Loneliness in Place

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> 'Our intimate life, our life in solitude, is a dialogue with all men.'[1]
> (Miguel de Unamuno)

There are no conclusive facts to which one could refer in order to demonstrate that architectural practices affect solitary living and, conversely, how loneliness is spatialised in the built environment. Although architecture as a humanistic discipline undoubtedly deals with the dual human condition of essential insularity and necessary sociability, 'no matter what happens in the world of human beings, it happens in a spatial setting'.[2] Likewise, given the multifaceted characteristics of the causes and consequences of loneliness, from psychological to political aspects, it seems evident that it has a tangible reflection on spatial arrangements.

Loneliness and solitude are extremely complex human feelings, which have been addressed by multiple disciplines, ranging from the social and natural sciences to the arts. The present article draws from the hybrid condition of the discipline of architecture as a synthesis of science and the humanities. Thus, it attempts to examine the architectural implications of these two unwanted and desired emotional states; and, vice versa, it seeks to relate how these feelings are manifested in the built environment.

Starting out from an act of introspection, and following the ancient tradition of 'commonplace books', we have collated a series of concepts that gather together other people's ideas together with our own commentaries and reflections, as a way of establishing a 'dialogue with all men'.[3] Our aim is to open a space of thought around 'proverbial wisdom' that relates the human feelings of

loneliness and solitude with architecture theories and practices. We have grouped these fragments of knowledge under a series of terms associated with space-related manifestations – 'Vital Space', 'Island', '(In)habit', 'Sharedness', 'Exchange' and 'In-betweenness' – which constitute an incomplete and ongoing conceptual framework around forms of individuality and community and their spatial reflection through a continuous act of 'crowded solitude'.[4]

Vital Space

In his seminal 1966 book *The Hidden Dimension,* Edward T. Hall crosses his disciplinary lines as an anthropologist to trace a framework for architectural space and city planning as a system of communication. The objective of the American anthropologist is to trace not a verbal but a basic 'underlying organizational system' that would 'increase self-knowledge and decrease alienation' among people.[5] Hall named the technique 'proxemics'. Proxemics interrelates his theories and observations of man's use of space, rooting them in biology, physiology, and cultural idiosyncrasies. On that basis, Hall establishes a hierarchical organization of space, distinguishing between 'intimate', 'personal', 'social' and 'public' distances, accounting for man's perception of them;[6] an experience that is 'not just visual, but 'multisensory'.[7] Hall acknowledges the role of the different senses in spatial perception, categorizing them into two groups: 'the distance receptors (eyes, ears, and nose)' and 'the immediate receptors (skin and muscles)'.[8] Furthermore, he maintains that there are many sensory worlds, depending on the groups of people and their cultures, leading to the statement that the environments that people build are expressions of a 'filtering-screening process'.[9] Depending on the culture, some receptors are

enhanced while others are suppressed and this has consequences on spatial layouts and qualities such as materiality.[10]

In the end, Hall's goal is to provide architects and city planners with a technique that leads to a system of conventions, which spatial designers might adopt in order to organize the living environment and facilitate human communication. Unveiling the 'hidden dimensions', and accounting for its 'silent language', might be a valuable design instrument to ease people's social relationships while balancing individuals' needs, which might have implications on facilitating a personal space, and therefore solitude, while preventing social isolation and, consequently, loneliness.

Artists have discovered and applied resources related to proxemics without being conscious of it, as Hall himself acknowledges in the chapter 'Art as a Clue to Perception'.[11] The history of the visual arts is full of conventional representational resources that enable artists to represent reality and to communicate with the observer. But, more importantly, it is worth highlighting what some artists have found besides the conventions addressed by Hall: something key to human existence, disclosing seminal reasons about what triggers the building of man's environment. This is evident, for instance, in the case of sculptor Alberto Giacometti and poet W.H. Auden.

Giacometti devoted his life to obsessively searching for a 'primal vision' and to destroy all the representation laws and conventions of art. He achieved it, precisely, by exploring the void between humans, 'between nothingness and being',[12] attempting to capture his only interest: 'reality' – rather than its representation.

Jean-Paul Sartre once said of Giacometti: '[…] first of all, it is the man who has created the distance, and it makes sense in a human space: it separates Hero from Leandro and Marathon from

Athens, but not a pebble from another pebble. […] An exhibition of Giacometti is a town. He sculpted men who cross a square without seeing each other; they cross themselves hopelessly alone and yet they are together.'[13]

Sartre understands Giacometti well due to his own experience:

> 'One night in April 1941 I understood what this is: I had spent two months in a prison camp, that is, inside a can of sardines, and had had the experience of absolute proximity: my skin was the border of my vital space; day and night I felt against me the heat from a back or a hip. It didn't bother me: the others were still myself. That first night of freedom I pushed the door of a cafe [...]. I was immediately afraid – or almost –: [...] The few customers seemed to me farther away than the stars [...] I had found bourgeois society: I needed to resume life 'at a respectful distance'. [...] This is the case with Giacometti: for him distance is not a voluntary isolation, nor a setback: it is a requirement, a ceremony, a sense of difficulties. It is the product – he said it himself – of powers of attraction and repulsive forces.'[14]

It is not by chance that the chapter of Hall's book titled "Distances in Man"[15] opens with the following prologue, poem, *The Birth of Architecture,* by W.H. Auden, from the collection titled *Thanksgiving for a Habitat*:

> Some thirty inches from my nose
> The frontier of my Person goes,
> And all the untilled air between
> Is private *pagus* or demesne.
> Stranger, unless with bedroom eyes
> I beckon you to fraternize,
> Beware of rudely crossing it:
> I have no gun, but I can spit.[16]

The title of Auden's poem eloquently evokes the genesis of

architecture as the negotiation of one's basic territorial unit, a *pagus*, and that of the 'stranger', both realms separated by a hidden boundary, whose measure he sets at thirty inches. Just as for Giacometti, it is through tensions, the 'powers of attraction and repulsive forces' that human space is created.

The poems that follow this prologue in *Thanksgiving for a Habitat* are a sequence of appreciative verses about Auden's house in Kirchstetten in Austria. The poems constitute a panegyric about the poet's 'vital space', which do nothing but abound on the following idea: the house is a shelter, even an extension of the human body, and simultaneously a place for sociability of the 'rational animal'.[17] The house itself and the objects within it seem to stem from its inhabitants and the 'untilled air between' them; becoming an amalgamation orchestrated by the management of the demesne's hidden dimensions.

Architecture is constantly in search of the agreement between conventions and going beyond them, in a continuous re-thinking, re-dimensioning and re-designing of the human's vital space.

Island

The modern notions of 'loneliness' and 'aloneness' date from the nineteenth century, arising in parallel with the emergence of the ideology of the metropolis and, with it, with the rise of the 'individual';[18] the 'modern, rational and secular versions of 'identity';[19] and changes in states such as 'sociability', 'community', 'belonging', and the 'self'.[20] Prior to that, the word did not carry today's emotional and psychological connotations. 'Oneliness' (today an obsolete word) was the term that conveyed a sense of physical or geographical isolation', writes historian Fay Bound

Alberti, and supporting this argument by referring to the early 18th century writer Daniel Defoe's *Life and Adventures of Robinson Crusoe,* where still the modern concept of loneliness does not feature, being a narration about the long-term seclusion of a castaway on a remote tropical island.[21] The island is nowadays a recurrent spatial metaphor, which helps to internalise 'oneliness', to convey what we currently understand as loneliness: lonely people often verbalise their mood like the feeling of 'being an island'; an island as a clearly demarcated territory bounded by impassable limits between oneself and the rest of the world, which impose a painful detachment from society. It is a feeling of uncanniness and anomality. However, this is just one of the possible interpretations of the figurative maritage between loneliness and the island.

Among all the suggestions that the island metaphor carries, there is that of being a space suitable for 'utopia', in all its forms and modalities. Interestingly, there is a primary ambivalence in the very word devised by Thomas More in his 1516 novel *Utopia* about an ideal society located in an idyllic island: 'utopia', a play on the words *eutopos*, 'good place' and *outopos*, 'non-place'. Islands are at once wonderlands, ideal and magical territories and places where anything and the extraordinary are possible, but also the home of the exiles from the ordinary, the condemned, the convicts, and the plagued. It is in this last sense that the contemporary meaning of loneliness is paralleled with that of the island, as a territory where people confine themselves or where society 'insulates' what it finds troubling to allocate or what it envisions as potential threats to its integrity.

Islands have been places to banish religious, intellectual and political dissidents, whose names have become indissolubly linked to that of the territory where they were sent into exile: St. John

on Patmos, Napoleon on St. Helena and Elba, Víctor Hugo on Guernsey, Unamuno on Fuerteventura, and Nelson Mandela on Robben Island. Similarly, islands have served to imprison criminals: Al Capone on Alcatraz. Sanitary reasons have also proved the island suitable for the 'internment' (fascinatingly, from the French *interner*: 'send to the interior') of the insane and infected; a paradigmatic example of which is the Lazzaretto Vecchio in the Venetian Lagoon away from the *terraferma*, which housed a hospital to quarantine plague victims from the 15th century till the end of the 17th century.

The last three examples mentioned are satellite islands in urban settlements (Cape Town, San Francisco, and Venice) that have served traditionally to expel, confine and even marginalize 'anomalous' citizens. That is also the case of Hart Island in New York City. This one-mile-long island in the northeastern Bronx, at the western end of Long Island Sound, has been, not only today but historically, a place for the City of New York authorities to displace social aspects and dynamics that they have found troubling to allocate within the City's area and its civic limits. While some structures were planned for Hart Island but remained unbuilt, such as a segregationist amusement park targeting negro citizens, others were functioning in different periods, sometimes overlapping in time, including a potter's field.[22] From 1875 until today, Hart Island is the one New York City public cemetery that has acted as a temporary burial ground during sanitary crises (including the Spanish Flu, AIDS and COVID-19 epidemics) as well as for the homeless, poor people, stillborn babies, and unclaimed, unidentified or anonymous bodies. In this last respect, the island has long borne the stigma of many New Yorkers' anomalous anonymity, potentially because of a likewise anomalous loneliness:

another 'contemporary epidemic', as some have described it, and not without controversy.

It is difficult to visualise loneliness at the urban scale: when living alone, people do not show recordable traces that differ significantly from those living with a family or others. However, it is when the person living alone passes away that disturbances in the norm become evident. In a sea of big data, the tracking of citizens' energy consumption patterns and, increasingly, the registering of their vital signs, show islands of inactivity becoming indicators of deaths of those living alone. While these behavioural irregularities are immaterially recorded in the digital realm, it is in the physical realm where the condition of living alone is spatialised: as materialised through the dead body. What is reflected by the massive burials taking place on Hart Island, if not the New Yorkers' loneliness (there is no record testifying that these people have experience existential, emotional or social loneliness during their lifetime), is at least their 'oneliness', in the sense of the physical, geographical, and metaphorical isolation of those New Yorkers from any societal bond. Each of the bodies buried on Hart Island are islands in themselves, and it is a cruel coincidence that all of them end up unified in an actual island that represents them. Strikingly, as Peter Sloterdijk points out, the well-known classical legend that explains the genesis of certain islands in the rocks thrown into the sea by the Olympian Gods to the giants, leads to an interpretation of the island as a tomb of giants or as the caps of sarcophagi for the enemies of the Gods.[23]

If what we are visualizing on Hart Island is not just New York's 'oneliness' but also potential clues of an even deeper problem, its loneliness,[24] the struggle for designers and planners, from the perspective of David Harvey's Marxist economic geography, is the

advancement of 'more socially just' and 'politically emancipatory' practices and not giving in to those kinds of 'Gods', 'to those dictations imposed by uncontrolled capital accumulation, backed by class privilege and gross inequalities of political-economic power'.[25] This instance, which is a telling and painful example of the dimension of isolated living in cities as well as an updated symbol of the contemporary identification of loneliness with the *outopian* connotations of the island, would disappear, opening a way to recover the *eutopian* dimension inherent in this metaphor.

(In)habit

The English words 'habit' (custom) and 'inhabit' (dwell), share an etymological origin: *habere* (to have). The frequentative of *habere* is *habitare*.[26] Frequentative means that the action occurs repeatedly; so, 'habit' and 'inhabit' can be read as 'having repeatedly'; for example, the routine that you frequently have is your *habit*, or the physical place that you have continuously is the place that you *inhabit*. Language reveals how our recurring acts of everyday life, the 'typical human situations', as Dalibor Vesely puts it,[27] intertwine with the physical place or space we occupy. They are originally 'attuned', using Alberto Pérez-Gómez's term.[28] Architecture's fundamental role is to mediate in such a tuning so as to enable a meaningful existence. Therefore, to grasp the intricate nature of human habits, and the feelings they relate to, is thus a central question that puzzles designers, who, overtime, have adopted different techniques to tackle this issue; for instance, technologies that allow the parametrisation and visualisation of habits, to grasp their spacio-temporal implications.

When the functionalist logic, proper to the industrial realm,

was adopted by architectural practices at the beginning of the 20th century, efficiency became the *leitmotiv* of the design of the daily-life environment. The above-mentioned 'attunement' consisted of 'mechanically' encompassing habits and the inhabitable space. The pioneers of the visual management techniques applied to industrial realms went on to develop movement charting techniques for that purpose, which were then later transferred to optimise domestic space. Nowadays, the smart technology – equally transferred from the industrial realm, in this case, from the systems-of-systems approach – allows one to delve even further into the mechanical procedures of the human body, penetrating its physiology and psychology, including the feeling of loneliness, supposedly reflected in daily domestic habits. In this latter case, the inhabitable space is the medium with which to gather data rather than its consequent result, as it was in the former instance.

An image particularly well-known within architectural circles is the chronocyclegraph that Sigfried Giedion included in his 1948 book *Mechanization Takes Command,* in which the architectural historian examines retrospectively the impact of mechanization on daily life. This long-exposure photograph, taken in 1924 by the American corporate consultant company Gilbreth Inc., 'shows the light path of the point of a rapier used by an expert fencer'.[29] It is obvious that with this suggestive image, Giedion wanted to convey an aestheticised vision of mechanisation, enabling simultaneously both the visualisation of the sequence of instants that make up a movement and its spatialisation. The time-and-motion studies of the founders of the Gilbreth Inc., Frank and Lillian Gilbreth, pioneers of industrial-organisational psychology, together with American women's domestic engineering studies,[30] had a great influence on the conception of early Modernist residential

programmes, especially in the influential housing development programme 'New Frankfurt' under the direction of architect Ernst May, and where the Austrian architect Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky oversaw the study of daily domestic habits and designed accordingly the space where they unfolded. Schütte-Lihotzky's investigations on the optimization of motion habits led to her most celebrated contribution, the so-called Frankfurt Kitchen; the utmost pragmatist domestic space derived from a prevailing scientistic paradigm, the ultimate goal of which is the reduction in building costs and the easing and optimisation of women's domestic labour, so as to allow them to dedicate their liberated time, in principle, to more pleasant and meaningful activities.

In line with this tracking and measuring of daily habits, current smart-home models and wearables are being tested to perform health metrics. Research is being conducted to 'detect' and 'predict' older adults' physical and sociopsychological decline, including their loneliness, based on their daily domestic habits.[31] The collated big data is processed through intelligent algorithms that trace the inhabitants' behavioural profile. To 'teach' the algorithms, the researchers correlate these factual scores with ground truth measurements; i.e., subjecting the inhabitants to scientifically approved loneliness scales.[32] Based on the correlation of the results of both quantitative methods, the researchers raise conclusions that relate the spatialisation of habits (e.g., the time spent in certain rooms or outdoors) and loneliness. The results of the refereed studies seem to back up a practical, reliable, and cheap way to open up the *terra incognita* of the feeling of loneliness, like the early 20th century pioneers of the visual management accomplished to unveil the hidden dynamics of movements in the domestic space. However, in these contemporary instances,

researchers seem also not to take architectural characteristics into any significant consideration in their experiments, neither do they coordinate with architectural and urban design practices that could extract conclusions and attune the architectural space with healthy habits that ameliorate the feelings of loneliness in the senior population.

Both episodes, the modern and the contemporary, have good socio-economic intentions as their final goals: on the one hand, to procure affordable living spaces in a post-war situation or to provide gerontological assistance in a scenario of demographic change and potential shortage of caretakers; and on the other hand, to free women from hard domestic labour or to facilitate older adults' independence and to age-in-place. However, when framing both approaches to the attunement of architecture habits within philosopher Albert Borgmann's 'device paradigm', and his notion of 'focal events' as practices and elements able to trigger and gather meaningful human habits, the architectural results seem questionable in both cases. The Frankfurt Kitchen, besides its unquestionable efficiency, resulted in an 'inconspicuous' and 'neutral' space as possible in everyday life:[33] it was reduced to perform just its prosaic and preprogramed function, resulting in a de-flavoured version of the complex implications that the architectural space we call 'kitchen' entails. Regarding the contemporary sensing technologies and big data processing, they constitute a technological system that does not generate by itself 'focal events'; in fact, their 'unobtrusiveness' is, eloquently, one of the characteristics determining the success of the system.[34] In order to have a meaningful impact, smart technologies probably need to be approached as part of a system conceived from a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary perspective, unified

under a humanistic perspective,[35] from the architectural 'unifying understanding' of 'typical humane situations'.[36]

The Frankfurt Kitchen and the smart-home paradigm, as it is currently formulated, seem to be the result of the idolatry – or even superstitious idea – of quantitative studies as applied to architecture in supposedly improving the life of the 'chimerical man', a man that 'does not exist', as referred to by Le Corbusier, as opposed to what he called 'our own' man, meaning an everyday man.[37] On being cautious with seductive and potentially deceitful practices, a 'whole batch of plans that have the wheel revolving around a fictious pivot' could be avoided.[38] What kind of kitchen would have been designed if the problem to be addressed would have been how to contribute to the consolidation of social bonds around culinary habits, rather than mere efficiency? What would the social consequences have been? How would the smart-home be if the problem to be addressed would be how to avoid loneliness or the social isolation of older adults, rather than its detection or prediction? And what would be its impact on people's lives?

Sharedness

In his writings on individuality and the so-called 'forms of sociation', George Simmel[39] points to the Renaissance as the period that created what we call 'individuality', which involved the liberation of the individual subject from the communal forms that were characteristic of the Middle Ages. Those forms of community entailed the constriction of the individual's activities and life impulses through homogenisation in groups, which in the end blurred the boundaries between individuals.[40]

For Simmel, the Renaissance brought an emphasis

on uniqueness and selfhood, which resulted in a so-called individualism of 'distinction', which carried a conspicuous feeling of self-aggrandisement.[41] On the other hand, an individualism of 'freedom' was used by individuals in the 18th century to self-assert themselves against the constrictions imposed by society. According to Simmel, freedom and equality do not exempt individuals from personal responsibility, which configures a 'natural law' based on a 'fiction of isolated and identical individuals', depicting the modern effort for differentiation that distinguishes them from one another.[42] This is visualised by Simmel with the metaphor of the frame in artworks, which simultaneously connects and separates them and their surroundings, whilst at the same time symbolises the contradictory aspiration of individuals for group belonging and their assertion for autonomy.[43]

When addressing the gathering place between individuality and forms of collectivity, Simmel makes a play on words distinguishing between the 'individuation of collectivities' and the 'indeterminacy of collective individualities', to state that 'the sense of individuality has overstepped the boundary of the individual, as it were, and has absorbed the social aspect of the person that normally constitutes the antithesis to his individual aspect.'[44] However, he points out that it is in the fact of sharing with others where the individual discovers his own selfhood and freedom, in the end revealing himself 'to bear the loneliness of its own quality.'[45] Therefore, the idea of sociation with others as a way of overcoming the tightness of individuals' boundaries becomes the trigger of their own freedom as individuals. The expansion of those limits beyond one's individuality by overlapping and sharing them with others is something that architecture has contributed to construct as the physical mediator between individuals in space.

Exchange

Interaction through social relations lays at the core of Simmel's sociology, which considered the forms of social interaction to be more important than its actual content.[46] According to him, the autonomy of personality and its isolation makes us identical to others, which is compensated by the possibility of interaction with them. As one of the forms of social interaction,[47] the concept of 'exchange' implies an added worth in the sense that, when produced, the sum of values after an act of interaction between parties is greater than what it was before, giving each party more than previously possessed.

Exchange as a 'pattern of sociation' possesses a spatial dimension, too. It is within space that the exchange of conditions that conciliate the individual and communal spheres is produced. In his seminal 1909 text "Bridge and Door", Simmel delves into the spatial dimension of separation and connectedness through a distinction between the human and natural dimensions:

> '[T]he objects remain banished in the merciless separation of space; no particle of matter can share its space with another and a real unity of the diverse does not exist in spatial terms. And, by virtue of this equal demand on self-excluding concepts, natural existence seems to resist any application of them at all. Only to humanity, in contrast to nature, has the right to connect and separate been granted, and in the distinctive manner that one of these activities is always the presupposition of the other. By choosing two items from the undisturbed store of natural things in order to designate them as 'separate', we have already related them to one another in our consciousness, we have emphasized these two together against whatever lies between them. And conversely, we can only sense those things to be related which we have previously somehow isolated from one another; things must first be separated from one another in order to be together.'[48]

Simmel elaborates on the natural symbiosis between separateness and connectedness with a physical metaphor, 'spatialising' his ideas about the limits of individuality by confronting the metaphors of the *bridge* and the *door*.[49] This confrontation qualifies a distinction on how the simultaneity of separateness and connectedness occurs in objects and in human beings. In spatial terms, according to Simmel, the bridge is the epitome of path building, whilst the door is the representation of the boundary point. Both concepts could in turn be the two physical modes in which exchange may be produced. On the one hand, the bridge acquires an aesthetic value insofar as it makes visible the separated elements it connects, be they the banks of a river or the two sections of a discontinued road. It therefore makes the separation visible. By contrast, the door visualises the connectedness and separateness as two sides of the same act, depicting a reversible boundary insofar as it may be removed by its opening.[50]

Both bridge and door represent the possibility of exchange. The door allows the interchange not only of its own character as a boundary but also that of the elements it separates (or connects) on both sides. By contrast, the bridge, having an aesthetic value, makes visible the connection between the extremes it gathers 'not only resisting spatial separation but also giving aesthetic and symbolic form to this dominance of volition over space'.[51] Moreover, the bridge may be crossed indistinctly in both directions, whilst the door, when traversed, produces a different meaning depending on the entry or exit direction one takes to cross it.

Architecture consequently possesses the capacity of positing the limits, while suggesting a meaning to them through a physical presence, aiming at solving the individual's needs for intimacy and solitude, the encounter between them and their integration with the environment, through an aesthetic presence.

In-betweenness

Among the spatial forms that Simmel distinguishes, the boundaries of space exert an important influence on social interactions, framing the pieces or units in which it is divided.[52] Simmel states:

> '[A] society is characterized as inwardly homogeneous because its sphere of existence is enclosed in acutely conscious boundaries; and conversely, the reciprocal unity and functional relationship of every element to every other one gains its spatial expression in the enclosing boundary… People seldom appreciate how marvellously the extensity of space accommodates the intensity of sociological relationships here, how the continuity of space, precisely because it nowhere contains an absolute objective border, therefore permits us to lay down anywhere such a boundary subjectively.'[53]

The idea of in-betweenness as a space of boundaries has been used in architecture in the revision of the first modernity at the second half of the 20th century. The expansion of boundaries has introduced spatial thickness as an overcoming of the dichotomies between inside-outside, private-public, and individual-collective, which is done through the negotiation between poles to obtain transitional spaces. The gradation of privacy in physical terms was analysed in the seminal 1963 book *Community and Privacy* by Serge Chermayeff and Christopher Alexander, who blurred the polarization in this dichotomy between extremes in architecture and urbanism through the notion of threshold.[54]The authors delve into overcoming the dichotomy between private and public spheres, which expands the distinction between individuality and collectivism poles:

> 'In cultures both present and past where recognition of the dichotomy or separation of public *and* private has not been

> overcome by complexities, as it is in modern industrialized society, there is clear physical expression of the need for varying degrees of privacy and the integrity of domains corresponding to these. There are many examples of hierarchical arrangements of space provided by history at many levels of sophistication.'[55]

Their main thesis advocates for the introduction of 'transition points' that may become transitional spaces between domains or realms with different degrees of privacy. Whilst this is produced at all scales, it is the so-called 'urban anatomy' that becomes a mediator between privacy and community living:

> 'Privacy is most urgently needed and most critical in the place where people live, be it house, apartment, or any other dwelling. […] It is our further contention that to contain this kind of dwelling, and to develop both privacy *and* the true advantages of living in a community, an entirely new anatomy of urbanism is needed, built of many hierarchies of clearly articulated domains. Such an urban anatomy must provide special domains for all degrees of privacy and all degrees of community living, ranging from the most intimately private to the most intensely communal. To separate these domains, and yet allow their interaction, entirely new physical elements must be inserted between them. It is because these new elements of separation emerge as vital and independent units in their own right that a new urban order may develop from the hierarchy of domains. Only when the habitat of urbanizing man is given such an order shall we perhaps restore to urban life a fruitful balance between community and privacy.'[56]

Both spheres of community and privacy may be connected according to the characteristics of the transitional elements that may participate on the basis of the conditions of the elements at both sides in a spatial gradation. This is an in-between condition that, as a threshold, looks two ways at once by inducing a reciprocal state, where 'provision for voluntary communality rather than

inescapable togetherness is essential'.[57]

The architecture of in-betweenness provides simultaneously both the possibility of solitude and the avoidance of unwanted social isolation – both situations very much needed in urban contexts.

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The first three concepts described above – 'Vital space', 'Island', and '(In)habit' – are essentially related to the individual sphere of the subject and its relationship to the phenomenon of loneliness: 'Vital space' as the connection between oneself and the immediate surrounding; 'Island' as the physical epitome of the idea of 'oneliness', a territorial metaphor for the boundaries between individuals and their social sphere; and the act of 'Inhabitation' as the way of purposefully 'attuning' the space that surrounds one through the practice of habits. Thus, the act of habitation is directly connected to the grasping of routines and customary modes of action, the practices of everyday life.[58] The three concepts may be considered as the spatial manifestations of the practice of individuality, inasmuch as it is through our everyday habits in the space of inhabitation how we determine the will or unwantedness of our solitary or connected living.

These practices may be grouped in systems of everyday relations, as far as they are able to trigger connected ways of operating regarding space. According to Michel de Certeau:

> '(T)he examination of such practices does not imply a return to individuality. The social atomism which over the past three centuries has served as the historical axiom of social analysis posits an elementary unit – the individual – on the basis of which groups are supposed to be formed and to which they are supposed to be always reducible […] Analysis shows that a relation (always social) determines its terms, and not the reverse, and that each individual is

> a locus in which an incoherent (and often contradictory) plurality of such relational determinations interact.'[59]

Beyond the individual sphere, the collective dimension of the subject was considered in the last three concepts – 'Sharedness', 'Exchange' and 'In-betweenness' – by exploring the spatial dimension of the modes of interaction with others. These latter concepts, built upon the sociology of space and theory of architecture, have acted as counterparts to the previous three concepts, drawing upon the relationship between the practices of collectivism and individuality, between community and privacy.

In order to grasp the notion of loneliness through spatialisation, the objective in delving into these six concepts has been to understand the implications of space in the physical relationships between the individual and communal spheres. They constitute the inception of a terminology that might become the above-mentioned 'commonplace book', allowing for the desired dialogue with all men.

Notes

1. Miguel de Unamuno, "Soledad", in *Ensayos, Vol. VI* (Madrid: Publicaciones de la Residencia de Estudiantes, 1918), 45.
2. Edward T. Hall, *The Hidden Dimension* (New York: Anchor Books, 1990), xi.
3. Unamuno, "Soledad", 45.
4. Mario Benedetti, "Rostro de vos", in *El amor, las mujeres y la vida* (México: Santillana, 1997), 44.
5. Hall, *The Hidden Dimension*, x, xii.
6. Ibid., 114-125.
7. Ibid., xi.
8. Ibid., 41-60.
9. Ibid., 2.
10. E.g. traditional Japanese paper screens are adequate to isolate a room,

since their auditory space is screened, because for them devices that intervene in the visual space suffice for the purpose of gaining intimacy. Ibid, 45.
11. Ibid, 77-80.
12. Jean-Paul Sartre, "The Search for the Absolute", in the *Catalogue of the Alberto Giacometti exhibition at the Pierre Matisse Gallery in New York* (New York: Pierre Matisse Gallery, 1948), 3.
13. Jean-Paul Sartre, "Sartre y Giacometti", *Debats* vol. 20, 1987, 23.
14. Ibid.
15. Hall, *The Hidden Dimension*, pp. 113-125.
16. W.H. Auden, "Thanksgiving for a Habitat", in *Collected Poems* (New York: Modern Library, 2007), 687.
17. Ibid, 688.
18. Fay Bound Alberti, "This 'Modern Epidemic': Loneliness as an Emotion Cluster and a Neglected Subject in the History of Emotions", *Emotion Review,* vol.10, nº3, 2018, 242.
19. Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
20. R. Potter (ed.), *Rewriting the Self: Histories from the Renaissance to the Present* (London: Routledge, 1997).
21. Bound Alberti, "This Modern Epidemic", 245.
22. The structures installed at Hart Island have included: a training ground for the United States Colored Troops; a Union Civil War prison camp; a psychiatric institution; a quarantine sanatorium for yellow fever and tuberculosis epidemics; a homeless shelter; a boys' reformatory; a jail; and a drug rehabilitation centre. 'Hart Island Timeline', New York Correction History Society: http://www.correctionhistory.org/html/timeline/html/hartline.html (accessed 2.2.2021).
23. Peter Sloterdijk, *Foams: Spheres Volume III: Plural Spherology* (Los Angeles: Semiotext (e)), 241.
24. The New Yorkers who die alone are mostly poor people or people of colour or both. It is a demonstrable fact that the ones that experience the highest levels of loneliness are the poor social groups, given the deterioration of their social networks, proportionally to their poverty levels. Thomas Scharf, "Social exclusion of older adults in deprived urban communities of England", *European Journal of Ageing*, 2 (2005): 76-87. Ethnicity is also an important indicator of loneliness. Richard L. Allen and Hayg Oshagan, "The UCLA Loneliness Scale", *Personality and*

Individual Differences, 19, (1995):185-195. Given this, to a certain degree we could infer that Hart Island reflects not only New York's levels of 'oneliness', but also those of loneliness generally.
25. David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1990).
26. Online Etymology Dictionary: https://www.etymonline.com (accessed 1.7.2020).
27. Dalibor Vesely, "Architecture as a Humanistic Discipline", in Soumyen Bandyopadhyay, Jane Lomholt, Nicholas Temple and Renée Tobe (eds.), *The Humanities in Architectural Design. A Contemporary and Historical Perspective* (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), 197-198, 200.
28. Alberto Pérez-Gómez, *Attunement: Architectural Meaning after the Crisis of Modern Science* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2016).
29. Siegfried Giedion, *Mechanization Takes Command: A Contribution to Anonymous History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1948), 29.
30. Domestic manuals based on the scientific organization of labour, written by the Americans Catherine Beecher, Christine Frederick and Lillian Gilbreth, constituted the *leitmotiv* of social housing in Germany during the heroic years of Modernism. All these books registered exhaustively the housekeeper daily habits aiming for the optimisation of their movements within the domestic space. Carmen Espegel and Gustavo Rojas, "The trail of American domestic engineers in European social housing", *Proyecto, Progreso, Arquitectura,* 18 (2018): 58-73.
31. This assertion is based on the work done in the research projects 'Social Robots and Ambient Assisted Living: The Independence and Isolation Balance' (SOCIETAL) and 'Implementation of contextual complexity in AI-based assessment systems of older adults' social isolation' (AIsola), which are part of ongoing research carried out by the authors on the mutual implications between the built environment and the phenomena of loneliness and social isolation. Both projects are being developed during the period 2019-2022 by multidisciplinary teams at different faculties at Tampere University, combining the disciplines of architecture, philosophy, social psychology, gerontology, mechanical engineering, and electrical engineering.
32. In the specific case of loneliness, the scales used include, for example, the 'De Jong Gierveld Loneliness Scale', the 'Lubben Social Network Scale', and the 'UCLA Loneliness Scale'.

33. Albert Borgmann, *Technology and the Character of Contemporary Life. A Philosophical Inquiry* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1987), 41-44, 48.
34. 'Nowadays, we find the ideas of availability, inconspicuousness, and spatial indifference in smart-home and smart-city ideologies but they were strongly present already in the machine metaphors of the modern architecture'. Pekka Passinmäki, "Technology, Focality and Place: on the Means and Goals of Architecture", in *Understanding and Designing Place, DATUTOP* 38 (Tampere: Tampere University, 2019), 74.
35. For instance, in the case of loneliness, there is no doubt that smart health interventions might help in assessing the problem but, of course, they do not solve it in its entire complexity.
36. Vesely, "Architecture as a Humanistic Discipline", pp. 197-198, 200.
37. Le Corbusier, *Talks with the Students* (Hudson, NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 1991), 45.
38. Ibid., 5.
39. At the start of the 20th century, the German sociologist Georg Simmel (1858-1918) broadly wrote on individuality and social forms within the field of sociology of space. Simmel's sociology has constituted since then a reference for the social dimension of space, in which not only social theorists or sociologists, but also urban scientists and architectural theorists have constructed modern theories of spatial sociology. The two most important of Simmel's texts on the sociology of space are 'On Spatial Projections of Social Forms' and 'The Sociology of Space', both published in 1903 and included in his subsequent book *Soziologie* (1908). David Frisby, "Social space, the city and the metropolis", in *Simmel and Since: Essays on Georg Simmel's Social Theory* (London, New York: Routledge, 1992), 71-84.
40. George Simmel, "Freedom and the Individual", in *On Individuality and Social Forms* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1971), 217.
41. In relation to this idea of the individualism of distinction, some authors have pointed out how popular culture in modern times 'stresses the dangers of aloneness and, by contrast, the virtues of group-mindedness' to explain the idea of 'lonely success'. This is exemplified, for instance, in the well-known 1943 novel by Ayn Rand *The Fountainhead*, in which an architect embodies this notion. David Riesman, Nathan Glazer and Reuel Denney, *The Lonely Crowd: A study of the changing American character* (New Haven CN: Yale University Press, 1961), 155-156.

42. Simmel, "Freedom and the Individual", 220.
43. Georges Teyssot, *A Topology of Everyday Constellations* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2013), 270.
44. Ibid, 265-267.
45. Simmel states that 'all relations with others are thus ultimately mere stations along the road by which the ego arrives at its self'. Ibid., 223.
46. George Ritzer, *Sociological Theory* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2011), 166.
47. Simmel's other forms of social interaction are conflict, domination, prostitution and sociability. Simmel, *On Individuality,* 41-140.
48. George Simmel, "Bridge and Door", in *Simmel On Culture: Selected Writings,* edited by David Frisby and Mike Featherstone, translated by Mark Ritter (London: Sage Publications, 1997), 170-171. Originally published as "Brücke und Tür", *Der Tag,* 15 September, 1909.
49. When referring to Simmel's assertion of human nature being formed by separation and unification, Georges Teyssot talks about a human being as 'an inhabitant of confines, a creature living enduringly on the frontier; yet, at the same time, he has no secure limits by which to enclose himself'. Teyssot, *A Topology,* 269.
50. Simmel, "Bridge and Door", 172.
51. Iain Borden, "Space beyond: spatiality and the city in the writings of Georg Simmel", *The Journal of Architecture*, 2:4 (1997): 313-335.
52. The other spatial forms that are confronted in social interaction are 'the exclusiveness or uniqueness of space, the fixing of social forms in space, spatial proximity and distance and the movement of space'. Frisby, *Simmel and Since*, 75.
53. George Simmel, "The sociology of space", in *Simmel on Culture*, 141. Originally published as "Soziologie des Raumes", *Jahrbuch für Gesetzgebung, Verwaltung und Volkswirtschaft*, 27, 1903.
54. Teyssot evokes Walter Benjamin's 'threshold magic' produced by places of transition. Teyssot, *A Topology,* 87. Architects such as Alison & Peter Smithson used the notion of 'threshold' in their revision of the Modern Movement. See Hadas Steiner, "Life at the Threshold", *October* 136 (2011), 133-55. This was later put into practice by Aldo van Eyck and Herman Hertzberger and other members of the Dutch Forum Group, part of the structuralist movement in architecture during the second half of the 20th century.
55. Serge Chermayeff and Christopher Alexander, 'Historic Integrity' (chapter: Anatomy of Urbanism), in *Community and Privacy: Toward a New Architecture of Humanism* (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc.-Garden City, 1963), 130.
56. Chermayeff and Alexander, 'The Search for Privacy' (chapter: Erosion of the Human Habitat), in *Community and Privacy*, 38-39.
57. Chermayeff and Alexander 'A Family Hearth' (chapter: Anatomy of Privacy), in *Community and Privacy*, 204.
58. Teyssot, *A Topology*, 8.
59. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1988), xi.

The translations of quotes into English are by the authors.