

SOMETIMES AND ALWAYS, WITH MIXED FEELINGS

Untimely Notes on a Culture of Silence

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The Culture of Silence, Architecture's Fifth Dimension

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May God prevent us from becoming 'right-thinking men' -
that is to say men who agree perfectly with their own police.

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Prologue

IGNORANCE & ARCHITECTURE

Jos on taipumuksia, ei pida taipua.

Sakari Tohka

In Latin the phrase *ignoratio elenchi* indicates a fallacy that consists in disproving or proving something different from what is strictly in question. This essay, *Sometimes and Always*, began from an eleventh-hour request for a contribution to a set of essays called *The Culture of Silence*. I received a telephone call from Texas one early Spring evening in North Wales.

Someone hasn't come up with the goods I was told. Could you oblige? A short paper, something about silence. You know, the way silence is used in architecture. I am sure you can do it.

When do you want it? I asked.

Yesterday.

Is there any remuneration? I stuttered.

Well, we'll see if we can get you a free copy.

I obliged to help out this colleague. And I obliged with what I saw merely as a working essay, a way to put some ideas that need not, could not, ever be complete. Given the ridiculously short time and the ridiculously huge subject I deliberately opted for a way of writing and a structure that could include 'ignorance'.

I felt it necessary to use my own ignorance, or distortions if one prefers, to explore this notion of silence and architecture. I knew that I would have to use 'generalization' if I was to explore in any reasonable way how 'silence' could be transformed architecturally. Not only was I not sure what a literal representation of silence could be, I couldn't see how it was translated into an architectural culture. Was this 'silence' a hoax carried out by (Finnish) Rationalists and Mystics hoping to reach via this silence, the essence of architecture?

As I set to work, reading furiously, thinking even more furiously, I began to set out reasons for opening to what I interpreted as the Official Archive in Finnish Architecture. To me, though I didn't know why or how, it seemed closed. To most visitors it appears open and flexible; to most within the country, the opposite seems true. It is and has been closed and controlled for many years, possibly since the 1950s. Some say for the whole century.

With this in mind it seemed essential to get beyond all the accepted opinions, the conventional interpretations and the readily available promotional material. I cannot say when this became apparent but somewhere along the way I realized that though I thought I was preparing notes on silence, I was trying to prove something else. I was miming another sort of knowledge completely. And though I remained aware of the theme of silence, I was clearly guilty of *ignoratio elenchi*.

To prompt this untidy haste, I had been 'randomly' helped. To mime a knowledge which I didn't much care for, I had come across the sketchbooks of the well-known, highly influential Finnish architect and thinker Aulis Blomstedt. These consisted of well-kept, collaged, pasted and ordered architectural journals, notebooks and sketchbooks. As these were in the possession of one of his sons (whom I visited by accident after receiving this telephone call) the journals and sketchbooks in question were obviously of a more personal nature.

So, I had the subject. Or could invent the subject.

Later I was to learn that the other notebooks of this architect, and there were over a hundred of them, were currently in the archives at the *Museum of Finnish Architecture*. Upon seeing the richness of these private journals, I immediately jumped to the conclusion that something had been left out of the history and research in Finnish architecture. I made assumptions which I knew I could or would prove, possibly disingenuously. I felt that this archive had for some reasons - which I was eventually to ponder on - been purposely left aside.

As I continued gathering material for my own thesis on silence, I was making assertions which clearly stemmed not only from my own ignorance. I felt the ignorance of a culture's own 'archive'. But fascinated by this ignorance I could not afford to be complacent about it. It was obvious; ignorance would need some serious structuring if it was to take on inaccuracy. Questions rushed by: Were these notebooks really part of a lost archive? Had the critical history of post-war Finnish Architecture gone on being interpreted without the information and insights embedded in this 'lost' archive? If this was true what of all the other material, notebooks and secret histories of the lives of architects had also gone unrevealed?

Upon hearing that these notebooks had in fact been available for almost 20 years, I was surprised that no serious research had been carried out. I knew one or two essays had been written on this Finnish architect.

I knew that some of the reputed foreign critics of Finnish architecture who had written their own critical histories had made mention to this architect, Aulis Blomstedt. But a sort of lip service was paid to his influence. His obsessiveness and his perfectionism, his harmonic and geometric studies of architecture were clearly useful to any architect wishing to appear rational and objective.

Or so I thought! Other things began to nag at me. This architect may have been a lost talent, a quiet hero, but we knew so little in depth of this obsession, this perfectionism. Was it really the case that if architects so rarely ever retire, they have little time for writing and even less time for monitoring their own lives? Lives we assume to be full of decisions about architecture or life. Was this the clue? Architecture or life itself?

Aulis Blomstedt's status as the so-called 'Rationalist' Godfather of Finnish architecture, and one-time devil's advocate to Alvar Aalto, has over the years since his death in 1979 taken on generalisation after generalisation. The looseness of aphorism and information, the lack of interest and intellectual solidity, the easy phenomenological erring have allowed versions of "Blomstedt" to script the 'silence' of many of the reputed leaders in Finnish architecture at the end of the 20th Century.

Blomstedt's mixed discourse, his stress on harmony and proportion, on the essence of architecture, on urbanism and the relationships between man and nature, architecture, art and landscape, and above all his wandering excursion into theory and its 'contest' seems to have been reduced devastatingly to serve a simple thesis. This thesis is about lucidity and clarity. With consistent distortion and tautologies, his own deep concerns and confusions have been lifted and used in a privileged manner as a reductive discourse on and about 'silence'.

As I progressed to explore 'silence' I began to understand this 'blindness' and 'ignorance.' What follows then are a series of small essays which are an invitation to the reader to trace how 'ignorance' and 'desire' conditions the personal, chooses architecture over life, scripts critical writing and revises interpretations of history. In other words, Finnish architecture is an infinite game. We then have to ask if the Archive can open up to the silence that so often closes it.

Preamble

*horrifying, the immutability
of the world, it is here,
only we move*

Paavo Haavikko ¹

This is an essay – an essay on the move if you like- that explores the notion of *silence* in a society and the ways it appears to be translated, often misleadingly, into culture; in this case, Finnish Architecture. In these working notes I set out reasons for opening up the Official Archive in Finnish Architecture, reasons for going further than the accepted opinions and institutional material often deservedly researched and commented upon by outsiders. Silence invites tranquillity, a cliché yes, but then it can begin to perform for that cliché. Silence also sets up continuous resistance to its own limit; in this case it can become censorship.

The extremity or 'strangeness' of the narrative that follows, the apparent divergence from accepted opinion and research in this field in Finland is, however, not explained by exaggeration. Considering it wayward, exaggerated or plainly wrong merely reflects the settled convention. It might be that in some societies silence invites an extremist mood, even a structured neutrality. But it also asks, of its own nation, an obedience! Up to a limit the notion of silence expects loyalty. Beyond this limit, it invites us to reveal repression. Silence then outdoes itself.

Finnish Architecture has long been tied to fascination and generalisation from outside; its status defined and promoted by a variety of respected international scholars.² Some of these scholars spend more time than others within the society. Some of them rely on the 'Official Archive' of received opinion more than others. Some use these opinions to re-script other agendas that have nothing much to do with the country. That said, many of these critical narratives are brilliant and demonstrate the never-ending oscillations between truths of history, and our critical schemata for writing history out.³

None of this necessarily impoverishes critical insight but over the last two decades in the 20th Century it has begun to ensure continued generalisations which begin to undermine the archive 'back home' so to speak. If we can highlight this, we might also observe how architectural history might, in some way be closer to Edmond Jabes than Manfredo Tafuri and become "a paltry history of mere vengeance".

"Now the book, carried by the enthusiasm of a few," Jabes continues, "triumphs over ignorance or manifest hostility; now the reader, turning to new and closer works, wipes out a sometimes, burdensome past."⁴ At home, within the society, the status of Finnish Architecture has often been artificially tied to the privilege and authority of these international commentators. Where scholarship occurs as a relationship (if any) to foreign work and comment, it is thorough, meticulous, occasionally sycophantic but more often isolated.

There are rare exceptions, but too often Finnish research can be isolated by language and experience, by reference and limit. Invariably this produces an introverted Archive tending to be descriptive and static. Critical generosity is necessarily then a lost art. There can be little rebound, no inter-criticality.

Why is this the case? Known as a quiet society, a society which finds debate 'unnatural' will clearly not encourage debate. Further the culture will find debate difficult to structure in its Academy. The Archive is then likely to continue along an isolated and self-isolating path. It will naturally choose the commentators that present their case, their cause, in the best light. Whatever 'their' cause or case is!

A nationalistic pathos can result from this. It can take over as if causes are coherent, singular and accepted unequivocally by the society in general. This is a narrowing which damages the Academy and the Archive. Generalisation rules insight, chamber of commerce rhetoric supervises promise and public relations become private relations.

That the Finnish society has found itself severely questioning the role of architects and architecture over the last 20 years is true. This questioning is true almost all over the world. But it is not because the world has privileged a 'romantic', 'organic', 'personal expression' over a more rational, academic picture (that is a separate seduction and failing entirely). It is not because a 'collective loss of faith' has been further dented by Post-Modernism and Deconstruction. Nor can we blame those persistent misreadings that only talented margins achieve as time is warped and critical tradition closed even further.

To approach these and other questions, it is to a deeper critique of 'silence' itself that we must turn, however erringly, however waywardly. Knowing what we do now about the manipulated histories and theories of architecture of the 20th Century, to fit up the century as a version of this or that 'episteme' is relatively easy given the references one calls upon, the material one edits and the limits one accepts. A reproach to nostalgia, a refuge, a moral urgency makes uneasy a single, clear, unquestioned and shared symbolic register. To remain silent in the face of this would of course also confirm the unquestioned and leave the Archive unchallenged.

Somewhere in the world, it may transpire that a contemporary moment in all its thrill and messiness is thankfully 'unmoving' for the moment or then it is mute. This rarely happens; stillness has been removed by 20th century hysteria, and muteness is something we only have on the remote button.

We assess 'silence' and its ambiguity in relation to architecture. This allows us to consider the *Shadowlands* and later how the *official archive* has used Aulis Blomstedt to construct its legitimacy and narrate a self-feeding and confirming architectural strategy. We also later approach the journals of Aulis Blomstedt as a way to test whether there is any truth in the reductive notions of 'silence' within his work. We finally go beyond this archive to explore briefly, Blomstedt's own life.

In all this we ask ultimately if this a lost archive of some value especially as we begin to notice the traces of piety and tragedy about Blomstedt's life where indeed architecture may ultimately have had no choice but to obsessively overwhelm life itself. We begin with some preliminary, contemporary, possibly faltering, observations about the notion(s) of silence in the society under the theme *Shadowlands*.

In *The Archive Strikes Back*, we set out a response to this where I suggest the Archive in Finnish Architecture would do itself a critical favour if it went about a deeper analysis of 'soft' (velvet) censorship, generalisation and its public-private relations. To do this I attempt a sketch, a provocative re-assessment of the status (public and private) of Blomstedt (1906-1979). Generalisations are re-interpreted, a re-appraisal suggested.

Necessarily a sketch, it will suffice here to make some indications as to how the constructed legend of Finnish Architecture and its ensuing Official Archive might strike back at loose interpretations of what has become accepted, under various terminology, as the Silent School, the Minimalist or Rationalist venture, the Cool School, the Helsinki School, the Miesian strain or Rationalist School. The Neutral school? How much of the theoretical spine of a contemporary 'rationalism' (and silence) can be traced back to Aulis Blomstedt?

Does 'silence', this refined and reduced version of a minor Modernism, hold within it and within architecture the encoded development, temperament and maturity of the Finnish society as some commentators claim? Put another way: how wide is this notion of silence as a cultural discourse? With what consistency can 'silence' be translated into a tradition in architecture? And how much of this cultivated silence has been 'lifted' without due acknowledgment of Blomstedt's work?

Big Questions certainly! The Little Prince would say. However, before we attempt to begin a sketch of this self-journey, we need to understand 'silence' and the civilized notions we try to make of it in our generalized chatter and research. "Once it has been expressed, the most savage thought," the Polish writer and philosopher Witold Gombrowicz claims not without reason, "civilises itself a hundred times faster than one can imagine."

Part One

SHADOWLANDS - an Archive of Silence

When the rest of the world has retreated, when the rest of the world has used and abused literary philosophy and aesthetic theory to test strategies of keeping sane if not quiet, when literature has gone from exhaustion to excess to interactivity via *Microserfs*, when CDROMs are so linear as to cancel their own invention, when various theories cusp and fold themselves into strange attractors and persuade us to believe in cosmic progress once more, when fashion has still not yet found ways of suggesting it is time to put the tongue away, the talent of the laconic, the privilege of brevity in a culture like Finland might be fortunate.

At least, if the world's progress is interpreted in such a way, the possibility of silence offers not only retreat, not only refuge but respite from the world's excess. If this refuge then becomes a lifestyle, it organises the self as much as architecture. That such refuge, such respite, must obey its own logics will be our exploration. Architects often considered detached from the personal through their 'public art' have long kept their own 'journey of self' repressed. Yet it is clear, a heart of darkness can find various and varying translations into architecture.

For an archive of silence, for a critique of that silence, including a self-censorship which supports the Archive, we must first make some initial assessment of the peripheral position of the society in question and consider also how culture can translate this into local advantage.

The Silent Centre of the Periphery

Cultures meet and co-opt, for their own use, ideas and theories from elsewhere. Silence becomes an option. And to some, like the sun, there is no alternative, it has to shine. It is often said that there are few advantages being in the periphery, any periphery. It is a *shadowland* often tormented until difference and originality is established. Recent scholarship on Nordic Classicism shows how well this was done in Finnish architectural history. What is defined elsewhere in the 'centre' - wherever that is - too often finds its way eventually, in modified even reduced form, in the periphery.

In a country like Finland with its geopolitical realities and anxieties, to be silent has more than history to upset its own seduction. Respectable retreat, staying on the sidelines - physicians not judges - the metaphors can easily lead us to think of it as a *culture of quietism* or more problematically of self-censorship. To rescue this retreat, to give dignity to the isolationism of the nation we are to believe - at least in architecture - that there is a logic to this respite. A logic which constructs from these notions a language of silence. Tectonic, topographical, phenomenological and ethical concerns can then be propped up 'reasonably' by an agreed aesthetic code of architectural silence.

Is it critically reasonable to speak of a tradition of silence? In a strongly Lutheran country, in a country nervously testing its own boundaries, the logics of respite must display obedience and loyalty. In a Lutheran will, there is a continuous desire to avoid conflict and confrontation. To achieve this, nothing could be as powerful as *silence*.

Retreating, avoiding or swerving away from exchange, politically and culturally, always allows a floating responsibility, we can speak even of a structured neutrality. If no one says anything, no one can be held responsible. It is the negative, the word 'ei' (no) in Finnish which, to the foreigner, is often the first utterance. *Ei siis kyllä*, Paavo Haavikko nailed it. A little deeper knowledge of the language allows us to observe how this supports a continuous warding-off gesture.

The gesture is one of 'come but stay away'; a paradoxical invitation to the myth of the outsider, no but yes! The *outsider* in a remote rural country isn't necessarily the foreigner, although they now constitute one of the major dynamics of change in the society (albeit exaggerated). The outsider in Finland is much more local. The outsider is from down the road. The outsider is the nearest neighbour. The outsider is the next person on the Finnish 'pachinko' machine, the *pajatso*.

Consider a small point in the language. If something has been left behind, forgotten, mislaid, abandoned, the structure of Finnish allows it be expressed in the following 'impersonal' passive manner: 'the object was forgotten' or 'the book has been left behind'. Without wishing to make wider claims, it is not unreasonable to assert that responsibility, hence culpability, can sometimes if not always be displaced. Blame can be shifted, made ambiguous, if not denied outright.

Critically, in politics and in culture, there is no doubt of the consequences of such shifting when trying to encourage and expand debate. And there is no doubt why, if we compare a (so called) National Archive of descriptive, normative prose issued by Finns themselves, and a (so called) International Archive of the outside commentator and researcher with wider even riskier views of history and culture, there usually exists between the two, ignorance, misunderstanding, hidden and even hostile disrespect.

Often the 'foreign' researcher cannot understand why issues are so descriptive, bull-headed, stubborn, literal and dry. Equally, the Finnish researcher cannot understand why issues should be taken wider than they need; they wonder often how such apparent misreadings of their own culture are so facile. Things should and must be more simple they will affirm. Leave us alone!

The periphery strikes back!

What times are these, the poet Paul Celan put it in response to Brecht, when a conversation is almost a crime because it includes so much made explicit. Celan was targeting Brecht's over-reaching didacticism, charging it for the little air it left to breath ambiguity and a future.

If silence supports respite, there is a direction to its retreat. Ultimately the logics of respite, of holding back, of closing inwards, support the role of the singular authority speaking and acting on behalf of others. Silence made explicit through such respite is, and has been throughout the last century even before independence in 1917, a lonely calling within Finland.

Are we then to take the side of Brecht or Celan, when so much explicit in architecture has made a shadow of its own Modern achievement? Silence used this way, of course, just before it becomes the purifying and generalised episteme in architecture and culture is the edge of night. It is why the estranged storyteller, even the carrier of anti-method, will not be welcomed. Nor will the society yield easily to the sly, cunning, anti-narrative seduction of the sort rogue architects like Alvar Aalto and Reima Pietila indulged in. Individuals are either marginalised or corralled – kettled - to speak for the collective mind.

Anyone returning to Finland as a foreigner over the last twenty years will realise that in amidst the excitement of Europeanisation and Globalisation 'nothing happens twice.' It is not that nothing has actually happened twice in Finland. More, it is the pace of the change, the immutability of things all around. To the outsider there is an attractive and tantalising un-eventfulness in the society. It is an immutability that disguises its openness to the outsider by its own anxiety. Sometimes the society appears even more resistant than this. Then the outsider has no way to give credence to the politics of refuge without experiencing it as a fortunate, 'monastic' silence. The country then becomes a literal 'retreat'; open to the clichés of the cold but tender North!

A Fortunate Silence

To be in the shadow of many of the world's ideas and theories allows reflection, deliberation and, if things fall together, correction. The marginal parts of the world need not fall into the ditch being dug for them by greater nations. Errors need not the trial before they correct themselves. There is greater fortune in this collision for the nation via architecture and Modernism, as the architect and writer Colin St John Wilson claimed some years back:

"At a happy moment in history, the self-awareness of a growing nation somehow became encoded and embodied in architecture. The moment was happy because it coincided with the genesis, emergence, and self-realisation of a worldwide revolution in the experience of architecture." This sense of new beginning, though shifted 30, 40, 50 years on from Modernism's promise and propaganda in the 1920s has, according to the writer "been seized upon as one of the principal roots of identity and sources of imagination in the formation of a whole culture." ⁵

For this to be true throughout the 'whole culture', the rational 'silent' strain of architectural thinking in Finland needs to be given a cultural coherence. Identity needs trimming and this silent revolution needs to be metonymic and stand in for the society in general. It is this common-sense theory of such hope, an outsider's optimism, that has taken on its role as a 'grand narrative' of the century.

This is also a wish, an alignment traced back to many travellers and political commentators who saw in Finland (some still do) scenarios for (tender) restraint and caution. In the 19th century when Finland offered these scenarios for a quiet remoteness, a place not going as fast as elsewhere in politics and industrialization, a place so little known, so little penetrated, it became the exotic and predictable buffer-zone between Byzantine (Russian) unpredictability and Swedish civility.

In practice, however, things have changed. Remoteness is never so remote today, belatedness has lost its advantage; the electronic invasion levels mediocrity as much as progress. Today it is increasingly obvious to the outsider that the contemporary moment does not hit a city like Helsinki, a country like Finland, in the way it hits and moves in, say, New York, Berlin, Vienna or London. With the intense pressure put on media speculation and centres of discourse, the contemporary moment is probably defined in these cities on a sort of rota. But to be in Finland, in the shadow of the contemporary moment is not necessarily as bad as it sounds.

A notional 'Finnish Architecture' is spoken about as if it can be defined simply, unequivocally as legend constructed years back in the 1950 and 1960s and re-created endlessly. The question often arises: what happened to the ascendancy of Finnish Architecture? Too much in such a question is taken for granted, too much is tacit and unchallenged.

This works simply. The narrative and myth of its ascendancy are sustained by privileging architecture that conforms to this ascendancy myth, whether this was a privileging of Aalto and the *romantic* (organic) modernism in foreign circles or the more generalised 'pure' (academic or classicist) architecture' from Scandinavia in national circles. There was a period – it may have been three decades – when these two narratives did not and could not meet.

What has been spoken about in relation to the tradition of silence, especially during the final decade of the 20th Century, is Finnish Architecture as the refuge, the last refuge it often seems if we take the rhetoric as given, from an insane, chaotic, immature, immoral, wavering and confusing world. We hear talk of a privileged status, of how 'the architectural profession has won an enviable position of public confidence'.

This confirmation of the legend however is worrying precisely because the culture adopts an unquestioning stance to this ascendancy myth. For years issues of social privilege and abused authority have gone unresearched. The resulting confusion in the Archive means that major cultural promotion proceeds, even today, along the same generalized, uncritical lines. We see this interpreted by both outsider and Finnish architect as a reproach to all that is bad elsewhere in the world over the last 20 years: in sum, the nostalgia and all the 'dithering and scuttling' (Wilson) in architectural theory and experiment. The logic then becomes even more logical, *tauto-logical*; ultimately the refuge in Finland is claimed to have rescued the disenchantment and lost sense of common purpose in 'modern' architecture. The margins of the world triumph.

There is some truth in this but the perpetuating self-logics of respite press on, relentlessly. This narrative of retreat is then seen to have saved the public not only from a dithering and scuttling world, but it has saved itself from the instrumental and gratuitous signage architecture, from an architecture where chaos and the undulating twists from contemporary sciences of complexity, for example, are made into another compositional strategy or organisational depth for architectural production. *Hallelujah*, the public is grateful; it has been saved from the spectacle of architecture making a spectacle of itself, like the Guggenheim in Bilbao.

This is not quite the case. It is by no means agreed that the Finnish public is grateful or feel the same way. Nor is there a common acceptance that the growing and somewhat closed uncommunicative nation has been embodied and encoded through this retreat into a thoroughly 'Modern' architecture.

A Far Cry from Architecture!

Naturally skewing the picture we have drawn so far, this should allow us to contest such reading. Interpreting this respite and refuge in architecture another way, Finland offers to become a shadow of its former self where the contemporary is carefully edited out, not to say censored, and the nostalgic vision is re-invented as contemporary even prophetic vision of a still-born architecture.

This is one of the more common 'narratives' of the 'continuum' an older generation now repeats in Finland. It is logic we have seen identified and more familiar with post-Marxists and neo-conservatives. Nostalgic tracts and the virtue of the lost paradise have immediate consequences. Used to support a golden ageism, nothing is ever quite as golden or as 'famous' as it used to be, back when rational was modern and modern was unthinkingly accepted.

Where it is stubborn and conservative, a school of 'modern' diffidence becomes institutionally powerful. It may begin also to regress the development of the culture. The result where it is creative is not always nostalgic. Most young people keen on the internationalism of their culture ('glasnost' is neither an insignificant nor forgotten notion in Finland's mammoth State organisations) would agree with this. A glance at the thrill and metropolitan excitement of *Helsingfors* around the year 1900 and the terminal 'wired' city Helsinki threatens to become in the new millennium is clear.

Promotion is high as the year 2000 recedes, but the 'city' is wary as ever of the outside. Russian invasion in the form of a St Petersburg mafia, the foreign hand, foreign finance, and the 'undesirable' alien will help others understand why the conflicting, more exciting picture of contemporary confusion is so carefully censored.

To speak of silence when faced with contemporary excess can either be seen as an essential resistance, the stubborn cultural rebuff to contemporary issues or a fear, a turning away, a retreat. The former might be healthy step back but not aside. The latter is often an abdication from such issues. As we argued earlier, and as we will go on to demonstrate, it is possible to read both into architecture. One of the clearest developments in Finnish architecture is the veiled aesthetics of the shadow.

Within a cautionary, neutral rhetoric, of the type the long-serving President Kekkonen propounded, is the obvious difficulty of self-criticism; which is why promotion of political errors and re-readings is so carefully guarded. And why ultimately, silence exists as an operative criticism, a self-censorship of its own society. Clearly, and it has done for years in the 20th Century, self-censorship can close off the culture behind a discriminatory, neutral but repressive openness.

Depending on how Finnish architecture is read in relation to the 20th century, 'Modernism' and its future prophetic vision, we will get further interpretations of a refuge as an anachronistic hold onto lost privilege. The logic of retreat leads to a deliberate and carefully staged inability to entertain contemporary issues, thereby re-situating the Modernist vision. The *Official Archive* which supports this must return to source to understand why careful architectural retreat or resistance can expand a limited, even minor vocabulary.

Restraint is like awarding achievement for ambition, whilst the loss of an experimental and vibrant architecture which attempts with more thrill and paradox to approach more of today's pressing issues becomes even more relevant in the silence. It can also lead to tamed, brilliantly restrained versions of an architecture going on elsewhere.

In the shadow of the contemporary moment

Critical histories and alibis fluctuate certainly, but rigour and discipline identify quiet talent. So, what is this mysterious contemporary moment that might be on rota between Tokyo, New York, Berlin, London, Vienna? What is this contemporary loss of vision and sense that needs such fear and resistance in a city like Helsinki? This 'moment' appears in seminars and symposiums around the world. There is talk of Chaos Europa or Virtually Las Vegas. Architecture is studied and explored through wider issues such as tourism, geopolitics, ecology, media and sustainability. Organisational depth, tectonic aid and newer tension in architecture in relation to society are lifted, grafted on from the mathematics of chaos, liquid crystal technology, gastronomy, Disneyland, information systems, digitalisation, Sarajevo or Singapore.

In Finland, the picture diminishes radically despite the persistent, often external claims that the 'happy' nation and its culture survive the contamination of much of the new. This 'new' is confusingly and embarrassingly dismissed by still naming and blaming it on a wilfully generalised Post-modernism or Latent Deconstruction. The local sources inevitably get more local by the Helsinki minute; Imagology, Moomintroll, Maastricht, Eclecticism and McDonald's!

Elsewhere in the 1980s - upsettingly, sometimes thrillingly - concepts from literary studies were turned into and put through the architectural mill. Dirty Realism, the Body, Godard, Tarantino and Lynch, semiotic play and pay, Gender Limits, all become figures of architectural lust and danger. This was an edge which we all needed to approach. And there was always someone else, some other idea or grand theory lurking to dismiss the previous grand theory. Slippage, we all did it, we all missed it, we all lost it!

Is there any doubt when faced with this slippage why some in the smaller countries of the world prefer to stand back? With all this echo and rebound, should we not speak of the fortunate aesthetics of the shadow, expressed as it so often has been by architectural commentators as a silence, a respite, a wonderful metaphysical lull in the greater storm? Like yachting!

Informed architectural speakers use phrases like the 'aesthetics of disappearance' as if now undebatable. And such debates are likely to hit the suburbs like meteor shards coming to earth with a rudeness unselected by their maker. They crash and generalise into shards of *unmeaning*. A simple survey of the architectural forums in Finland (the Architectural Review, the Museum of Finnish Architecture, Safa; the Professional Body, the universities) is enough to indicate a fending-off, a resistance to, if not complete absence of, such issues.

It is a near silence that leaves us to ask the obvious with some dispassion: do some discourses fade upon re-entry into other cultures? And if so, do they disperse only to re-group for their own survival? Or is this a self-learning process, a deliberate strategy of recognising in the 'Big Ones' issues of little value to the periphery? Aalto's lesson all over again: "Architecture is not merely national but clearly has local ties in that it is rooted in the earth. Through its forms it can achieve international influence."

⁶ Rich indeed from someone who grafted and assimilated various eclectic source faster than anyone else!

To root or resist

Whichever it may be, to root or resist, if we judge this an absence, most of these contemporary issues seem to be cleverly, discriminately, skirted by peripheral architects. Is this a salute to the necessity of silence, or a self-censorship in the Finnish culture? Is this the inevitable neo-conservatism of radicals once lost to the world, struggling with such brave prophetic visions of equality, democracy and social progress?

At this stage, to continue the 'happy nation' (grand narrative) concept, we would not read this response in Finland to world architecture as a censorship. Instead, to many suspicious of the 'outside', it would resemble a healthy editing of the wider, world picture. But it doesn't take much more logical and cynical reason to avoid the big issues before a curious anti-intellectualism takes over. This operates as a Mannerism, rife and silent in Finnish Architecture.

This mannerism is then legitimated by the continuous privileging of generalised writings about modern aesthetics and representation. Critics, foreign and national, legitimate observations on projects, architects, buildings and photographs by using the written statements provided by the architects themselves, the Museum of Finnish Architecture and/or the Foreign Ministry. Mostly these statements are descriptive and tendentious.

To foreign critics unable to spend the longer research time necessary to penetrate the language's own protective shield, these processes form the descriptive basis of their work. Insight and scrutiny follow but the limitations of this Archive are obvious as 'information' is shuffled to and from universities and interested parties around the world. This practice is more than problematic, and we will later turn to some issues raised by this critique of silence in relation to the archive of the Finnish architect Aulis Blomstedt.

Arguably, Blomstedt's writing and gnostic presence (in three decades from the 1940s to the 1960s) are the reason why there lingers an aesthetic of alleged austerity and purism, why it is interpreted as a 'modern' tradition, why it is performative, normative and an attractive myth for outsiders, and why it is legitimated by privileging Blomstedt's selected writing over his works, which interprets a cubist geometry as an 'erotics' for the ascetically inclined. Silence is its obvious metaphysical prop.

The Torment of the Vicarious

In Bo Carpelan's novel, *Axel* first published in Swedish in 1986 we have the fictional diary of Count Axel Carpelan. One entry in this diary dated 27.2.1897, above all others, demonstrates the energy and torment of silence as it becomes the shadow dilemma. It is not quite the definition of the original shadow, but it is as near as we might possibly get to it: "Have a quartet in my brain, it is tormenting the life out of me; so I must let someone else create it." ⁷

Letting someone else create has the comfort and protection of immutability. It is the torment of the vicarious. It can witness greatness whilst also remain detached with the pleasure of observing someone's error at work. It is a privileged position from which to assess one's quietness in life. It stands aside. It moves into the margin of another life. Possibly aloof, sometimes stubborn, it is always anxious.

Finland to all intents and purposes though geopolitically always stressed is one of the significant margins of the world. Most of what is known of the country is second-hand. Most of its authority and gossip is passed through foreign scholars and sadly often does not rise above the mockery of its primitiveness or its uncultured silences. Usually, a history beyond the country has been a personal quest carried out by researchers interested enough in its identity. These visitors are seduced in various ways by its 'image' and usually attracted enough by its errors to remain interested. Patronisation of the society – the tender North - as a researcher or visitor is difficult to avoid entirely.

The sincerity with which the visitor, the anthropologist or English-language teacher is bombarded with insecurity can have an unsettling effect. And few visitors have the luxury or privilege of depth or integration into the culture. Very few will ever feel that they inhabit the country and even less inhabit its language, finding it not only one of the most difficult languages to learn but an embodiment of "difficulty" in itself.

The 'difficulty' we speak about in Finland is not enigmatic, not cryptic. It is a difficulty defined by and restricted by stubbornness and resistance. Immutable, few outsiders ever cut through the word for 'silence' in Finnish; 'hiljaisuus'. As a notion in the society, 'hiljaisuus' is louder than any midsummer celebration or May Day binge that foreigners stumble across by mistake. And before we forget the cliché that passes from Finland to Sweden, to Hungary to Japan, suicide is in a way a national invariant.

Suicide is the other torment of the vicarious returning to take revenge on the self. Suicide is the only other sound of silence to compete with the immensity of the nature in this country. And more tellingly, this is the sound of the gun at the temple; clean, crack-shot accurate. Suicide is the loudest sound of silence the country knows, and constructing architectural silence to the crank existentialist at the edge of night is a parlour game. It is only epiphanic when the water hits the sauna stones and the eyes cannot stay open. It is a metaphysical dream that needs the mask of landscape to support its near void, its severity and higher purpose.

Museums and Institutions do not promote or scaffold silence, they usually bring the gun to the temple of optimism and let it off slowly, obediently, autocratically. But to the foreigner, the loudest silence in Finland must and will always be different. It is the 'sound' of the handshake; unfirm, slippery and unwelcoming. Embarrassed skin, it wants none of the narrative someone else brings. Including the outsider.

Historically, belonging to the Finno-Ugrian peoples rather than the Indo-European language speaking world, Finnish is a difficult language to improvise within. It is a language that does not open without some knowledge of its syntactical structure, its agglutinising characteristics. Moreover, it is a language that has not found an easy way to be taught.

Not being easily taught, not 'catching on easily' has serious consequences in the arts and culture in general. It is why so often one can hear assessments of Finnish film in international listings (at least those that get as far as Cinemascope or Screen International) as lifeless, dull and monotonous. The very success of the Finn's 'sisu' - - the relatively 'untranslatable' word for endurance/immutability/stubbornness as in Winter War 'sisu' - depends on their own wit for survival.

Such remote language societies are also attractive precisely because of their margins. This, of course, is tautological. Remote and distant, they must offer some sort of mystery to a world that begins to know too much about its neighbour. The remoteness and rudeness that comes along with primitiveness is accepted only if original. This was perfectly demonstrated by the 'outrageous' silence the film director Aki Kaurismaki used to perform so well in his Berlin Film festival press performances during the 1980s. The foreign journalist and film critic is faced with a stuttering fascination. The Finnish journalist is faced mostly with a desire not to pass judgment but shifts uncomfortably.

Anyone doubting that this linguistic wit is lacking need only turn to Vaino Linna's use of dialect in the novel *The Unknown Soldier*. Translated, this novel is however only a shadow of itself. There is no possibility of doing justice to the survival. It is a nation and language apart.⁸ Which means Finland is not a country one makes jokes about easily.

Slouching towards Byzantium

Slouching towards Byzantium, sometimes and always, is not abuse, nor is it wit. Marginal languages, especially non-Indo-European languages, have continued to hold a fascination for students and scholars beyond contrastive linguistics and beyond the boundaries of the Northern hemisphere. Much of this seduction is conditioned by the strong pull of the 'primitive' and the 'remote'. Ultimately, for the outsider, when the land just does not seem to have as much history as other European societies, this becomes a pull towards naivety and attractive innocence.

The guilt of patronisation, of seeing one's attraction aligned in this eternal landscape of 'tree, tree, tree', never entirely leaves researchers and visitors alone. Offering a way to measure the neutral self, just as anthropologists used to measure skulls, such societies that have not been over-researched, that can be re-interpreted and offer clues for one's own journey of the self, always hold out a seduction. Estranged from the local nerve, external researchers, anthropologists, geographers, historians, writers and critics indulge in this seduction and are equally indulged by the seduction.

Estrangement needs confidence. And it can only be such notions of estrangement that can turn an obsession and hobby like alcoholism in Finland into the art of inebriation and alibi. ⁹ This, too, is a contract with silence and the self. Often it feels only the Irish can recognise such art, yet the differences become obvious between the two races when the silence rises over the evening and the festivities begin.

Finns, hostile to themselves, fight their own ghosts before and after alcohol. Evenings can turn ugly silence into violence; alcohol has long been life-threatening. Versions of the truth game can end up with the gun at the temple. The Irish, hostile to the English, treat the evening differently. The Irish fight the ghost of history past. The Finns hit 'Gloomsville'. The Irish go to town laughing. Saarikoski or Joyce?

Research in Finland and abroad often runs in parallel, rarely converging. When this is all a matter of the prepared mind under Lutheran control, we will not find it a far cry from architecture's desire for the purifying episteme and the journey to the silent, inner self. It is a gamble with subordination between the self and architecture. It can seem like two completely different universes. The native scholar mourns the inevitable loss of accuracy of the foreign scholar. And the foreign scholar so often mourns the boredom and dullness of limited, descriptive, provincial vision. We get a dulling in research and in the relative merits of the Archive, a tired unhelpful opposition; flag-pulling versus flag-waving. History becomes fiction.

The New Nordic Book of The Dead

If someone set out to write *The New Nordic Book of the Dead*, for silence to do its own deed it is obvious a simple approach to the subject would not be adequate. Affinity to the Japanese society and the symbolic logic assumed from this is made natural and neutral when one considers how both societies operate within a code of behaviour that prevents confrontation.

A silent location, the sobriety of Finland's northern latitude certainly suggests a *shadowland*. Claims of a Finnish affinity to the American society have been made more recently and suggest the distance the society takes from things-European. But no consideration of the Finnish society can be taken seriously without some mention of its location and the geo-climatic and geo-cultural conclusions drawn. Considering the intense darkness during the five or six winter months from October through March, we can understand the theme of the Norwegian critic Christian Norberg Schulz's book, *Nightlands*. We should know that the real difference in light between Oslo and Athens, between Helsinki and Heraklion not only tells us about the awakening and yawning rates of each society but the way buildings are put to sleep in the landscape.¹⁰

'Kaamos', a particularly intense climatic and mental time around November in Finland, especially in the North, is so dark, so heavy as to make a blanket necessary longer than is wise. It is so special in its silence, physical and optical, that the 'native' from the South of the country will opt for weeks on end, walking and avoiding others in the 'tuntuuri', the rolling mass that makes up the landscape curtain north of the Arctic Circle. Lapps, like the poet Nils Aslak Valkeapää think nothing of it where nothing is the dream of infinity too often awarded prizes in literary capitals long distances from this 'centre'.

To think nothing of it!

The marginalised Sami culture and language cuts 'rites' through silence. This part of the world is no expanse of dumb snow even though, for many foreigners, the vastness can be uncomfortable, even embarrassing, so intimate is this silence. But no litany of phenomenological readings will relieve or relive the necessity of heaviness. Any lines from Gaston Bachelard can be made to fit such stillness without answering survival and livelihood.

To speak of *formlessness*, the fecundity of fire and water, the concentrated primitiveness of warmth and well-being is little more than a gossip of detachment, a privilege of the pluralist. More outrageously accurate might be the similarity we can glean from the poems of Paul Celan written post-Auschwitz and the lines of Valkeapää. Any gossip of light and silence drives architectural commentary into wish-fulfilling dreams. Celan:

Driven into the
terrain
with the unmistakable track:
grass, written asunder. The stones, white,
with the shadows of grassblades:

Do not read any more - look!
Do not look any more - go!

Go, your hour
has no sisters, you are
are at home. A wheel, slow,
rolls out of itself, the spokes
climb,
climb on a blackish field, the night
needs no stars, nowhere
does anyone ask after you.¹¹

In Lapland, a personal stereo carries its own invasion and insults the snow. There a hand carved reindeer bone is not politically incorrect to slit open a letter, but it might be to protect oneself against invaders. This is well-being not magic realism, that seductive never-never land between dream and reality, between literature, architecture and exhaustion. This is silence as tenderness, the warmth of death, and the sounds of the reindeer herding poet's ski-do and his son's Personal Computer.

Valkeapää: 'Sometimes in the midst of active life, in which of course I am as fully in control of myself as the others, I am overcome by a strange sense of doubt: I don't know whether I exist; I believe it altogether possible that I am a dream of another creature... I am almost convinced I am never awake. I do not know whether I am dreaming when alive, or am alive when dreaming, or whether dream and life do not mingle and overlap in me.'

Familiar? At times, words and language go in and out of each other so that we are not sure whether it is this Sami poet's lines on a Celan idea or the Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa pre-empting the lines of Bruce Chatwin. This is as it should be; minimal dialogue, maximum conversation where sound itself highlights the acoustic sense of space and the idea of Lapland as one large eternity of light and silence. A metropolis of light and its reconcilable darkness is stretched over the 'tunturi'. The arctic mountain offering a new contract with life and death. Ditto: Architecture!

Songlines connect us all across the world whilst the *world wide web* is but a trick to convince us of this survival through unrest, through movement. Then silence. To think nothing of it! To blink in Finland and miss the event; is that silence? Most foreigners besides the hardy have the greatest difficulty in negotiating the silence of such a metropolis without a plentiful supply of whisky, a flexible return ticket, and a Lonely Planet Guide full of quips about reindeer castrators and the *pure trollishness* of the forest intellect!

Helsingfors, Helsinki

Cities are scenarios of forgetting as much as memory. Cities too hold silence to their facades, close-chested, head down, avoidance of eye contact. Swedish, Russian and German presence in this young city hold stories, civil wars and struggles too painful to forget, too painful to exorcise. Helsinki is a strangely-moving city. Not confident with itself as a capital, as a metropolis, it suffers from unjust comparisons with some of the world's more majestic capitals.

Shunning tranquillity for a raggedness, Helsinki is as windy as Edinburgh but without the rugged majesty. It is, though, sometimes as still and as attractively empty as St Petersburg in miniature form but it loses out to history. It is not however Stockholm, Oslo, Amsterdam or Copenhagen. Architecture and planning, that is its 'urbanism', have gone askew for this reason.

Terrifically private and terrifyingly private, Helsinki like Finnish Architecture has a schizophrenia about it, a dualism that has much to do with the privacy of space and public ambiguity. A city like Helsinki, over-centralised as a sinkhole, a city that empties on summer Fridays, becomes a ghost town. Then the outsider can roam the streets with an emptiness that is suburban even though the streets desperately try to signify 'city'. Silence is echo. Emptiness becomes a missing link between private and public space! When the city fills up, estrangement is calmed. Whole parts of the city are forgotten, have been forgotten and will remain forgotten depending on which narrative is currently charged with carrying history.

For much of this century after its metropolitan status as Helsingfors on the Stockholm – St Petersburg axis, Helsinki has become a terminal city. With the Cold War, things stopped at Helsinki. Further east was too far east. In films like 'Reds' Helsinki became a stand-in city for Leningrad. Paradoxically it helped people forget where it was filmed, or where it should have been filmed. Now, in the new millennium, the Helsinki-St Petersburg axis runs a flourishing trade line just as it did at the turn of the century. The black market and anxiety spectrums the whole length.

The influence of social thinking, the post-war position of the society, the commerce in the history of ideas and their obvious reflections and debate within architecture and the visual arts remain restricted to the historian or the architects themselves. It must be obvious that such specific geo-political and historical conditions have undoubtedly influenced architectural thinking. Yet in the Archive, both at home and abroad, mention and analysis of such conditions are extremely slight and superficial, if not absent. This compounds forgetting; it becomes cultural amnesia.

Recent Euro-babble of Helsinki being an East-West Gateway once more in world trade and politics of the North is exaggerated. The Finnish political mind is proving too wary of the outsider, too creatively stubborn to open to any serious flexibility in trade and finance. Nokia rises and falls. It must, to obey the logics of its own thrill and then restraint.

Recession may recede, but the mental scars last longer in this part of the world precisely because the openness is so hard to invite and control. Non-risk is uppermost. If airlines struggle to establish themselves, are not easily seduced to operate within the country, the city remains relatively closed. Travelers and finance do not flow adequately, though all brochures will tell you differently.

What we might term a 'forest-intellect' in politics mirrors what is at work in architecture. Finnish politics isolates its own trends; an introversion which we see interpreted as that necessary refuge from outside contamination. The careful geometry of feeling is intensified. Structure is poetry and poetry is everything else but the un-necessity of words. A prepared silence, in other words, can be spoken by all.

A Prepared Silence

Why and how does a prepared silence occur and how can we support such claims? Ideas operate like finance; spectacular, speculative and spurious. They too, co-opted and terminal, have no return especially in architecture. Rarely are ideas bounced back into western discourse, western currency. They come up against the buffers. Lonely metaphors with nowhere but the Baltic to go!

Foreigners can find the country so internal it always meets itself on the outward journey. No rebound! Political scientists and historians trying to open up to the contemporary post-Cold War situation, face a density of Finnish political descriptive prose that too often wraps their history around vaguer notions of 'Finnishness'. Props are used on television programmes like play school to keep those present in the debate conscious of the 'other'. This apparent willingness to accept these vaguer notions of their own identity allows the foreigner the possibility of considering and misreading the society.

It is easy to be critically rude and detached about a detached, marginal and stubborn culture. It is also a reflection of our own alignment that we can fail to place ourselves within the realpolitik that we may never experience, within a silence that chooses its own promise and hope. But something about the silence of the country begs the obvious question: "is it inevitable that so many conversations should be fruitless?"

This question posed by Theodore Zeldin would echo our awkwardness with each other, an awkwardness that Zeldin claims seems to increase in this part of the world. The traveller to Finland can miss the point of elegance and verbosity and is stumped by taciturnity. Of course, all outsiders and travellers complain in some way whenever they travel. But in Finland the result is more pressing, more personal. It hurts.

It is no coincidence that Zeldin opts for the 'peasant silence' of Finland as one of the primeval firsts: "That ancient peasant silence can still be heard in parts of Finland which is reputed to be the least talkative country on earth. 'One word', says an Finnish proverb, 'is enough to make a lot of trouble.' The province of Häme in Finland is the most silent, where they take pride in the story of the farmer who visits his neighbour and sits quietly for a long time, saying nothing, before his host asks him why he has come. He finally brings himself to reveal that his home is on fire."

Zeldin sees the environment responsible for and possibly receptive to, the least talkative nation. "These Finns used to live in isolated farmhouses, not villages, and it was no burden for them to tolerate silence."¹² Crucial here, in the acceptance of cliché and generalisation, is how we ourselves can miss the point (the creativity?) of this burden.

The burden of silence to those embarrassed in Finland produces curious effects. To speak then of a tolerance for silence - repressive or otherwise - is this only something we bring as outsiders to map onto our own estrangement? Do we do this merely to compensate for our own dullness and inactivity in a society we consider dulling and inactive?

There is an interesting antidote to Zeldin's observation. The Finns seem also unshakable and unmoved by mobile phone and satellite. They have become the country with more mobile phones per capita than anywhere else in the world. This is a curious and telling privilege. "It's good to talk," the television advert goes for mobile phones. Not only that Finland is now one of the leading Internet user nations.

In the art of the laconic, training is history, silence is second nature. It is not difficult to read between silence and the archive, between mental and fiscal thrift, serious therapy exists in sitting alone with a screen. Effectiveness is economically advantageous, no more so than on the Net. Brevity is a talent that the Finns have in abundance. No practice is necessary.

Whilst attention spans diminish radically all over the globally satellited world, going by continuous political cul-de-sacs, brinkmanship, ceasefire breakdowns and talks about talks, it becomes more evident by the day that conversation (not to mention communication) is still in its infancy. Or can we find it in ourselves to be more generous? Is silence not creative precisely in its static, unmoving dynamism?

Does this notion though not present us with an ecstasy of no further communication; content with the accepted narrative, accepted version of the 'modern' century as history. Would this offer personal gain in that it is no further loss of self? Is not this the comfort of that open space in the virgin forest which offers a hole from which to hang upside down. That space, for the poet Paavo Haaviko, for the *EveryFinn* who doesn't care for conversation, where "my breath I blew and left it mute, so as not to spoil that region by shouting." ¹³

Not to spoil the region by shouting is a contract with language, aphasia, architecture and identity. Finland responds in its special way. It is offered by its history and geo-climatic conditions the interior form. This is a coded logic of detachment, where the society by-passes dilemmas by remaining 'silent'. Culturally coded it seeks the non-representational, the impossibility of the neutral signifier.

Fortunately, Finland has often been able to respond uniquely by constructing its conversation in another form. We begin to deepen our critique on silence and forgetting. We turn to Architecture, Music, Design or Cinema. Musically, though, silence is so loud in the country, so emotive, it has become a shadow art itself. Post-Sibelius, it is thrilling to score awkwardness and edge into opera and symphony. It saves speaking about it, it saves spoiling the region with sentiment, the picturesque, the explicit.

In a way not usually discussed, this might also be a shared contract with modesty and austerity; a restrained, edge-of-night architecture. And as we well know, for years before, during and now after the Cold War, Finland politically and culturally is nurtured by a strong notion of 'neutrality'.

At North Farm

On 19th October 1961 President Kekkonen addressed the general Assembly of the United Nations. He defined, with his inimitable rhetoric of caution, the past role of Finland and at the same time a scenario for the future. The ambiguity between independent-minded individuals and the desire not to pass judgment is one that remained remarkably consistent throughout the century.

Critical thinking, especially in architecture, has been restricted to the singularity of independently minded individuals and a professional code that desires not to pass judgment (at least in public) and prevents critical assessment of colleagues. For the development of serious critical thinking, the consequences must appear obvious. "We in Finland are, to a large extent, a nation of co-operators; and we know that true co-operation is best advanced by strongly independent-minded individuals. We believe in the possibility of harmonizing dissimilar interests for the benefits of all."

President Kekkonen's great talent was to recognise the absoluteness of the perfect fence. Whenever 'neutrality' is thrown around for more political misunderstanding to gather, the following statement from this speech is always used: "We see ourselves as physicians rather than judges; it is not for us to pass judgment nor to condemn, it is rather to diagnose and to try to cure."¹⁴

To diagnose and cure. Silence is a kenotic act, but can it creatively heal a world architecture of failed emotion? This 'kenosis' is not for the foreigner to take lightly. Too much of the content of silence can miss the point of its own existence when it breathes on the mirror. Then it dulls itself with over-activity.

We would have to side with Celan and not Brecht about silence but preferably opt for the American poet John Ashbery's more pressing accuracy of this part of the world in his poem titled 'At North Farm.'¹⁵ We should know by now just where this North Farm is and why it remains silent.

Somewhere someone is traveling furiously toward you,
At incredible speed, traveling day and night,
Through blizzards and desert heat, across torrents,
through narrow passes.
But will he know where to find you,
Recognise you when he sees you,
Give you the thing he has for you?
Hardly anything grows here,
Yet the granaries are busting with meal,
The sacks of meal piled to the rafters.
The streams run with sweetness, fattening fish;
Birds darken the sky. Is it enough
That the dish of milk is set out at night,
That we think of him sometimes,
Sometimes and always, with mixed feelings?

Part 2

The Archive Strikes Back!

Something fundamental in Ibsen,
a sly uncanniness uneasily allied
to his creativity, is pure troll.

Harold Bloom¹

Encoding Silence

To believe architecture can be read as a refuge from today's stress, moral decay and lack of social commitment in society we have established is key to a *logic of respite*. It is a romantic notion that recalls 18th century travellers seeking purity in the morals and virtuousness of the past.¹⁶ The tradition of silence claimed from this is a further translation of refuge and virtue. Used to form views of the cultural progress of the Finns it is also often the circumstances that provides a mirror to the researcher's or critic's ideas of their own past. Whether this is an architectural privilege only Modernism can claim, we need to investigate. But as we saw in part one, if we follow this argument into the contemporary messiness of society, Finland can be seen by such reading as to offer a refuge not only from today's chaos and unrest but from both the thrill and uncertainty of 'cultural progress'.

It is this 'logic of respite' interpreted in the public confidence and allowed to go relatively unchallenged, that we find ourselves discussing a little-known discourse like 'silence' as if it pervades the whole society and profession of architecture. That this is a distortion we will trace later. More important are the reasons for such persistent distortion.

Vigorous eloquence often partners the authoritarian. Privileges given interpretations are too often personal and transmitted by vague, hurried seminar proceedings that also encourage little serious scholarly exchange. The delivery and written work of Finnish scholars again is often at odds with the foreign researcher. Exchange is usually by-passed; lectures are often remarkable for what they leave out rather than for what they propound. In this the visiting Finn is a master; the responsibility for architectural interpretation is left as open and neutral as it need be until of course, it is 'interpreted wrongly'. Silence then re-groups.

Only with this in mind can our project around the Finnish Archive begin to discuss 'silence' as a metaphysical prop and assess its underpinning as a theoretical aid and tectonic guide for some of the more recent architecture. But before that, we must return to the post-war climate in culture and society, especially the presence of the two architects Aulis Blomstedt and Alvar Aalto, to see why time and again, singular thinkers assume an unchallenged role as translators of other people's thinking.

Aulis Blomstedt's status as the so-called Rationalist Godfather and devil's advocate to Alvar Aalto has over the years taken on generalisation after generalisation. The looseness of aphorism and information, the lack of rigorous debate, have allowed versions of Blomstedt's scheme to script the 'silence' of many of the reputed leaders in Finnish architecture today. His mixed discourse, his stress on harmony and proportion, on the (phenomenological) essence of architecture, on urbanism and the relationships between man and nature, architecture, art and landscape, and above all on theory and its 'contest' have all been reduced devastatingly to serve a simple thesis. This thesis is about lucidity and clarity; it has been with some distortion privileged into a discourse on and about 'silence'.

If Aulis Blomstedt has been acknowledged, albeit reluctantly, as the 'executive producer' no one has occupied a greater 'shamanic' role more recently than the architect Juhani Pallasmaa as the 'translator' of insight in Finnish architecture. Recalling the need for authority (and subsequent authenticity) in the Lutheran upbringing, it is not unusual that so often the personal is used in the small country as a protective device against serious exchange. Again, we must sidestep this duel for the moment if we are to interrogate 'silence'.

What is more in doubt and what we are questioning is whether this so-called tradition of silence can be seen as a defence; whether it has succeeded in fending off all comers (including the wildly misunderstood Phenomenology, Postmodernism and Deconstruction) and established an enlarged language of 'modernism' as the encoded birthright of this new society. And if silence acts as the theoretical underpinning of this tradition, an organising motive - some would say 'mystic' - then we must now excavate a little further to do justice to what then 'sits in' as a moral correctness for the society.

To the insider, Finnish Architecture is the history of personal insult and denial. Vigorous debate is selectively eloquent, vindictive and, even, hostile. Aggression is hidden in ego-games and narcissistic manoeuvres. Mostly throughout the last century it has been a battle of privileged monologues. There is a tacit agreement that colleagues do not talk, discuss, or debate openly the work of others. A silent agreement that description is always inadequate or virtuous indolence. These become private fears that operate within language as a retreat; language speaks silently.

Under such conditions to talk and discuss is short-circuited. A critique has little chance to emerge except to signify the fear of the negative; 'criticism' is signified by its reductive "no, no, no" form. Remember, the Finnish language begins with the word 'ei' (no) and corrects. Like the use of the wind in yachting, criticism in Finland is a tacking procedure to end up where you once started.

No, no, no!

If our proposals are refuted, this would still signal the time to open up the Archive to purity and order, suspicion and innocence, and to the history of ideas. To the outsider, unaware of the journeys of self and culture, where even negative exuberance is suspected, Finnish Architecture can certainly be read singularly and happily as a controlled episteme of purity and order. Nothing changes when all changes.

This bleeds wonky heroism. General suspicion, helped along by incomplete, fragmented pictures, redefines the tradition of architecture as a prepared mind. The private and selected inactivity, the balked acknowledgment surrounding Aulis Blomstedt's writings, journals, work and notebooks, offer us a perfect chance to extend our critical sketch.

The ascendancy of Finnish Architecture was, after a period in the late 50s and 60s, taken for granted in many informed circles. A confused picture it was somewhat biased by the international success of Aalto and the 'romance' of Finnishness which spun off Aalto's work to accepted heroes like Pietilä, Penttilä, Siren and others. This is now, rightly, a questioned picture. Attitudes polarise.

Scott Poole, a recent researcher in the Finnish landscape considers this a bias that needs righting. His critique bolstered by Aulis Blomstedt's 'shadow' represents a tradition of silence that touches base. And by so invoking silence, it is a critique that attempts through 'silence' a narrative that retrieves the general loss of value in society and well-being. Malcolm Quantrill, more seasoned and with a wider repertoire, sees this 'silence' differently, interpreting it as a natural indication of the real state of affairs. Quantrill reads silence as a forced position taken by marginalized architects. The foreign interest in Aalto and others like Pietila and Siren clearly signified to Quantrill the only architecture of interest around in the general creative dullness.

Again, these patterns can be traced back to the historians, the travellers and anthropologists of the 18th and 19th centuries. Finland becomes acceptable to critics for different 'blind' reasons. "Unlike most other alien races, the Finns had become quite acceptable and agreeable to the British. In comparison with the Negroes, Indians, Slavs and even the Irish, they were endowed with an exceptionally high status in the hierarchy of races."

Anssi Halmesvirta notes that Finland was a territory from 1809 onwards subsumed under Russian rule: "The Finns were seen to assist, on their own peripheral but critical border-area, the preservations of Western civilisation against the eastern menace. This had been the gist of Finnish history from its very beginning and some variations if it can be encountered even today."¹⁷ Perhaps this is unfairly reductive but the seduction of this sometimes and always confused notion of 'Finnishness' is seen to have disguised what was really happening in Finnish architecture.¹⁸ A culturally hegemonic rationalist school, centred on Helsinki, has dominated the educational and professional scene for over four decades and paradoxically by passed the theoretical role in architecture Aulis Blomstedt tried to contest.

Though the role of Aulis Blomstedt has rightly re-emerged in recent research, 'silence' as an organising motive for tectonic and aesthetic concerns, has rarely been explored amongst the architects. Contemporary Finnish architects and students are apt to play an ambiguous game; they deny 'silence' as a jokey notion of little concern in their own minimalist games. In this they have been taught by architectural education to play a win-win game.

Where they do not understand the wilful, sometimes wild phenomenological spin put on buildings, they remain silent. When this is trimmed to accessible language games and terse sentences that can sound right for their architecture, they applaud. Yet the discipline asked from and propounded by Aulis Blomstedt belies their flippancy. To be, as Blomstedt said, 'natural and intellectual' at the same time has never been easy. In Finland, where being 'natural' is a somewhat uneasy, neutralising game, being intellectual is often a mask that needs constant check.

The art of subordination

Aulis Blomstedt, younger brother of P E Blomstedt and Sibelius's son-in-law, was one of the main teachers responsible for architecture at the Helsinki School of Architecture (Otaniemi) as a professor from 1958 to 1966. He is written about in histories of Finnish architecture as significant but in a rather ambiguous footnote manner. Mostly it is a reluctant, even unintelligent shrug of acceptance. This suggests Blomstedt's output and oeuvre not big enough to attribute greater architectural lesson.

His significant collection of writings, journals and sketches have remained meticulously self-catalogued in the *Museum of Finnish Architecture* or then ignored. A selection has found their way into circulation, but these are mostly the endlessly repeated statements.¹⁹ These gnomic utterances, carefully selected, stand in as generalisations and mantras for an assumed talent of higher thinking in architectural philosophy.

Architects, now reaching the age Blomstedt was when at his most influential, acknowledge his role with somewhat embarrassed paraphrases of his thinking. Blomstedt's shadow role in the society has been immense but perhaps, for a small culture, most architects are just too close to the Archive to make any detached sense of it. It is worth diving in whether we fall on our head or our feet, whether we hit sky or water, whether we root or resist! Here I take Samuel Johnson's lesson when writing for 'The Idler'. We will take licence and ignorance to stumble on insight. We will ignore as much as we can to make fresh tracks.

The status given Blomstedt as the rationalist Godfather is a condition encouraged by the need for authoritarian figures in a predominantly Lutheran upbringing.²⁰ Blomstedt brought along a heavy sense of discipline and rectitude. Tolerant and intolerant at the same time. Through the family, the Lutheran rite of obedience, and the ever-present shadow of Sibelius, Blomstedt – if we are allowed our own paraphrase - is purported to have scripted the future of architecture as a harmonic study of privilege.

Music and order, harmony and equilibrium, prototypical phenomenology and controlled perception, architecture was choice and only a few could choose correctly. Blomstedt was a consummate corrector and self-modifier. His behaviour suggests an obsessive neurosis. There is little doubt that this sort of ascetic anxiety was a charm that could and did set the agenda for, as we have suggested, an 'erotics' of geometry and restraint. There is one wonderful photograph of the man drawing 'blind lines' on the blackboard at the school of architecture in Otaniemi. Can we though fairly attribute to him not only the *erotics* that followed from this seduction but the blind authoritarianism?

"Architecture is choice, and few are able to choose right."

So said Mr. Blomstedt. Since then, 'silence' has been cultured like yoghurt from this and other such mantras. Amongst invariants - minimalism, asceticism, rationalism, restraint, primordial stillness, archetypal reverie - all could be archived under silence. Blomstedt's orphans have been many. The archive, however, initially entrusted to his 'understudy' and disciple Juhani Pallasmaa has seen re-workings of Blomstedt's themes under various names. Minimalism, 'miniaturism' and 'silence' have been buttressed by Pallasmaa's fit of well-chosen literature from Hall to Bachelard, from Stravinsky to Kundera, from Whorf to Calvino, from Heidegger to Tarkovsky.

This translation is part of an elegant but self-closing ego-thesis. It contrives to structure silence as the fitting tectonic and symbolic mission of the architect obeying the logics of respite and retreat. It has turned a romantic venture into a chase for reductive 'essences', a cul-de-sac that Blomstedt predicted in one of his more self-questioning texts, 'Prospects in Architecture.'

On the essence of architecture, Blomstedt warned himself and others: "Actually it is dangerous to try to extract the essence out of anything that is and remains complex by nature. One may end up like the student of chemistry whose studies at the Polytechnic were characterised by saying that he used a reduction reaction for reducing equations." Using a constant and disciplined self-awareness, Blomstedt can be seen to have predicted the outcome of all the 'essence-searching' that has so occupied an architect-theoretician like Pallasmaa in text after text. Since Blomstedt's death, this has become an essentialism that has subsequently pre-occupied and even strangled Finnish architecture: "Perhaps," Blomstedt could never have known how prophetic his words were, "the same thing will happen to me in trying to distil the essence of architecture."²¹

To do justice to Pallasmaa and his supporting generation who tacitly follow this interpretation, this has been a consistent and eloquently dogmatic fine arts translation of Blomstedt's thesis. It makes the higher bid in architecture by recourse to the poetics of the senses, and architecture of phenomenological intention and insistence. It can be read as a phone catalogue or a self-help volume of your own utopia. Where this process hiccupped, of course, was in the dance hall days of Marxist-Leninism which overwhelmed any essentialism by supreme reductivism.

The violence of the translation of the 1960s generation gave no indication of the re-emergence of sense and sensibility in the Neo-modern lamentations that were to follow throughout the 1980s and 1990s.²² These brilliant restorations of a known repertoire attempt a strategy of consolation. By repetition of known architectural forms, upgraded certainly from the Modernist canon into a Finnish tectonic essentialism, this starts to make architecture look like a hypnotic will-to-silence.

It is arguable that the severity, the dogma, and the uncompromising rigour attached to this essentialism have not deviated much in all this time from Blomstedt's discipline. To support this view, we now need to shift our concern to how and why such privileging and 'theory' go relatively unchallenged; this returns us to the role of the authoritarian figure. That 'theory' (statements, pro or contra, thesis or anti-thesis) can pass relatively unchallenged and un-debated in a country like Finland is not so much to do with the language that can always close itself off to the outsider. Instead, the unchallenged debate, the unchallenged exchange is more connected to the politics of authority in the society.

Where familiarity always breeds distrust if not contempt, respect needs to opt for safer guardians. Time and time again a Finn will tell you of their fear and impotence at school; that they were unable to challenge their teachers. It was unheard of even to interrupt. Gentle seething was always preferable to the shame of being victimised in class. Silence was honoured as something preferable to talking wildly. The schoolteacher, the professor, the priest, the magistrate go remarkably unchallenged in Lyceum, University, Church and Court.

It is a characteristic of the Finn to swerve out of the way of conflict, to avoid confrontation. Indeed, where confrontation is anticipated as a necessary social encounter, isolation and privacy often assume a mask. The passion of the unsocial is, for most, a struggle with loneliness. For the extreme, it is a pact with the self. For those who are courageous or hope-less, it is suicide.

Recalling Zeldin, it is quite probable that even today country folk naturally shun the outsider. Distrust for the rural society meant survival. Passion for loneliness and the unsocial was a luxury; suspicion and caution was a hunter's and forester's instinct. Silence, the unrevealed (talking) hand or eye, was livelihood. Just as in a game of poker, the intellectual, the city-forester, turns such silence into a form of terror. As Nietzsche put it: "No one dares to appear as he is but mask himself as a cultivated man, as a scholar, as a poet, as a politician..."

Nowhere has this been so apparent in a country forced to cushion its knees under one man's obedience to Moscow, in a country forced to read silence and neutrality as a necessary act of defiance. The result, as later re-assessments of Urho Kekkonen's long rule as president now begin to show, is an individuality withdrawn even more into itself. From without, Nietzsche says, it has become invisible.²³

"What in the end," says Beatriz Colomina "makes Le Corbusier's archive private is its capacity to hide things. Sometimes the best way to hide something is in full sight."²⁴ Sometimes, the best way to hide something however is not always in full sight. Upon a recent opportunity to glance, I admit 'rapido', through some of Aulis Blomstedt's meticulous notebooks, journals and sketchbooks, I couldn't help thinking that here was someone who must have understood so well the value of hiding things in the light, so to speak.

To make architecture invisible, pure, that higher order necessary for man's dignity was obviously something that developed with Blomstedt's own journals, his jottings, his sketches and his citations from other writers, other artists and other architects. Is it possible that this cautious neurotic man had an agenda that has not only been hijacked into some sort of correctness, but has diminished the importance he undoubtedly gave to self-contest in theory and to 'urbanism'?

Since Blomstedt's demise, the debate has narrowed not widened. Urbanism has become parochial as it has globalised. Architects have been seen to abdicate debate by indulgence in journalistic attacks or then opt for an agreed silence as the debate over the *Kiasma* Contemporary Art Museum indicated. A re-reading of Blomstedt's eclectic writing and thoughts about urbanism and nature from *Le Carré Bleu* would all but show how restrictive the discourse in Finnish architecture and theory has now become. How did this happen? Deeper scrutiny of the archive would afford more accuracy, but we might, even with such impropriety, hazard a few pointers.

L'ésprits nouveaux

Aulis Blomstedt was undoubtedly one of those visually influenced and influencing figures in architecture in the last century who saw in Le Corbusier the way forward; through persona, intellect and architectural vision and montage. He probably presented the perfect image of the well-dressed architect intellectual. Colomina's brilliant detective story-research, 'Privacy and Publicity' allows us to imagine just how much manipulation and modification of the image must have been done by Le Corbusier himself.

Like many of the time, late 40s and early 50s, bow tie and buzz-clipped hair, round-necked sweater and cigarette, Blomstedt himself sported the intellectual code. Though he resisted the owl-glasses, the neatness of his appearance gave him the image of a Swiss doctor on vacation, if not quite that of the emulated and chosen émigré architect in Paris. A Francophile, Blomstedt's manners were meticulous; his methods were about methodology and his obsessions were, clearly, compulsive.

Before speaking he 'looked' authoritarian in the 'Japanese' way, the head slightly bowed down. And he spoke well. The pages of Blomstedt's journals and notebooks are ordered in a somewhat random manner: this needs explanation. There is no fashionable chaos here nor is there the chance meandering and play of accident that we can discover say in the Pietilä archive and self-penned notes. Handwriting wavers as if on train, in lecture or then scrawled in the dark. Here was a conscious intellectual defining the order he felt necessary to keep architecture pure and the self 'invisible'.

A theocratic adventure, Blomstedt would always return to the straight and narrow after deliberation and discourse. Nowhere, as far as I could tell, did Blomstedt ever speak persistently or directly about 'silence'. In a Le Carré Bleu text (4.1959) we do however get the following as he picks up on his master's interest in Arab architecture: "The horizontal floor, the flat lying bridge, an Arab village with its flat terraces - these are idealised images of the soil, of the horizon itself which may be perceived by the eye only if the limit of the prairie or the sea crosses the eye. In such a way, architecture is 'stylised' nature, but its silence is eloquent." Here, though silence is mentioned, we note the quiet shaping of the discourse by the particular use of the words *idealised images* and *stylised*.

In this careful elegance, less wild mystical passages, these are Blomstedt's journals of phenomenological fervour. His Le Carré Bleu texts were often seen as a precursor to Reima Pietilä's own culturally engaging texts and Pallasmaa's later phenomenological journey where juxtaposition, anecdote, story and lesson all intermingle. Where 'normative' statements are made we often get the hint, through asides and comments, of Blomstedt's increasing self-awareness (what might now be seen as his own self-reflexivity). He always seemed aware of the discourse he was entering.

Pietilä too, never stopped this kind of self-debate with his own limit. However, when self-debate loses sight of its own limit it can over-emphasise the dogmatic. Such self-debate becomes heavily metaphysical and mystical. Though a 'Francophile', there is no hint of Bergson, Merleau-Ponty, Levi-Straus or Benveniste. In Blomstedt, Cézanne and St Exupéry seem more appropriate fellow-travellers.

Many entries in the journals are partial commentaries on events and people met. Amongst these we find the modified and modifying one-liner. The aphorisms appear as they would from any self-corrected exercise which goes back over lines to alter them until they sound right. Architecture follows similar tinkering and alteration. Aphorisms and one-liners can be culled from the mass of this writing with ease. Yet, having said all this, we must still consider how the notion of a higher order for architecture wedged in aphorism after aphorism in his notebooks came from a precision so close to *silence* as at times to be too loud.

The sounds of silence

It is not difficult to see Blomstedt put forward the intellectually, privileged 'Modern Architecture' and in his case, a particular intellectual De Stijlian (harmonic and rhythmic) refinement of it, as the highest artistic practice in response to the quotidian, mass-cultural mess of everyday life. What is little known so far of his personal life may bear out the passion and rigour of 'military' training, of control, and the freedom within such an Academy.

The Blomstedt family of four boys was run like a small Academy in the shadow of the grand tree, Sibelius.²⁵ Architecture became an awards system; a points system in the graduating journey of self through to self. Pallasmaa duly picked up this rewards system. In other words, for Blomstedt architecture could locate itself in-between; in between the 'self' and the 'other'.

This is the sense of control that saw Blomstedt the natural foil to Aalto's internationalism and romanticism, a natural foil also to Aalto's flamboyance and (silent) 'womanizing'. If Aalto was generalised into red-wine or vermouth machismo, the brutality of the Finnish forester crossed with the instinct of the pioneering American cowboy, Blomstedt was the masked intellectual, the Francophile willing others to perform as he required of himself. In another life Blomstedt would have been the headman, the village chief or Churchman, looking down from above, exhorting those impure to confess bravely. There he would be, beating the shamanic drum, whilst smoking *Gitanes!*²⁶

The notebooks are transparent. Blomstedt clearly favoured an internal if not a silent life. Supposedly autonomous, he made himself into a self-referential object before it was obvious that others from that era, whether he knew it or not (Barthes and Levi-Strauss) could do that for him. Catching Modernism later than mainstream Paris, a good 20 to 30 years on from the early days of L'Ésprit Nouveau, allowed Blomstedt to cull the *Purism* he so felt attracted towards, from the more radical media montage that Le Corbusier had shown in the early journals from 1920-1925.

The journal Blomstedt founded in 1958, named - significantly - in French, Le Carré Bleu along with - significantly - the Frenchman, André Schimmerling, had essays and texts accompanied by aerial photographs, Japanese gardens, landscape forms, St Exupéry, the mandatory desert development, the mandatory Finnish lake-lines and a sprinkling of Egyptian references if not (Corbusier's) Algerian women. As a detached viewing subject himself this source and obsession were turned by Blomstedt into an architecture that was to detach viewing in such a way as to suspend any figural or sculptural dimension.

This became for Blomstedt a strict programme to neutralise unnecessary decor, perhaps in life as well as art.²⁷ Any reference to the few aphorisms that have already been culled from his notebooks and journals will, of course, make clear this detachment and the normative urge in his phrases:²⁸

Elegance can only be achieved through asceticism.

Culture implies striving towards integrity,
clarity and precision in all fields and in all expressions.

Numbers are not size, they are forms.

Restraint is the privilege of the great.

I avoid contriving - only the natural can be great.

It is said that art is a means for expressing one's temperament –
to me architecture is a means of disciplining temperament.

Disciplining Temperament

Disciplining temperament would see Blomstedt, at a time when mass culture, standardisation and industrialisation occupied architecture's surge for more public and social relevance, deny architecture's involvement with the more problematic emerging forms of communication and information theory. Apart from the montage within Le Carré Bleu, Blomstedt would seek to go within, to remain pure, subordinating architecture to the higher moral ground:

"It is known that form and music, form and poetry, and form and mathematics are closely interwoven. But the innermost core of form is, however, concealed from man." This hidden act would invite a chosen, self-performing and self-purifying truth. In this way, consistent with his own programme of restraint and simplicity, he would not support the engagement of *Modern Architecture* with media, or with politics, though he was to live to see, up until his death mid 1970s, his pedagogical legacy of discipline translated somewhat violently into an era of confused geometricism and standardisation.

Blomstedt would see both worlds, politics and the media, pursued relentlessly by his followers. Within the next fifteen years from 1959, he would see Aarno Ruusuvuori pursue the unrelenting self-closing *purism* that he aimed at. Perhaps Ruusuvuori got nearest to building the aphorisms and has only recently been given the attention he deserves. Ruusuvuori though was no innocent quietist. What little he did say usually held gems within. His character was equally as seductive and complex. He was as prepared as Blomstedt and, significantly for the Archive, he would guide this through his role and tenure as Director of the Museum of Finnish Architecture. Heavily a promotional institution, research was not always allowed to take on the more ambiguous diversity and plural picture of Finnish architecture during this tenure.²⁹

Blomstedt would see his one-time CIAM companion, Pietilä, swerve from his own rigorous exploration of rationalism and indeterminacy in the Brussels Pavilion (1958) to a controlled foray into the sculptural and natural. For this swerve, the Neo-Plasticism and De Stijl exercise Pietilä exhumed in the Suvikumpu Housing project remains pivotal, especially considering Blomstedt's role also in the project at competition stage. But by then Pietilä had too much anti-narrative in his architecture to suit Blomstedt's discipline, though much in Pietilä's early thinking can be traced back to ideas expressed in Blomstedt's *Architecture and Landscape* (Le Carre Bleu 4:1959).

Blomstedt would also see his own disciple Juhani Pallasmaa enter the arena of short-term political engagement and agitprop and watch as 'pure' rhetoric twisted support for the collective and against the individual in those Dance Hall days of Marxist-Leninism. Blomstedt would not however live to see the reductive in the essentialist search reduced to recipes for a phenomenological user-guide as he forewarned.³⁰ He would also see Aalto's Godson, Maire Gullichsen's son, Kristian develop standardisation into a brilliant dialectic between equality and quality; an architectural game setting the minimal against detail and an *erotics* of asceticism and affluence.

He would however miss out on Gullichsen's emergence later as the architect of some of the most convincing allusive and elusive works of architecture in the pluralising decade of the 1980s and on into the confused *postmodernism* of the 1990s. In fact, taking Aalto on at his own game from the ground up and from the roof down, Gullichsen was to produce dead ringers for a rejuvenated Aaltoesque referential binary-style architecture. Too much 'decor' though probably for Blomstedt's taste!

Blomstedt would also see Kirmo Mikkola strip the Francophile discipline and dogma even further into a political and cerebral reading of art theory and the subsequent semantic reference to Constructivism and all-things social and soviet. Mikkola got nearest to stripping the sun from his eyes and seeing the canvas through which an architectural idealism could perform and then vanish. No reference was made at this stage to cinema. But he wouldn't live to see his foe Aalto, rehabilitated by both Mikkola and Pallasmaa who proved they could reverse jackets and applaud what Blomstedt found so unsatisfactory about Aalto's meandering work. Nor would he see the architect Juha Leiviskä get as near as subordination to his realisations of a higher, lucid plane for architectural harmony in his musical, fugue architectures.³¹

It is considered unfair to blame leading figures, leading 'voices' (especially Pallasmaa and Mikkola) for the devastating slide into hubris and *Formalism* and the hijack of the rational exercise by housing development boards and the prefabricated building industry during the 1970s. Such slide of course happened everywhere in the world where mass scale building projects were tempted by speculative money. But this stance is somewhat naive. These individual hectoring voices had enormous influence during the polemical and hostile late 1960s and early 1970s. Their hostility to any architecture with thrill and curve, with symbol and verve no doubt sanctioned a mindlessness elsewhere.

Silence again re-groups. To claim that there is a loss of collective faith in Finnish architecture today, without seeing the public's suspicion and without understanding the fall out of authoritarianism and hostile dogma during that time, does not deserve innocence. Clearly the dogma, censorship and intolerance from this period affected Finnish architecture and the archive in at least three ways. First, it damaged if not closed off architectural criticism pledging it to a naive reductive social programme.

Loss of collective faith in architecture was inevitable. Secondly, it misunderstood the mechanics of culture with a curious naivety. And thirdly, it reinforced neutrality and estrangement by intolerance to the 'other' types of architecture and thinking around. Confusing passive tolerance with active official tolerance, it was indiscriminate. Marcuse is apt here: "Such indiscriminate tolerance is justified in harmless debates, in conversation, in academic discussion; it is indispensable in the scientific enterprise, in private religion."³² And how close this was to private religion in Finnish architecture, only the opening of the Archive and less falsification of truth and history will probably tell us.

The sub-text is even more interesting. At bottom there is not only the ever-present sainthood of geometry, restraint and discipline within these visions of architecture. These are second-nature to a culture brought up on secret resistance, secret loathing for a country that could overrun tomorrow. The same country, the same Empire offered such seductive agitprop models for architecture and social subordination.

Yes but no, this was about control. Control always was and remains essential in this theoretical position for authenticity and power. And Blomstedt's lesson was well meant. It was a lesson not about using accident or the spontaneous way systems feedback and then self-inform. Nor was it about conveniently changing one's mind and being applauded for this openness. Neither was it about chaos. Instead Blomstedt sought invariants. It just so happened that his invariants requested him to be more invariant than others.³³

Beyond the private

Architects tempted with the higher moral gambit have always a private religion to tickle and tease out. Their success relies on control of the inner self and their inner speech. Most of the outer form is masked. Blomstedt's concern was a consistent testing of whether that 'control' outside and beyond architecture loses all semblance of order and integrity when it is compromised. For Blomstedt a dynamic architecture with static elements sounded a lot like an ordered family life. Pekka Suhonen, in an otherwise generalised text on Blomstedt from 1978 did however identify this reversal: "the quality of Aulis Blomstedt's architecture cannot be described as something working outwards from the private to the public. On the contrary, his mind works in quite the opposite way."

Inward, then, from the public to the private via architecture? Blomstedt's notebooks consist of about a dozen large black, 30 x 40 cm, cartridge sketchbooks, catalogued under various thematic headings; form, harmony etc. These seem to cover the 1960s and 1970s and besides drawings and sketches they seem to be assembled on a cut and paste system. Papers from anywhere and everywhere are affixed to these large white pages; a bricolage of statements, thoughts, citations and sketches meets the eye.

Further there are between twenty and thirty small sketchbooks from the earlier years and going right through; small sketch blocks, spiral-bound or stitched. The third set is journal size, 15 x 20 cm, in which Blomstedt seems to have committed the private organisation of his travels, his visits, his chance meetings. Pencil and ink mostly, alternating between a spidery shaky hand and firm tectonic hand. Taken together, and there are of course countless letters and doubtless rogue journals and sketchbooks, we start to be seduced by this ordered existence moving towards a prepared mind.³⁴

One entry for the 4th December 1947 reads: "*Un rigoureux equilibre est indispensable si l'on repousse l'equilibre conventionnel.*" It was written as if printed in a 1930s font; strictly, meticulously copied down in ink with not quite the right accents. Alongside it, the reference: Jean Cocteau, *Le Coq et L'Arlequin*. And if it invited so in life, we must question, then with what consequence such void and *equilibrium* in architecture? The private life of the architect was never so inextricably wound up as in Blomstedt's Lutheran fear. Another untranslated aphorism reads: "Of all the things most to fear. Fear itself."

From the cloister to the construction site, from an intense cloistered discipline Blomstedt obviously saw architectural production and hope pass from the idealism of metaphysical certainty to the more pragmatic, even disappointing mundane aesthetics of form. No doubt if he had built as much as Le Corbusier, we might also have seen him resorting to modifying the photographs to conform to the verbal scaffold. Who can say? But Blomstedt's short production did spare him the vulgar reduction of much architectural dream to realised project.³⁵

Can we interpret this preparation of the mind as a meticulous attempt to secure his place in the century? Perhaps. But with more and more detailed archiving of his thoughts and architecture, in an era strongly anti-theory (if not anti-intellectual) Blomstedt could not help but be the obvious precursor to the different spectres 'rationalism' was to assume in Finnish architecture. Here to avoid a painful concordance we could suggest a list of 'ungrammatical' architectural synonyms: emptiness, coolness, minimalism, neutrality, restraint, order, subordination, asceticism ... the simple, the mute, the archetypal, the timeless and so on.

Silence as the so claimed 'tradition' in Finnish architecture becomes the re-grouping of this approximation. It is the recuperation of an imagined lost culture; architecture is the masked language of its idealism. "The same could be said about architecture. On the public side of the wall another language was spoken, the masking language of information. On the other side lay the unspeakable. But this unspeakable domain beyond the public is also beyond the private."³⁶

Beyond the private, Colomina is discussing the place in a city like Vienna where the limit can reside; in the wall that is its mask. If we are to give credence to an accepted encoded discourse on silence within Finnish architecture, then we might expect to find serious documentation and critical discussion on such aspects as the mask, invisibility and the void and not the repetitive metaphysical jargon on timeless well-being. That we don't find this perhaps should tell us more about the forest intellect of the Finnish architect rather than the absence of such notions in Blomstedt's writings. What followed from Blomstedt's autonomy was an alibi for theory and the unchallenged power of ambiguity in the aphorism.

Alibis and ambiguities

Blomstedt's search can now be seen to have resulted in an architectural language that privileged architectural representation. Finnish architects were allowed to speak for themselves, somewhat aloof and silently isolated from a wider conversation about architecture and the environment. Language went unchallenged. Authority too. Since then, we have noted how there have been a series of verbal nets, metaphysical and phenomenological props for an architecture of respite.³⁷

Usually, we find these 'silent' nets put forward as reasons to be rational, acceptable strategies to take refuge in a peripheral world. Here also is nostalgia for the reconciliation of irreconcilable opposites. Blomstedt passionately invited other Finnish architects into the intimacies of elemental nature and reason. But there was always a potential embarrassment about these proposals as if to be intellectual is really only a gloss on the obvious desire to 'fall silent'.

As diverse statements, Blomstedt's aphorisms remain ambiguous, unable and unwilling to open themselves to any deeper organisation within a discourse. The Finnish poet Haavikko may have a more appropriate alibi for any architectural script:

I summoned the Great Meeting of Dead Nations, and
behold, all came and reported.

All were registered, each was given a name-tag. And
behold, there were thousands of those nations.

All of us who had adapted to the world and to the
conditions blowing in the wind, had died, of our adapting.

For what it means is a bloody harmony and a knowledge
of many things, not only the cross that becomes a sword,

the sword that becomes a hammer, the hammer that
becomes business and profit and time, the clock that becomes a
precise well-wrought weapon,

crazy, to imagine you could discover the structure of the
world without understanding that such scrutiny makes it fall
apart.³⁸

The result is that such statements by architects remain discriminatory and 'silent'. They are chosen for interpretive support, for the affirmative mask but not for any critical debate. Depth must be hidden certainly, if we follow Nietzsche's model of the intellectual, but where if not on the surface?³⁹ Where if not in the cold sensuality of geometry? The failure as Blomstedt knew so well was the danger of architectural vocabulary getting further away from the purity intended. From this obsession comes over-reach.

It is possible that Blomstedt himself was not short on obsession and why in later years there was a hypnotic will to repeat his discipline to the extent of silence as muteness. Paavo Haavikko, perhaps closest to the brilliance of obsession that Blomstedt demonstrated, always felt language was key to *unspeakability*. There was an untranslatability and an ultimate darkness in the distrust of images. The following extract from the collection *Wine, Writing* (1976)⁴⁰ puts into words the discriminatory strategy many architects adopted. This, after Blomstedt spearheaded the possibility of theory in a culture of architects so intent on remaining discreetly silent:

Loneliness, nostalgia, wine, and Autumn.

I open the uncut pages of a book with a knife, but don't read.

I read printouts from the computer, the figures.

This is not writing anything down on paper.

This sentence is no more written now than it was before.

It was no less written before it was.

I knew these things, and you aren't reading this.

There is no need to read the old masters.

The most important thing is that they exist.

Curiously enough, if they radiate light

they generate more darkness.

If they had anything to say, they have already fallen silent,

they would like to retract their words.

But of course they wouldn't apologize.

And, of course, the Archive doesn't apologise. Did Blomstedt know something of the impossibility of communication? Does the very silence of his architectural production point to a willed incommunicable intimacy? Intimacy might be a guide to the desire that silence should fill in the logics of respite. But it is difficult to say; Finland is not an intimate country, though it is naturally intimate to and with itself, often to an unhelpful degree.

Notions of silence in Finland have always been confused with asceticism and the minimal architectural gestures that must tempt emptiness. And emptiness, in an immensity of nature so pressing, so loud, must always challenge the individual's existence. It is a matter of dignity and site; to want to deny site, to lift the architect and thus the building out of any context to site is a natural sequence in Blomstedt's thinking. It is a gamble with idealism and neutrality, a gamble with language that then makes the metaphysical reach even more plausible (if ultimately never achievable, which would be its success).

Redundant this may be to architectural production this is not a redundant thinking. Architecture becomes truly subordinate to forces beyond a 'simple' materialism. Proceeding along this line, it is clear to see that Blomstedt was nearer to an 'immaterialism' than materialism. And we can express some surprise that at the attention Blomstedt tried to bring to architectural theory in an unspeaking land, little attention has been paid to the consequences of such 'immaterialism'.

Immaterialism versus a rhetoric of place

If Blomstedt took the media manipulation of Le Corbusier much closer to heart than the unmasking of Adolf Loos' sentences, it is not surprising that we see less attention to the local scale, the pragmatics of the mask and the continual debate on *ornament* that Loos shows. Blomstedt's agenda was always more abstract, more dismissively correct. Closer to De Stijl and the 'persona' of Theo Van Doesburg than Loos, Blomstedt relied on an abstraction of language that could only assume to perform if the generalisations and 'big ideas' were accepted. Breaking up Loos's sentences would indicate to us a differing internal use of language where anecdote, reference, rhetoric plays scale against Blomstedt's aphorisms.

Loos: The first ornament that came into being, the cross, had an erotic origin.

Blomstedt: Is the right angle the octave phenomenon of the visual world?

Loos: The first work of art..... in order to rid himself of his natural excesses.

Blomstedt: If you want to create something new, search for that which is ancient.

Loos: A horizontal line: the reclining woman.

Blomstedt: Architecture is geometry adapted to gravity.

Loos: A vertical line: the man who penetrates her.

Blomstedt: Architecture is the art of subordination.⁴¹

As with a discourse that survives without exchange, and goes beyond the private, Blomstedt's approach to theory may now be seen in Finnish circles to have legitimated generalised statements about architecture's metaphysical promise. In comparison, Van Doesburg would use language to express both the wide range of architecture's new promise: "The new architecture on its highest plane will be called upon to remove the conflict between the organic and artificial, between the open and closed, between the country and the city" and the closer, more pragmatic tectonic moves that such generalisation must invite: "By the disruption of enclosure - walls - we have abolished the duality between interior and exterior."

No walls, no foundation! This is not a debate we see Blomstedt take on in depth. Instead, the type of language of natural/intellectual, classic/romantic, interior /exterior, inside/outside were discourses probably passed over to Pietilä. Already in 1958 and 1959 Pietila published (in *Le Carré Bleu* alongside Blomstedt) studies clearly challenging language and echoing De Stijl and Theo van Doesburg and the delimiting of Neo-Plasticism. In these texts and models Pietilä can be seen to have tackled tectonic modulation and transcend the formal implications of Blomstedt's generalised statements.

It would be perhaps unfair to say that a metaphysical lining in Finnish architecture has contaminated much architectural writing at the expense of serious theory and tectonic/philosophic enquiry. But the continuous desire for a symbolic expression, a representation of the myth of Finnish architecture as a 'non-representational' condition, as an unquestioned embodiment of a nation's growth and well-being encoded in architecture, has always made recourse to fine arts and the status of non-representation on and off the canvas.⁴² Natural (and 'intellectual' for a Francophile) it would be painting taken as an organisational depth model for the architectural surface. Readings would naturally follow on from this and still do so aplenty.⁴³

If, according to our own reading, tectonic expression of an inner state has always been the masked agenda of the Rationalist strain in Finnish architecture since Blomstedt, we need to consider how - at a certain time - the 1960s - this led to a whole generation of architects sidelining site and context in what may now be seen as that ancient battle with nature. Obviously, the accommodation of formal statements and tectonic purism could bypass the concerns of site. Aalto's assimilation of site and place, continued more radically by Pietilä, was considered 'out of context'.

We can now see how a general 'reductivism' in the whole era just about put everything 'other' out of bounds. Where place became a literal metaphor for Pietilä's spontaneously complex emerging forms, and a tectonic metaphor for history's weave for Aalto, for Blomstedt it was clearly a *delimiting* exercise. This set up a condition where nature and city cease to exist in architecture. Architecture, displaced (de-placed) to the tectonics of purity, could affirm, by this tactic, its higher existence. The idealism in the Finnish programme set out for such event.

If we look at the photographs of any projects from the sixties and seventies we see formal representations, images that blur with fine art and rational romanticism, images displaced from the environment. Not only are people naturally 'avoided' (this, a constant complaint of any architect's photographs) but *place* itself is almost etched out. If Colomina showed us Le Corbusier airbrushing out other buildings and place around the Villa Schwob, we need not consider it necessary in Finland. A greater presence threatened to achieve this on its own.

The ancient battle

Nature and the intellect: 'to be natural and intellectual' was one of Blomstedt's one-liners that Pietilä used to repeat. Literally, though, in Finland architecture is swallowed by nature in both country and city. It is understandable to hear the claims of architects feeling that site and nature form no real context for their work. The landscape is so immense, so expansive and often features 'monotones' that can always be viewed as a neutral backdrop. Architecture in Finland could frame nature but never be framed by nature, contrary to the endless manufacturing of phenomenological interpretations from just about any dwelling placed in nature as expansive as this.

This 'threat' naturally invites an intellectual resistance; a resistance to being swallowed up by the sentiment to the 'wild', the 'primitive' and - if we go too far back - the un-cultured past. In such resistance, featured in various theoretical positions interweaving with one another, idealism, purism and minimalism (from the painters, artists and architects) and the obvious affinity to the 'constructivist' artists in the USSR, we see the logic of the purifying episteme claimed for Finnish architecture.⁴⁴

As Mies van der Rohe entered the eclectic Finnish scene in the 1960s it was this contribution to Blomstedt's thinking and the pragmatics attributed to Mies that allowed the *constructivist* strain further programmatic advance. Pallasmaa, Gullichsen, Mikkola and Sipinen and many others produced buildings shaped and influenced by Mies. In fact it is possible that the refinement of the edge (eave) details - always important to the Miesian 'cube' - occupied all these architects at the same time, mid-60s. Arto Sipinen's Jyvaskyla University might properly be considered the first venture into this brick-and-steel aesthetic.

Though it would be unreasonable to attribute a 'site' neutrality, a strategy of effacement, to all these architects, it surely goes some way to explaining why we find versions of Sipinen's cultural-centre architecture repeated in many Finnish towns and cities during these two decades. The identifiable signature of Sipinen's Post-Aalto style for a moment appeared ubiquitous, suggesting a pragmatic version of Blomstedt's immaterialism.⁴⁵

However, it was Aarno Ruusuvuori who remained more faithful to the impossibility and invisibility of Blomstedt's programme. Ruusuvuori tempted the void by remaining uncompromisingly committed to concrete as the new material in what might have become a high-tech fascination. Later, the 'signature' geometric-harmonic repetition in Leiviska's work suggested context and site were not as important in the emergent logics of Finnish architecture as 'transparency'.

The rhythmic flow, the control and restraint of geometry where proportions become autonomous and harmony is independent of material, all delicately controlled by a series of modulated exercises has to place Juha Leiviskä as the foremost exponent of the Blomstedt legacy. Given Leiviska's quiet musical affinity too (Chopin, Palmgren and Satie) the elegant obsession and introversion of architecture and life provide an interesting echo to Blomstedt's own autonomy. Leiviskä expresses the profession's close homage *and* difference with Blomstedt?

Pedagogical silence

Feed some of these lines into Blomstedt's aphoristic world and we discover splinters of the Blomstedt programme in the minimal, neutral strain in Finnish architecture up until the 1980s. This is not an exaggeration. The closed society, unchallenged theory, means that education is grounded in a strong, unchallenged set of statements. In the Helsinki 'Otaniemi' School from the late fifties onwards, from Blomstedt and Ruusuvuori (Allu and Ruusu, as they were affectionately known) the unwavering Jaatinen, Laapotti, Korhonen and Lundsten all continued the 'tacit' rationalism and 'silence' of Blomstedt's programme as if spoken aloud; a pedagogical silence passed on through authority and obedience.

Pedagogical silence has since been idealised by many architects and students, as the necessity of apprenticeship. But speak to any student of architecture today and there is again this general confused feeling of 'unspeakability'. "Things are assumed to be and follow on from before," one student recently remarked. "Conversation?" he replied. "Don't even dream of it!" A cynical reason or a manneristic silence? Not all is lost, however. The mask shifts. As educational trends and professorial challenge remain mute, the younger generation naturally distance themselves and are distanced from such legacy. In some ways this should make them freer to re-work their own past in a fresher way.

The Finnish Pavilion in Seville, Expo 1992 (Monark 1992), one case in point, became a cause célèbre. The project could obviously be read as the crowning achievement of the logics of respite, the silence of forms. Besides the 'lucidity' of the building being read as 'silence', the brave scale of its forms showed it to be an experiment in the sculptural, in the plastic limits of the minimal. It played with the notion of 'literal morphology'.

Believe it or not the 'natural' reference made by these young architects to the building was an appendage. But that doesn't matter; it is after all only timing and culture at work. Monark produced a layered project unlikely to be reduced to the simple restraint of Blomstedt. Twisted by meta-history, the building was however interpreted as a silent answer to this echo of higher architecture some 30 years on.

An architecture distancing itself from nature's seduction and perfecting this, as a shared tectonic expression of an inner state of mind - a journey of self - might not be an easy point to grasp or for the Finnish Archive to entertain. *Neutrality* has a habit of being subordinated to the loudest voice in a shared silence. After all, research and cultural promotion have continued for some decades to support the dominant 'purifying episteme' despite some muted complaints.

I am quite aware that such a re-siting of the 'silent' tradition in Finland is at odds with the recognised archive. But the unchallenged in theory and history will eventually surface and signs are that the interest in the past and the current abdication from theory and the contemporary moment by many of the elder architects is due for an upset. A modern invariant will always go on developing and enlarging without challenge. That this is not an easy point but is logical and consistent in much of the work seen to be a legacy of Blomstedt's time, does not diminish its likelihood.

If much of the Finnish Archive – and implication of any history invented - has remained closed and selected, then at least Finnish Architecture owes itself to open to more recent (inter-disciplinary) scholarship and discourse. There should be no real need to stress this; any Academy trying to take itself seriously beyond its own boundaries must eventually turn itself inside out. It is true that the purifying episteme of 'silence' naturally fits the interpretation of many Finnish architects who cannot quite 'stomach' the work of Aalto and Pietilä, as they now cannot stomach the work of Jyrki Tasa, Kai Warttinen or others.⁴⁶

That many 'silent' architects have wanted to distance themselves from the romance and agony of Pietilä and Aalto shouldn't surprise. That they cannot open to the intellectual reasons for doing so and the 'private' strategies that became public in architecture is not in their favour. That these architectural strains have now mixed - the classical and the romantic, the minimalist and expressionist - is also inexplicably neutralised.

Houdini minimalism and repressive silence

The primitive and unsophisticated implications that *nature* always brings along explains why 'nature' as an architectural alibi for the intellectual architect is a discourse so heavily loathed by those seeking a greater purity. Only this goes some way to explain the persistent loathing that Pietilä's frontal interrogation of architecture and nature caused and why it is important to understand the reading of the 'aberrational' role of Pietilä in Finnish Architecture.

To come at this from another angle: Yachting is as much a formal exercise in *neutrality* to Finnish architects as it is to viewing the landscape. Detaching themselves from the subject viewed has been a concern that took on the Blomstedt dream. Later vague theorising about space and place and a general desire to take the Genius Loci approach as given have weakened much of the new Finnish architecture as it distances itself from Blomstedt's uncompromising ideals. It opts for softer, vaguer symbolic registers where the 'logics of respite' soften the agenda and we get continuous complaints about architecture's wrong, un-silent direction.⁴⁷

As we have noted, in the Lutheran society one man too often speaks for all. Haavikko has called Finland a *One-Man's Land* for obvious reasons. When one voice speaks, often obedience and fear allow no other room, no further space. This guru-space has passed from Blomstedt to Pallasmaa; there is no room for competing phenomenologists. Ultimately this leads not to a culture of silence but a repressive silence; an operative but silenced culture. Silence, and its tectonic register supposedly representing it, then signifies emptiness, impotence. This though is a far cry from the meditative loftiness invited by Blomstedt's outrageous and often militant integrity but it is not disconnected.

Contemporary Finnish architecture can certainly give us a massing of the void with newer symbolic register, but a serious critique of silence would have to take on board the philosophies of the void and the clinical register, not the received phenomenological mysteries of a prepared imagination. The Archive could then begin to shift radically if Finnish architecture is to understand its own confidence game.

A little local exercise in 'silence' is necessary. A close analysis of the Helsinki Metro stations and trains will indicate that the society is based on the necessity of 'un-approach'. Train width, seat width, surface ornament; the stations are devoid of character. Silent and minimal they of course become, but to encourage meditation and serenity, they need to invite more calm, than the minimal design tries to achieve. This is a paradox that some Finnish designers fail to recognise.

Cleanliness, next to sterility is, of course, another erasure, another silence. Comparison to the Stockholm Metro, the use of vandal-proof material and the way the edge of chaos and unfriendliness is kept just at arm's length would indicate the confusion about philosophies of silence in the Finnish culture.

If Blomstedt understood in an understated way the schizophrenia between the public and private self, between his public and private architecture, he also saw architecture as a response to estrangement. Understanding architecture as a social mechanism, it was a way of negotiating social situations. The purity Blomstedt aimed for, the higher ideal, would then naturally be a strategy of silence. This is introversion, a closing off to the exterior. It is an obsession with the painterly, and - though we have seen little evidence of its admission – it is finally recognition of the impossibility of dialogue.

In this impossibility of dialogue in Finland, a 'language of silence' and its many versions stand in for others. As we have identified, this follows a muted logic of respite; it is a romantic scenario, a consistent search for refuge and a better time, usually in the past. Later Finnish architects have turned this into an obvious, effective and consistent wind-milling translation of Blomstedt's theoretical position. For tectonic symbolic register and style, we should allow Colomina to be cited in full. This kind of schizophrenia is an important clue as she speaks of Hoffman and Loos:

"Both Loos and Hoffmann recognized that being in society involves a kind of schizophrenia between one's private and public self, like being in a meeting where one does not understand what is being said. This happens often in foreign countries, that is to say everywhere. Both responded to this estrangement by understanding architecture as a social mechanism, like dress or manners, a way of negotiating social situations. The difference is in the particular social strategy. For Loos it is a strategy of silence, but this silence is not merely the silence of one who has nothing to say. The introverted character of Loos's houses, the way in which they close themselves to the exterior, is with the silence of one who recognised the impossibility of any dialogue in a language that is not his own....

.... It is a silence that speaks. It is not a conventional silence, but the rejection of a convention. As Karl Kraus wrote, "In these times you should not expect any words of my own from me - none but these words which barely manage to prevent silence from being misinterpreted."⁴⁸

The silence that speaks! We would not have to mine Paavo Haavikko very long to find a similar awareness and persistent unease. This is an introversion, consistent with the Finnish culture, with the upbringing, the history of the Finnish state and consistent, also with persons denying these and wanting the purity of higher ideals for architecture.

The logics of silence that follow from this (as we have tried to show) can be an impoverished version of Blomstedt's ideal as much as the architecture can encode a mystic 'silence' and cultural growth. For reasons of critical closure, loss of debate in the society and the way 'theory' survives uncontested, will impoverish the culture.

Silence has never been conventional or traditional in Finland. It goes further back than convention and tradition. It goes back to the fire and civilises itself only at chosen moments. The Finnish Archive would need to strike back and open outside itself.

Coda
Pure Troll

Don't laugh.
So you won't be shown, every moment
a reason for doing so.

Paavo Haavikko

Silence the culture, gag the priest! Close the gateway.⁴⁹ We come up to the present. There is currently confusion about confusion in the Finnish society. The spectre of pluralism and an emerging coherence around 'chaos' may ask us to re-assess the contemporary moment. It will go on doing this. The pluralism of the 1980s and the increased unrest in theory and the architectural expectation of the digital revolution will challenge the Archive once more.

But before we do we close on the mechanics of silence that ordinary people know about. Silence can retreat into self-censorship. When it does people are leaned on, institutions and jobs ever so subtly threatened. The truth though will never 'out' as 'familiarity' has a way of covering up its own tracks. Applause is unquestioned. This is not uncommon in any political dealing or in any politicization of architecture.

Silence as a rhetoric of retreat and neutrality also allows those who can say things to say things on behalf of others. And those who can speak are not always those that have something to say. In the language of silence that is supposed to be a concern of architecture, more mundane battles take place within the society than the encoded culture acknowledges. Such battles have gained credence precisely because the professional stubbornness can turn silence into an abdication, thereby putting it on the side of an unchanged or re-scripted history. Officially approved doctrines generalise and rebound in Finnish architecture; they begin to undermine the Archive itself. Silence, then, has repressive power of unimaginable consequences.

Architects visit their neighbours and sit. Fires, obscurantism, despotism, naivety and the history of ideas have destroyed buildings, neighbourhoods, milieux. No one is ever to blame. No one can be found who was 'actually' there, who sat at the meetings, who decided to send in the demolition gang. Nothing much is being said whilst the interviews go back and forth in TV studios and guests play at civility and sophism.

The brick or concrete industries battle against each other, then it's the turn of timber or steel. Materials with a heavy 'modern' memory! It seems to matter little which faction fights nor the scale of intolerance that begins to blind. Remember, the politics of respect allows for fear in its greatest project.

To foreigners these issues in Finland - give or take a few variations - would be an instantaneously recognisable catalogue of the limitations of the society. One need only sit amongst a group of foreigners (not only white!) and hear their meta-grumbling about the Finnish society. The coldest place this far north of hell! Perhaps it is no different in London where Australians gripe or the South Africans mutter. But the scale of outlet, the scale of release from this is so different.

Here, this far North, the scale narrows down often so alarmingly and suffocatingly. Release is usually 'exit'. To many foreigners, the nation presents itself as a simple, though dense, fog. Even for the Finns, the two nations now are not 'primitive', silent Finns and civil, aloof Swedish Finns. They are those that gripe about the lack of freedom in the tax-bound country and those moving into the emerging security compound housing.

There are some, including Finns, that cannot wait to get out for frequent vacations, and those with frequent Flyer status, Finnair Plus or SAS Euro Bonus cards who can go for *pain au chocolat* and coffee in Copenhagen Airport. Silence is dyslectic. Lucidity appears with mixed feelings, sometimes and always accompanied by a thick layer of wax that for most foreigners is being cut every day and in every way.

Silence is a hidden game. Humour, when it doesn't lose its 'sense of humour' in Finland plays an important role. Satire merely alienates and engages camp mentality and defensive positions. The success of the Kaurismäki films throughout the 1980s and the 1990s was in main due to the way the films played so well on the edge of parodic and real silence.

It was no surprise that they were loathed in Finnish embassies abroad for the desperate image of the society and culture foreigners read from the films. No surprise either that Kaurismäki was awarded with State Recognition after a decade of undermining the image applauded. (Adorno would smile!) Unable to see the parody, unable to note that the silence at work was in fact reality, the dullness was read as 'dullness'.

This is often reversed. Finns themselves can write and prepare papers on some aspects of their own culture. To a foreigner they can make half-way interesting characters, but events and novels sound lifeless and make one wonder why one bothered with the research in the first place. At a time of increasing uncertainty and thrilling and delinquent theorizing, plus much multicultural confusion and meta-babble, it is not surprising that some turn again to the margin of the world, to the shadowlands, for a new refuge.

The question we must pose to the Finnish Archive in architecture however: what is now on offer? How does a resistance scaffolded by theories of silence, by a phenomenology of respite and hubris, and a Lutheran reflect contemporary issues? Or is this an important parallel exercise carried out in a region of the world able to go silent on itself? And not tell anyone about it?

Is the Finnish culture able to keep a prepared mind for versions of a useful, silent architecture? I cannot help thinking of Aulis Blomstedt, the silver prince, as I read Bo Carpelan's lines: "The insignificant is so insignificant that whoever sees it smiles. The insignificant has a tough life-energy, is always there, always signifies something and is a significant warning. It warns the significant against always believing that it is significant. The insignificant displays itself in the cracks between the stones, or is it perhaps the mortar? Why am I interested in the insignificant? Because the insignificant does not simply draw nourishment from the significant; the significant is also dependent on the insignificant, as the landscape is dependent on its sometimes almost invisible shadows."⁵⁰

Dependent on its sometimes almost invisible shadows! Sometimes and always: with mixed feelings, then silence. Sometimes and always, it feels better when faced with such terrific and terrifying silence to go at the culture 'rapido' like Samuel Johnson. Remember when Boswell asked Johnson: 'does not Rousseau talk such nonsense?'

'True, Sir,' Johnson replies, 'but Rousseau 'knows' he is talking nonsense, and laughs at the world for staring at him.' There will always be a trollish fascination and patronisation of Finnish Architecture from the outsider when faced with such a traumatically private society and culture as Finland.

But what is this trollishness? Isn't it precisely what interests many foreigners, many researchers about Finland? Because, as Harold Bloom puts it, "most simply, trolls are before good and evil, rather than beyond it." ⁵¹ Before good and evil rather than beyond it - that surely is what *silence* must invite from its own past. Big questions, certainly – the Little Prince would say. *Pure troll*, even! As Witold Gombrowicz wrote: ‘once expressed, the most savage thought civilises itself a hundred times faster than one can imagine.’”

\So let us end with the obvious. That, as outsiders, we get it wrong when talking about Finland goes without saying. But like good anthropologists, why should we not add to the fiction, as long as we know the extent to which it might not be fiction and as long as we live through the period when savage superstitions are changed from the imaginary to the perceptive. Then go silent. Roger Connah (Texas 1998/Ruthin 2004)

¹ Paavo Haavikko *Poems tr Anselm Hollo*, Penguin (1974)

2. For example: Richards, Pearson, Porphyrios, Frampton, Curtis, Quantrill, Wilson, Davey, Moorhead, Morgan, Sharp, Norberg-Schulz, Weston, Zevi and more recently younger researchers like Burkle, Poole and McKeith. Clearly the most consistent, persistent and mature in relation to the Finnish Archive is Malcolm Quantrill who has done more than most to continue opening up the Archive beyond repeated generalisation and gullibility.

³ see Kenneth Frampton's *Foreword, Finnish Architecture and its Modernist Tradition*, Quantrill, London (1997).

4. Edmond Jabes, *The Book of Margins*, Chicago (1993) p.12

⁵ Colin St John Wilson, *Finland and The Tradition of Modernism*; Introduction *New Finnish Architecture*, Scott Poole, New York: Rizzoli, (1992)

⁶ Scott Poole, *New Finnish Architecture*, used *Foreword*, p.8 *ibid*.

⁷ Bo Carpelan, *Axel*, London (1989). Tr. David McDuff

⁸ For this and other such discussion of film, pace and 'uneventfulness' of the society see *K/K A Couple of Fins and Some Donald Ducks (Cinema in Society)*, Connah. Helsinki: VAPK (1989) pp. 412-414.

⁹ For an insight into inebriation in Finland and the suggestion of a World Map of Inebriation see Angel Ganivet. *Suomalaiskirjeita*, (Finnish Letters) Helsinki: Otava, 1992. Original title: *Cartas finlandesas*. Chapter XVIII; Humalaiset (Drunks). The book is full of other quite enchanting misreadings in which erudition and perception outweigh eccentricity.

¹⁰ cf. Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Nightlands* MIT Press, (1996).

¹¹ Paul Celan *Selected Poems* Penguin (1990). Tr. Michael Hamburger. p.137. *The Straitening*.

¹² Theodore Zeldin, *An Intimate History of Humanity*, Sinclair Stevenson (1994) p.32.

¹³ Paavo Haavikko, *Selected Poems*, Carcanet (1991) p.54.

¹⁴ Urho Kekkonen, *Neutrality, The Finnish Position*, London (1973) p.94.

¹⁵ John Ashbery *A Wave* Viking (1984) p.1

16. This is a clue that can be pursued elsewhere. For invaluable material on the romance of the traveller and the way imagination and fiction were replaced by more acceptable perceptions see Anssi Halmesvirta, *The British Conception of the Finnish 'Race', Nation and Culture, 1760-1918*. Societas Historica Finlandiae. Studia Historica 34. Gummerus (1990)

¹⁷ Anssi Halmesvirta *ibid* .pp. 162-163.

18. For these two sources see Scott Poole, *New Finnish Architecture* and Malcolm Quantrill, *Finnish Architecture and the Modernist Tradition*. Clearly this duality could run and run but a word on approaches. Poole is a relative newcomer to Finnish studies. This is welcome and has produced insight and clarity. But the readings that support a tradition of silence are too often over-loaded with loose phenomenological weight, references from the architects themselves and a somewhat charming 'romantic' gullibility in the performance of language in relation to architectural promise. It is a limited picture as the writer acknowledges, forceful nevertheless for putting forward the ideology and credo so many of these architects left in the air. For a Finnish reaction to this book and the 'eternal' myth of lucidity, plus Poole's limited use of the archive, see *Riitta Nikula, Helsingin Sanomat*. 11.8.1992.

Quantrill's range is wider, more seasoned and mature and, in this latest book, gives ample scope and debate to the range of architecture this century in Finland. His research also has the advantage of a consistent approach to the 'body of knowledge' in architecture which for practitioners is too often sidelined. Importantly, his range though often curt and somewhat reductive (perhaps necessarily due to space and scale) allows one to disagree whilst still following the merits or demerits of the architecture outlined.

In a generous criticism this is invaluable as Kenneth Frampton indicates in the foreword. Quantrill is also right; the social history of Modernism in Finland has not been written. Our study here intends to indicate why that is of extreme importance to the Archive today.

¹⁹ A recent volume Helena Sarkjakoski (*Rationalism & Runollisuus, Aulis Blomstedt Suhteiden Taide*) has redressed much of the theoretical work on harmony and proportions but despite admirable analysis this follows the existing and accepted notions on Blomstedt. A serious intellectual biography awaits.

20. For two not entirely dissimilar approaches to Blomstedt's status see Poole's essay *The Construction of Silence*, pp.28-50. in *New Finnish Architecture* and Quantrill's re-appraisal in relation to the intimacy and then divergence of Reima Pietilä.

21. (Ehkä minun kay samoin taman arkkitehtuurin pelkistys-yritykseni kanssa.) Aulis Blomstedt, *Prospects in Architecture*, Arkkitehti (1952) pp.9-10. Reprinted in *Abacus*. Museum of Finnish Architecture Yearbook. 3. 1982. edited by Asko Salokorpi. For the generalised public relations version of Blomstedt see *Aulis Blomstedt; Form-Harmony-Philosophy*, Pekka Suhonenn *Look at Finland 1: 1978*. Suhonen is a much better commentator on architecture than this piece of journalism suggests. Doubtless editorial and journalistic control flattened the image of Blomstedt given but it is significant for the clichés, the acceptance of aphorism and generalised notions of architecture at the time. No theoretical insight is put forward more than the obvious, accepted version of Blomstedt. Blomstedt's whole range of architectural thinking is reduced to the simple triad - form, harmony and philosophy. Contrary to their objective, such magazines undermine the very 'Finnishness' they attempt to disseminate.

22. This will be treated as *Straight Left* in a forthcoming essay.

23. F. Nietzsche, *Untimely meditations. On the Use of Disadvantages of History for Life*. trl. R J Hollingdale CUP (1983) cited in Colomina, B. *Privacy and Publicity, Architecture as Mass Media*. MIT Press (1995).

24. Ibid Colomina .p.11

25. The *four sons* 'narrative' is another clue to the Blomstedt legend with the eldest son Juhanna Blomstedt one of the most well-known of the Finnish post-war constructivist-abstract painters. An adequate term in itself but this should be explored for the harmony of discipline and disciplined harmony reversals in relation to the father. Two of the sons are architects, Severi and Petri, with Anssi a filmmaker. This story itself awaits imaginative research.

26. The apocryphal stories of Aalto and his forester-like machismo are usually much nearer the truth than scholarship and achievement allow. If anyone should be put through the type of detective study of media manipulation that Colomina has achieved so seductively in her study of Loos and Le Corbusier, in Finnish Architecture it would surely have to be Aalto and Blomstedt. My comments here remain, I stress, in relation to the ever-possible Archive, merely pointers.

27. For a reading of the Blomstedt rationalism as 'romance' in relation to Pietilä see the chapter *Larvatus Prodeo, Two Scripts and The Double Act* in *Writing Architecture*, Connah MIT. Press/Rakkenustieto (1989) pp.139-149.

28. As these aphorisms are the ones chosen for translation, these too become the ones in constant media circulation. Available from the Finnish Architectural Review and The Museum of Finnish Architecture (Exhibition catalogue, Yearbook etc) theoretical positions interpreted from such aphorisms continue to serve a closed archive. A more serious contribution to Blomstedt's theoretical position and development would have been achieved by a publication of more of the archive, notes, correspondence if not in its entirety. This is even more timely, given the status and legacy of discipline and rationalistic rigour acknowledged by the leading older architects in Finland today and considered a somewhat tired but strongly *operating myth* by some younger architects.

29. To trace this, see the various persistent writings of Asko Salokorpi in the 1970s and 1980s; always aiming at a wider Finnish archive. Salokorpi was marginalised for his efforts at the Museum of Finnish Architecture by both Arno Ruusuvuori and Juhani Pallasmaa who followed on as Director after Ruusuvuori. For a disputed text see Salokorpi's commentary to the Multi-Vision production of Ilpo Okkonen in the early 80s. For a more recent attempt to reveal promotional favour and histories of the era, although discreet and still somewhat unexplored, see also the work of Timo Koho.

30. This was represented by a fierce and hostile polemic aimed at the 'decorativism' and 'individualism' of an architect like Pietilä who would never keep silent enough. For a detailed look at this polemic see *The End of Finnish Architecture*, Connah, Rakennuskirja (1994); Goran Schildt's somewhat sycophantic biographies of Alvar Aalto; Timo Koho, *Pietilä* (Painatuskeskus 1995) and other texts by Malcolm Quantrill.

31. It would be useful to continue re-siting Finnish architecture's development by observing how all these Blomstedtian strains continued to influence and have now left their own legacy on Finnish architecture. In some cases, Poole has begun this exercise but a greater detachment from unchallenged, accepted reference would have given the approach more critical heft. The notion of critical silence sees a reluctance in the younger architects to put forward their theoretical positions where they differ from an assumed 'official' position. *Silence* then too serves a critical laziness, a lack of courage, the fear of confrontation and more swerves within.

32. Herbert Marcuse, *Repressive Tolerance*, in *A Critique of Pure Tolerance*, Cape Editions (1966), p.102.

33 Only Pietilä in a series of anti-method exhibitions was speaking this language; then in the 1950s and 1960s it was considered *Indeterminacy* and the *Open Work* and dismissed in no uncertain way. Today, it might be possible to trace the way Pietilä (in a kind of post-Blomstedt fusion of the natural and intellectual) was stumbling across a geometry for nature of the sort that has been refined by Benoit Mandelbrot. The whole phenomenological programme drawn into Finnish architecture in the aftermath of this reductive social and political programming for architecture was natural and even predicted by Pietilä's own monologues.

The point here is that the critical naivety and reductive dogma of the Marxist-Leninists - the politicisation of architecture - found no way to handle such discourse. Hence the inevitability of nearness and the fear of intimacy, of Heidegger and Bachelard, in a country indebted to 'faux' nature, root and place had to be reinvented another 20 years on. Also, the *repressive tolerance* necessary for such authority to convince others of this authenticity demands that the past is somewhat falsified to suit their own discovery.

Pallasmaa's role here (in the past, in the future?) is one of a critical windmill disguised by the romantic pain of social well-being and lost values. In the 1990s patterns of resistance and suspicion repeat; it is chaos and 'cosmogenetic' architecture which is resisted for its flippancy, its loss of value and self-reflexivity. This is a further example of the margin misunderstanding the central discourse. Each time we resort to the history, the isolation of single figures either as mentors or as village headmen are always pitted against the outsiders. The shamans beat their drums; one hand claps! A *Pallasmania* will later emerge.

34. This is not taking into account the drawing archive which is held at The Museum of Finnish Architecture and which, in some ways through publication and exhibition, is more familiar and more accessible.

35. Whenever one traces photographs of Blomstedt's work only the few already existing go into circulation. These are taken at a certain time, obey a certain rhetoric of the time, just as the photographs of the *Workers' Institute* in Helsinki (1959) show. These frame the theoretical position in such a way as again to close off the Archive. It is not that they mis-represent the work. It is a mechanics of discrimination that the photograph achieves and, like the use of repeated aphorisms, closes the interpretation on the simple utterances of the thinker himself. The photography then evidences the writing and vice versa. The consequences for the Finnish Archive in general are not innocent. New interpretations, new assessments and re-workings are clearly less possible if less material is available.

36. Colomina, *Public and Private*, *ibid.*p.28.

37. From the 1980s, two often quoted are the more general 'language of silence' from Pallasmaa and the catchphrase from the architects Heikkinen and Komonen to describe their Heureka Science Centre outside Helsinki, 'minimalism with fireworks'. Of course, the architects aren't necessarily to blame if these are continually cited but again this is an innocence well calculated.

Coded politeness between architects and critics in Finland is taken for granted; it can make or trash careers. The foreign critic is, more than we think, led up the garden path. The desire for architects to tell what their building is about leads to humour, of course, but also demonstrates obvious manipulation and leg-pulling. No doubt many Finns roll over in laughter at what is written about their work but the critical looseness and ambiguity often serve in their favour. This poor critical sense and almost no discourse does little to justify the serious work, say, of Heikkinen and Komonen. A forthcoming study by William Morgan hopefully will correct this looseness and again open the archive to the unchallenged, the convenient, the ambiguous and the manipulative in theory and critical statement. Otherwise we will be asked to be satisfied with phrases like 'minimalism with fireworks'. Instead of what it should be for Heureka; *Fireworks scripting an escape from minimalism*. The Washington Embassy building is a fine project which deserves a completely new vocabulary and critical arsenal to do it justice. Echoes certainly to the 'tradition', to the 'canon', but something else entirely. *Houdini Minimalism?*

38. Haavikko, *Darkness* (1984), Selected Poems, *ibid.* p.149

39. "Depth must be hidden. Where? on the surface." Hugo Von Hofmannsthal. *Buch der Freunde*. cited in Colomina, *Privacy and Publicity*. *ibid.* p.32

40. Paavo Haavikko, *ibid.* p.143.

41. Loos, Ornament and Crime, Blomstedt cited in *New Finnish Architecture*, Poole. The Loos extracts are taken out of context from Colomina's study for this purpose of exploring Blomstedt's performative use of language and generalisation. As I am merely setting pointers for what I would hope the Archive could take on later, I hope my (ab)use is accepted. No disrespect is aimed at Colomina's version of these lines or of Loos himself in what is invaluable pioneering research into media and publicity in architecture. The book helps draw on ideas that indicate how the Archive in Finland remains myopic and impoverished without studies of this quality.

42. Any research taking this into question must also look at the important role played by Timo Penttila in Finnish Architecture, until his 'defection' or 'excommunication' to Vienna. His attempt to open a debate on the 'closed' idealism of the Post Blomstedt group spearheaded by Pallasmaa and Helin has yet to be given serious consideration. See the last essay in this collection called *The Passenger*.

43. For a particularly loyal reading of this sort see Poole, *New Finnish Architecture*, p.39. Poole reads all the correct fine art references and metaphysics into Kirmo Mikkola's Artist's Houses scheme from 1967, and we can trace almost all Blomstedt's aphorisms in the terminology. *Silence* is now used more openly than Blomstedt used it, and with an obvious but confused meditation of the void. The writer invites intellectual purification through modulations of number and geometric relations. The wall is considered a 'fragment of diaphanous silence - an elusive version of a world of serenity.' Poole rightly recalls Malevich and the discourse on gravitation, and by the repetition of phrase and intent of performance through language and will, he 'reads' Mikkola as the apotheosis of Blomstedt's *aphoristic will* for architecture. In the immensity of this smallness, at a still point in 1967, before the Marxist-Leninists squatted in architecture, Poole's reading is surely just about right for the time and the 'truth' that was infallibly invested in it.

44. For a re-siting of this rationalist (Academic) consistency and not necessarily as a 'purifying episteme' see Kenneth Frampton's introduction to Quantrill, *Finnish Architecture and the Modernist Tradition*. Frampton is always good to read and can challenge the very last thought one has had. But there is also a sneaking tendency to rely on safe and trusted material. However, Frampton's reading (mention really) of Pietilä as the genius manqué, as 'aberrational' and the master of digressions is a much more interesting debate and one which is not contained, as Quantrill points out, by the notion of 'eccentricity' or Pietilä as the 'footnoted' Aalto-follower.

Aberration itself is fraught with narrative predisposition and creative misreading. As is the art itself of the digression. *Homo Scandinavicus*, generalised Nordic heroism and the figure of Jorn Utzon would put another slant on the 'aberrational' and digressional organicism as it slides further North, further cold and further ob-scene.

45. cf. *The End of Finnish Architecture*, Connah, Signature Tunes, p.51.

46. However, this is not the issue here, but around the late 1970s Aalto's romance was re-defined, place was accepted as contextualism re-emerged as an antidote to site and the mannerisms of the facade games of Post Modernism. Architects, forest-intellectuals as they are mostly in Finland, wanted to distance their own selves too from the sentiment surrounding them. It is plain to see that the city manners and existence of even the most sophisticated Finn is organised by their relationship to the country; nature and intellect again.

47. These are mostly laments and are singularly repeated, as we now recognise by our model, by the priestly authority of 'the' single voice. At present this is the Professor, Juhani Pallasmaa, but it looks as if times change and the shamans pass by. Given the general silence of the culture, the lack of encouragement to write and theorise, to challenge and debate theory, Pallasmaa remains (like Blomstedt) unchallenged, undebated and too easily revered and mystified. Hence the texts often continue tired lamentations without deeper scrutiny of crisis and 'lament' itself.

For example: "That view of the world and mission of architecture which had appeared unquestionably founded on precepts of truth and ethics, as well as on a social vision and commitment, has been shattered, and the sense of purpose and order has faded away." This sounds like a private struggle being translated into general lament, so vague is its assumption on words like 'truth', 'ethics', 'commitment' and 'order'. Such lament can run and run.

Another example: "Why is it that architecture seems to turn away from social reality and become so self-referential and self-motivated? Why are narcissism and self-indulgence replacing empathy and social conscience?"

Narcissism and self-indulgence are not the privilege of this late stage of the century (of deconstruction, of self-reference in art, architecture, literature etc.) as Colomina's work clearly shows and as our approach to the Blomstedt archive might start demonstrating. This is clearly unsafe territory and drumbeating; a touch rich indeed.

48. Ibid, Colomina p.40

49. For a more recent look at Finland's attempts to become a 'gateway' between East and West see the following '*Finland's Approach: The European Union's border with Russia*', Daniel F C Austin (1996) (Doctoral Thesis, London University). The author poses the interesting question as to whether Finland's own internal security concerns do more to undermine this 'gateway' objective than any external threat

50. Ibid Carpelan Axel Diary entry, 16.11.1914.

51. Ibid Harold Bloom, *The Western Canon*, p354.