches made *in situ* on that study trip in 1954, tables comparing the masonry of related churches, photographs made in 1932, in short, everything he knew about the building. The implication was that I should, and could, take it from there. This episode alone explains why Krautheimer was such an extraordinary teacher. From the beginning he treated each of us as if we might go farther than he had on the road of research, and he sent us off with every provision he could supply.

Except a map. At no point in the seminar did we reflect on how to do what we were doing. Method was not a subject of analysis; "theory" was not a word we used. Much later Krautheimer would write that he had always "shunned art theory, basic principles, and methodologies. As I see it there is no *one* method for approaching the history of art."³¹ The method should always be *ad hoc*, adapted to, or even deduced from, the problem. In a pithy summation, James Ackerman called this approach "inspired empiricism."³² Inspired empiricism is what Krautheimer expected of us as well, although he did not say so. The seminar's research exercises were designed to show us how to be empirical, but even Krautheimer could not teach inspiration. Those of us who had it, or seemed to, were successful, sometimes without really understanding why.

Atheoretical empiricism was not a peculiarity of Krautheimer; it was the mode throughout the Institute of Fine Arts in the 1960s, as it had been for decades.³³ The "crisis" of art history being bruited in other circles - even other circles in New York - was not felt there until much later.³⁴ As a new Ph.D. it was disconcerting to emerge into the professional climate of the mid-1970s and discover that

³¹ Krautheimer, "And Gladly Did he Learn" (as in n. 5), 123.

³² Ackerman, "Richard Krautheimer's 'Method'" (as in n. 26), 71.

³³ Colin Eisler's description of a largely atheoretical discipline, written in the later '60s, seems to pertain more to the Institute than to art history as a whole: "*Kunstgeschichte American Style*" (as in n. 11), 605.

³⁴ The crisis was institutionalized in 1982 with a special issue of the *Art Journal*, which is published by the College Art Association; see the following note.

"empirical," often linked with "positivist," was a pejorative. Monographs were no longer "interesting," and the questions we had been so rigorously trained to answer - who? what? where? when? how? - turned out to be suspect habits of an unexamined ideology.³⁵ Krautheimer, by then living in Rome and composing what would become the century's greatest book about that city, was untouched by this development.³⁶ Many of us followed his lead and kept doing the kind of work we knew we could do well, regardless of whether or not it was in fashion.

In retrospect, however, it seems that a little theory might have brightened the picture. Suppose that in the seminar, in addition to Agathias and Evagrius, we had read George Kubler's *The Shape of Time*.³⁷ It disrupts every one of the Pelican's structuring concepts: chronology, typology, and geography. Krautheimer, who once told me that he liked always to be at work on two different kinds of project simultaneously: something like the *Corpus basilicarum* (viz., something empirical) that he could do at night when he was tired, and something involving ideas, should not have objected in principle to combining Kubler with Agathias. He would not have done it, however, not because he thought Kubler's work too speculative (as I suspect he did), but because he would have considered *The Shape of Time* the sort of thing we could read on our own. If we were spending all of our time on Agathias, well, that was our choice.

Sometime after I had given my seminar report, Krautheimer remarked that Hagia Sophia in Thessaloniki could be the topic of a dissertation. This oblique invitation was an honor, which -- although I had not previously had any thought of specializing in architecture --

³⁵ Eisler, "Kunstgeschichte American Style" (as in n. 11), 605; Henri Zerner, "Editor's Statement: The Crisis in the Discipline," *Art Journal* 42 (1982), 279.

³⁶ Richard Krautheimer, *Rome. Profile of a City*, 312-1308 (Princeton, 1980).

³⁷ George Kubler, *The Shape of Time. Remarks on the History of Things* (New Haven and London, 1962).

I had the wit to accept.³⁸ Subsequently he steered me to a different topic, Santa Maria in Trastevere in Rome, which was much better suited to my skills.³⁹ Like a number of other dissertations, mine was finished by correspondence after Krautheimer retired to Rome in 1971. When I began teaching in 1972 and could write only during the summers, Krautheimer readily invited me to send my drafts to his resort address in Flims. He read at once whatever I could send him, returning by almost the next mail long lists of skeptical queries and corrections. When I was put under an implacable deadline to finish by September 1975 he worked even faster, not without comment but certainly without complaint. And when his job was done, in August 1975, I received a letter that concluded: "I've had fun reading these final chapters, as I have had fun reading the previous one and altogether working with you ... all these years. Thank you."

With the file on Hagia Sophia, this letter exemplifies the essential and extraordinary character of Richard Krautheimer the teacher. He was an immensely busy, enormously productive, powerful, and influential man. He did not have a small ego. And yet he never felt himself too grand to do the grunt work of scholarship and teaching. He clambered in the dirt of excavations, trolled the stacks of

³⁸ It was said that, looking toward retirement four years ahead, Krautheimer was not accepting new advisees, but he also took on Charles McClendon even later (dissertation 1978; *The Imperial Abbey of Farfa. Architectural Currents of the Early Middle Ages* [New Haven and London, 1987]). In retirement Krautheimer had several more generations of protégés in Rome; see their impressive "Kinderfestschrift": *Pratum Romanum. Richard Krautheimer zum 100. Geburtstag*, ed. Renate L. Colella, Meredith J. Gill, Lawrence A. Jenkins, and Petra Lamers (Wiesbaden, 1997).

³⁹ Eventually there was a dissertation on Hagia Sophia in Thessaloniki, written by a Greek student, which confirmed Krautheimer's suspicion by pushing back its origin almost to Justinian; Kleinbauer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture* (as in n. 1), No. 1308. Some of her conclusions have been debated by Slobodan Ćurčić, *Some Observations and Questions Regarding Early Christian Architecture in Thessaloniki* (Thessaloniki, 2000) 18-22.

libraries, continually revised his classroom lectures, and gave up his vacations to read imperfect dissertations and to hand-write multiple pages of advice. By patient explanation and correction he brought ignorant young people like me to a state of reasonable competence in a difficult field of research. He led or pushed us to a point at which we could have a voice in debates that had been going on, in some instances, for hundreds of years. And then, incredibly, he thanked us.

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