RELIEF-SPACES: TRANS-POSITIONS IN DISPLAY ENVIRONMENTS

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF NATURAL AND APPLIED SCIENCES
OF
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

SEZİN SARICA

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE
IN
ARCHITECTURE

JULY 2019

Approval of the thesis:

RELIEF-SPACES: TRANS-POSITIONS IN DISPLAY ENVIRONMENTS

submitted by **SEZİN SARICA** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of **Master of Architecture in Architecture Department, Middle East Technical University** by,

Prof. Dr. Halil Kalıpçılar
Dean, Graduate School of **Natural and Applied Sciences**

Prof. Dr. F. Cânâ Bilsel
Head of Department, **Architecture**

Prof. Dr. Ayşen Savaş
Supervisor, **Architecture, METU**

Examining Committee Members:

Prof. Dr. Esin Boyacıoğlu
Architecture, Gazi University

Prof. Dr. Ayşen Savaş
Architecture, METU

Assoc. Prof. Dr. M. Haluk Zelef
Architecture, METU

Assist. Prof. Dr. Pelin Yoncacı Arslan
Architecture, METU

Assist. Prof. Dr. Umut Şumnu
Interior Architecture, Başkent University

Date: 16.07.2019

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name, Surname: Sezin Sarıca

Signature:

ABSTRACT

RELIEF-SPACES: TRANS-POSITIONS IN DISPLAY ENVIRONMENTS

Sarıca, Sezin
Master of Architecture, Architecture
Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Ayşen Savaş

July 2019, 166 pages

The aim of this study is to redefine the relationship between the exhibition space and the object on display. With the recognition that architecture of exhibition space has been a renowned problematic in the architectural discourse, this study specifically focuses on the spatial integrity of both the container, the exhibition space, and the content, the object on display. The inquiry is into the possibility of using the visual field of artistic production, "relief", as a decoder, in order to be able to define a new way of seeing the visual field of exhibition space. Relief is reintroduced as a scaleless surface and space formation. Therefore, it becomes a seeing/reading tool that can magnify the environments superimposed in one immersive medium. Space and the surface are read together as a display environment. The aim is to look into the term and condition "expansion" that surface defines while creating a relief-space as a display space. Relief-space is defined as an architectural condition, which is conceptualized through a collocated textual ground of both architecture and art. The discussion questions both the conventional singularity of museum and galleries as "the" exhibition space and the conventional stability of architecture, which has been accepted only as the "container".

Keywords: Relief-space, display environments, exhibition, museums

ÖZ

RÖLYEF-MEKÂNLAR: SERGİ ORTAMLARINDA YER DEĞİŞTİRMELER

Sarıca, Sezin
Yüksek Lisans, Mimarlık
Tez Danışmanı: Prof. Dr. Ayşen Savaş

Temmuz 2019, 166 sayfa

Bu çalışmanın amacı, sergi mekânı ile sergilenen nesne arasındaki ilişkiyi yeniden tanımlamaktır. Sergi mimarlığının mimari söylemde çokça çalışılmış olan bir araştırma konusu olduğu kabul edilerek, bu çalışma, özellikle sergi mekânının ve sergilenen nesnenin hacimsel bütünlüğüne odaklanmaktadır. Araştırma, bir sanat ürünü ve temsil yöntemi olan rölyefi, bir görme biçimi olarak tanımlayarak sergi mekânını yeniden anlamayı amaçlar. Çalışmada rölyef, ölçeksiz bir yüzey ve mekân oluşumu olarak tanıtılmıştır. Bu nedenle, bir görme / okuma aracı haline gelir. Mekân ve yüzey bütün bir ilişki olarak birlikte okunur. Amaç, mimari yüzeyin, sergi mekânı olarak bir rölyef-mekân yaratırken tanımladığı "genişleme" terimini ve durumunu incelemektir. Rölyef-mekân, ya da kabaran-mekân, mimarlığın ve sanatın ortak zemini ile kavramsallaştırılan bir mimari durum olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Tartışma, müzelerin ve galerilerin sergi mekânı olmaya koşullanmış tekilliğini ve mimarlığın sergi mekânında sadece bir çeper olarak kabul edildiği sabit durumu sorgular.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Rölyef-mekân, sergi ortamları, sergileme, müzeler

To my family & To the memory of my father.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURES

xvi

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This study aims to redefine the relationship between the exhibition space and the object on display. Having considered that architecture of exhibition space has been a widely discussed problematic in the architectural discourse, this study specifically focuses on the spatial integrity of both the container, the exhibition space, and the content, the object on display. Rosalind Krauss explains the relationship between the exhibition space and art object on display by using the term "expansion" in her seminal text "Sculpture in the Expanded Field".[1] According to Krauss, the space of sculpture is no longer statically defined. The boundary between sculpture and its site has been dissolved and defined as an expanded field. Referring to Krauss, the discussion in this inquiry starts with the term and condition of "expansion", to unfold the relationship(s) within the exhibition space.

"Expansion" can be an immersive term to understand the intricate relationships between art, architectural object(s) and architecture. Re-introduced by Krauss, "expansion" has been reused as a keyword in many publications to become the core of a diverse discourse.[2] Before Krauss, however, the term was used by Robert Morris, in his article entitled "Notes on Sculpture", thirteen years before Krauss, in 1966. When Morris dwells on sculpture, he uses the term "expanded" to emphasize not only the object, which becomes "less self-important", but also its spatial relationships.[3] Moreover, he underlines another point which is far more thought-provoking. He says:

---

[1] Rosalind Krauss. "Sculpture in the Expanded Field." October 8 (1979): 31-44.

[2] Spyros Papapetros and Julian Rose, eds. *Retracing the Expanded Field: Encounters Between Art and Architecture*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2014.

[3] Robert Morris. "Notes on sculpture." *Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology* (1966): 222-235.

"The size range of useless three-dimensional things is a continuum between the monument and the ornament. The sculpture has generally been thought of as those objects, not at the polarities but falling between. The new work being done today falls between the extremes of this size continuum. Because much of it presents an image of neither figurative nor architectonic reference, the works have been described as "structures" or "objects." The word structure applies either to anything or to how a thing is put together. Every rigid body is an object." [4]

As Morris says, scale has great potential as a means to understand the structural aspects of sculpture. Moreover, scale helps the transformation of discourse from ornament to architecture and shifts the existing nomenclature in the fields of both sculpture and architecture. The ambiguity in scale and its relativeness can generate new terms. Having understood this capacity very early, in 1966, Morris states:

"Most ornaments from the past, … consciously exploit the intimate mode by the highly resolved surface incident. The awareness that surface incident is always attended to in small objects allows for the elaboration of fine detail to sustain itself. Large sculptures from the past that exist now only in small fragments invite our vision to perform a kind of magnification (sometimes literally performed by the photograph) that gives surface variation on these fragments the quality of detail it never had in the original whole work."[5]

In the light of this introduction, the ruins of the Acropolis of Athens, especially the Greek temple Erectheion (Figure 1- Figure 2) can be used a pretext[6] that "magnifies" the intricate relationship between art, architectural objects, and architecture itself. This intricate relationship embodies "trans-position" as a keyword and a new condition. Trans-position means "to exchange the positions of two things". [7] The Erectheion illustrates this trans-positional condition. Today, the temple is in a state of ruin. The

---

[4] Ibid, 230.

[5] Ibid, 230.

[6] During the study, the image of Temple Erectheion as a pretext is deeply discussed. The emphasis here, is the capability of a single image, which can illustrate the interpretative definitions in this study. Pantheon as a pretext, is also considered as another condition that can illustrate the "trans-positional relationships". However, the image-reading of Temple Erectheion has defined the conditions in a more clarified manner.

[7] Cambridge English Dictionary, *https://dictionary.cambridge.org/.*

small fragments of the Erectheion, surviving over 2,400 years, magnify a "trans-positional" relationship between art, architectural objects, and architecture. One unique photograph that shows the southwest elevation of the temple, can be a starting point to follow the traces of trans-positional conditions and their scale shift (Figure 2). This ruin is a relatively complete fragment of a larger whole, the Acropolis of Athens (Figure 1). As a ruin, it becomes an object, which is beyond architecture. By shifting from fragment to monument, it has a capacity to show different scales. In these scales, art, architectural object and architecture itself can be traced. When we unfold the photograph into a plan layout, it is possible to read these different conditions (Figure 3). There is a porch defined by six columns and a wall. There is another smaller porch with "caryatids" as load bearing elements. In between, there is a façade in which columns are carved on the surface, and at the east elevation of the temple, there is a single-standing column, which remains as an intact fragment. There is no historical or contextual relationship between the topic of this study and the architecture of the Erectheion. However, it is used as a pretext, since the research refers to the coexistence of these elements in different physical positions and spatial combinations (Figure 4).
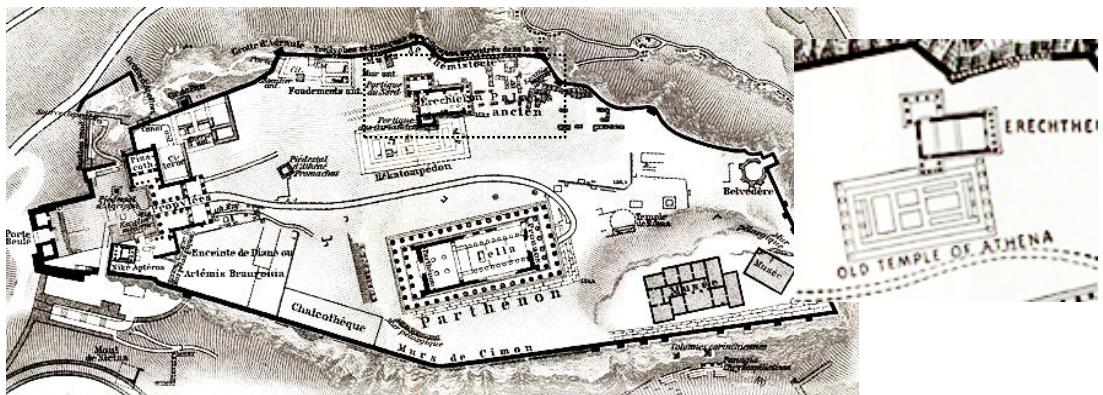
Figure 1. The Acropolis of Athens plan.
Source: https://www.antiquemapsandprints.com

3

Figure 2. Ruins of the Greek temple Erectheion.

Source: https://enacademic.com/dic.nsf/enwiki/397700
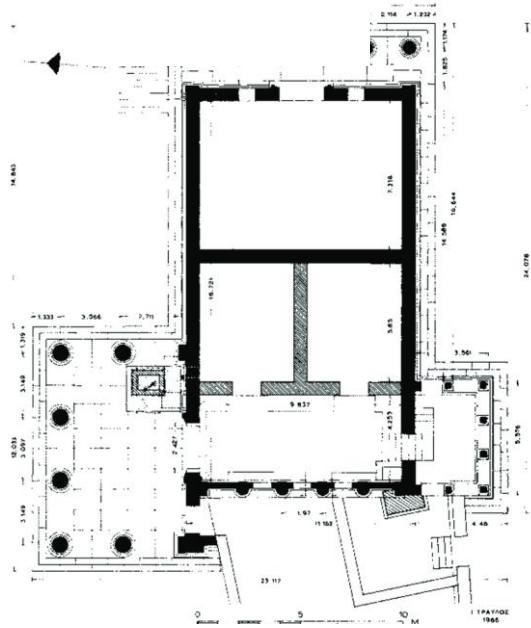
Figure 3. Plan of the Greek temple Erectheion.

Source: https://www.researchgate.net

4

The physical positions of architectural elements define a gradual reading of spatial combinations: from the state of "structure" to "object"[8] and from monument to fragment. Here, four different physical positions are illustrated (Figure 4). In each fragment, a different spatial combination is depicted. One of these spatial combinations is the condition in which the architectural elements are located in their original positions, on their original locations (Figure 4a). It is a porch, where six columns are located as load bearing elements. The columns are located in front of the wall. In the second condition, it is a façade. The architectural element, column, is embedded within another architectural element, wall. In the west façade of the Erectheion, the columns are carved within the surface of the wall (Figure 4b). They define a surface together. In the third condition, it is a smaller porch where the upper structure is supported by six caryatids. Caryatids are significant because they are more than load-bearing columns. They can be interpreted as sculptures. In other words, the architectural element, column, has been supplanted by an art object (Figure 4c). In the last condition, the architectural element is a single-standing column as an architectural object, which lost its original position and became a fragment as the ruin of the east porch (Figure 4d).

---

[8] Please see p. 1; Morris' definitions of object and structure.

These different physical positions of architectural elements define different spatial conditions referring to intricate surface and space relationships in the architectural scale (Figure 4). Going back to Morris' definition of expanded space and his term "magnification", a scalar relationship between fragment and monument, which magnifies the vision of surface and space, can be discussed. He says that when the object is the ruin of a temple, an architectural façade, it is perceived as a surface. However, when the object is the ruin of an architectural façade, a fragment of a column, then we perceive it as space (Figure 5).
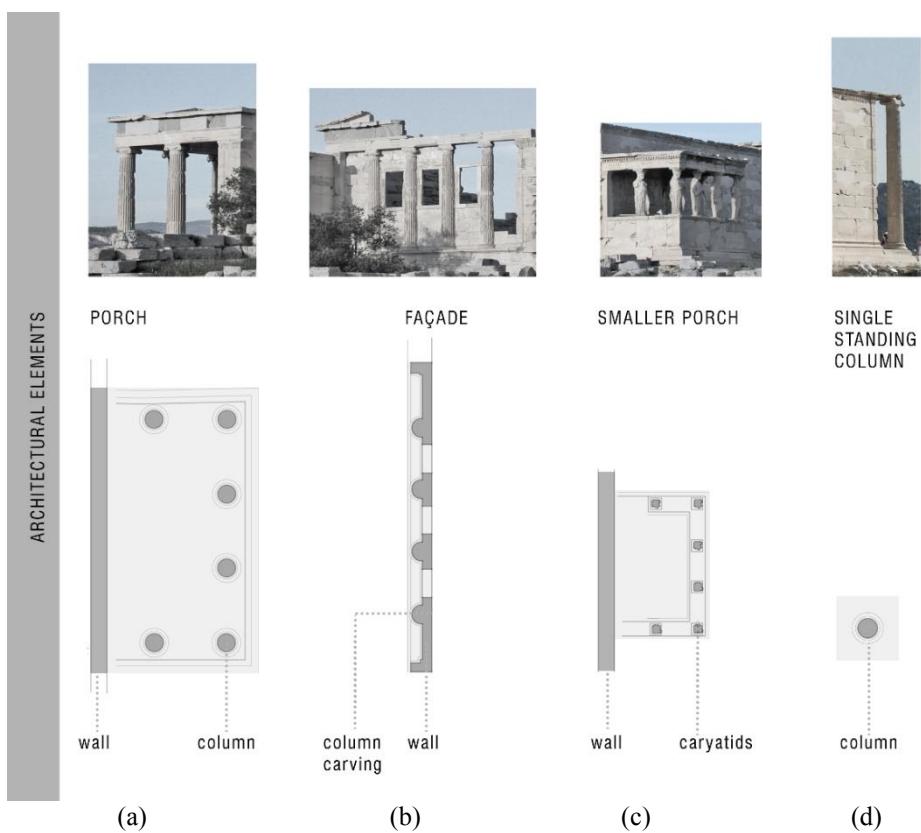
Figure 4(a,b,c,d). Diagrams created from Erechtheion plan, with different surface and space relationships, drawn by the author.

Zooming into the surfaces of these architectural elements is very crucial to understand that the intricate surface and space relationships can be scaleless. Both the ruin of the temple, the façade, and the flutes on the surface of the column, have a three-dimensional space (Figure 5). This space is called the "relief-space" in this study.

Relief-space has an integrity by definition, since it is defined by both surface and space. This integrity helps us to redefine "relief" as a scaleless surface and space formation.
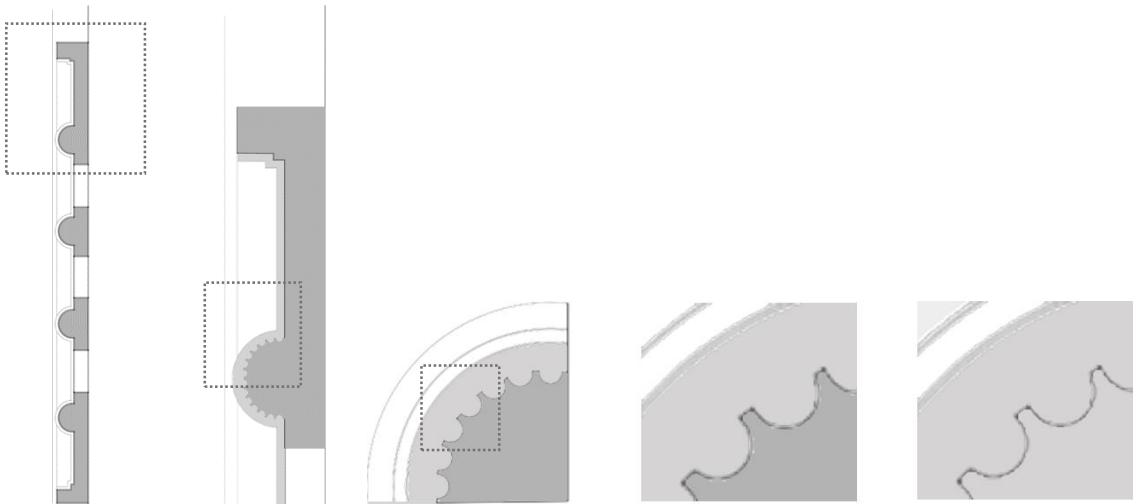
Figure 5. Diagrammatical zoom-in drawings of column flutes, drawn by the author.

Morris defines the scalar relationship between fragment and monument as a potential to change the perception of surface and space. Ironically, though, he does not realize that relief has this surface and space quality intrinsically. He defines relief only as a surface shared with a painting, without a literal space[9] :

> "The relief has always been accepted as a viable mode. However, it cannot be accepted today as legitimate. The autonomous and literal nature of sculpture demands that it have its own, equally literal space - not a surface shared with painting. Furthermore, an object hung on the wall does not confront gravity; it timidly resists it. One of the conditions of knowing an object is supplied by the sensing of the gravitational force acting upon it in actual space. That is, space with three, not two coordinates. The ground plane, not the wall, is the necessary support for the maximum awareness of the object. One more objection to the relief is the limitation of the number of possible views the wall imposes, together with the constant of up, down, right, left." [10]

---

[9] Ibid, 224.

[10] Ibid, 224.

The contradiction inherent in Morris' definitions of fragment and monument, and their relationship with relief, renders "relief" an important part of this research. Unlike Morris, this research studies relief as capable of being defined as both surface and space.

In a relief, lines expand to transform the shapes into forms. A relief is both two and three dimensional by definition and allows the coexistence of multiple layers of visual information. It suggests a method to raise the shapes above a flat surface so that they appear to stand out slightly from it.

The process of relief construction has a terminology that is inevitably architectural, since the process oscillates between ground and space. In this process, the ground surface is transformed into space. The transformation is based on a number of operations that convert guidelines on the surface to volume and mass. The in-between condition of relief operations has a discourse, which has an obvious reference to the field of architecture, since relief itself started "architecturally" in its fullest sense.

As a setting-bounded practice, relief suggests operations on a referent surface. Robert Goldwater refers to reliefs in the past that "[h]ave generally been tied to an architectural setting. The sculptor has been called upon to create a work for a particular, predetermined spot, and asked to make it fit in appearance and spirit."[11] Either in the case of a relief carving of a classical entablature, which has a certain architectural setting, or a constructivist relief, which is an art object without any specific architectural dependency, the surface operations form a space of relief. In order to be able to create a space, this formation necessitates an "expansion" of the surface.

---

[11] Robert John Goldwater. *What is Modern Sculpture?* Museum of Modern Art, 1969.

By an interesting coincidence, it was the same year, 1979, that the word "expansion" was re-remembered with Rosalind Krauss' seminal text, and that Art Historian - Museum Curator Margit Rowell curated an exhibition called "The Planar Dimension: Europe, 1912–1932: From Surface to Space" in the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, which included works of 20th century sculpture. The exhibition was mostly composed of relief constructions and included works from renowned artists: Alexander Archipenko, Giacomo Balla, Alexander Calder, Naum Gabo, Jacques Lipchitz, Lazar (El) Lissitzky, Joan Miro, Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, Antoine Pevsner, Pablo Picasso, Man Ray, Alexander Rodchenko, Kurt Schwitters and Vladimir Tatlin[12] (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Examples from Archipenko, Domela and Rodchenko.
Source: The Planar Dimension: From Surface to Space Exhibition Catalogue, Margit Rowell.

In the introduction to the exhibition catalog, Rowell presents the development of relief art. Starting from the canvas as the surface of operations, she gives a historical promenade of how the picture plane gained dimension through the relief art especially within Constructivism. She refers to artists' interpretations of relief art. The most

---

[12] Margit Rowell. *The Planar Dimension: Europe, 1912-1932*. Vol. 71. Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, 1979.

interesting point for this study is her way of using the term "architecture". Architecture is used with the adjective "pictorial".[13] In other words, she transcoded the word in order to be able to assign an art object a spatial value. Thus, the sentence that Rowell uses to define the relief works in the exhibition becomes even more provocative.

She says "[t]hey detached the two-dimensional surface from the wall and installed it, as surface, in front of the wall."[14] Rowell's sentence explains the process applied by all these relief artists and questions the meaning of "surface". This act of "detaching" and "installing" surfaces in relationship to the architectural element of the wall, illustrates the process of exhibition making. The space of the exhibition corresponds with the surface to space relationship of relief. Referring to Morris' definition of "magnification", the relationship between the container, exhibition space, and the content, or object on display, can be considered as a magnification of the relations of surface and space in relief (Figure 7). In the photographs in Figure 7, detached architectural surfaces - fragments of façades, cornices, and capitals - are installed on the wall surface and define a new three-dimensional space. Likewise, the reliefs define a three-dimensional space, formed by detached surfaces installed on a referent surface.
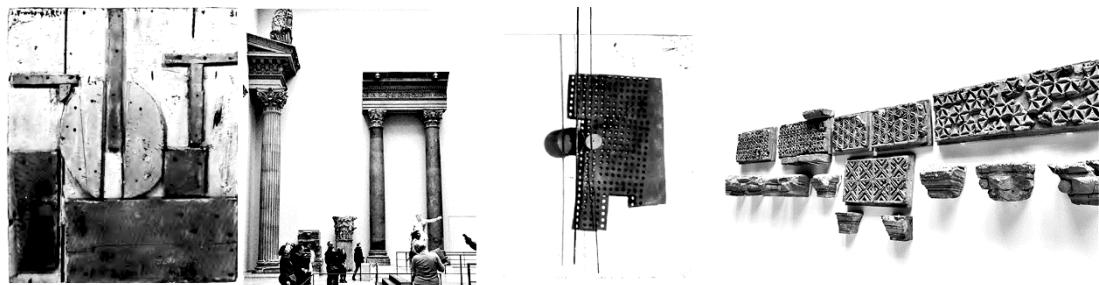
Figure 7. Photographs from Pergamonmuseum taken by the author and reliefs from Surface to Space catalog, edited by the author, referring to Rowell's sentence: "…They detached the two-dimensional surface from the wall and installed it, as surface, in front of the wall."

---

[13] Ibid, 11.

[14] Ibid, 9.

In this sense, exhibition space has an intrinsic expanded condition in which both the container and the content are on display. The three-dimensional spatial relationship between the architectural element defining the container, and object on display, forms a relief-space. A relief-space is dependent on both of the architecture *in* and *of* the exhibition. As Eve Blau points out, "[t]he experience of architecture in exhibition is very different from the experience of architecture as a material and spatial object in physical space."[15] Thus, the exhibition space is an intricate visual field.

This study introduces relief as a decoder, in order to be able to define a new way of seeing the intricate visual field of exhibition space. Accordingly, it is structured under three main chapters. In the second and third chapters, "Relief: Expanded Surface", and "Display Environments: Expanded Space", necessary information regarding relief and display environment, which are both representational media in different scales, is provided. In the light of this information, the third chapter, "Relief as a Way of Seeing the Display Environments", introduces relief as a scaleless surface and space formation and a new way of seeing the display environments. With the recognition of this gradual structure, in the second chapter, the intention is to locate "relief" in an intellectual context. In this part, an overview of the renowned tryptic of "painting, sculpture, and architecture" will pave the way to define "relief". To explain the fields "painting, sculpture, and architecture", two publications are chosen, because their contents are structured under the same tryptic. However, they include different definitions under the title of each field. One is "The New Vision" by Laszlo Moholy-Nagy from the year 1928. He defines painting, sculpture, and architecture with notions of surface, volume and space. His definitions are mostly supported with examples from Bauhaus education. The other publication is "Circle: International Survey of Constructive Art" by J.L. Martin, Ben Nicholson and Naum Gabo from the year 1938. This publication defines painting, sculpture, and architecture with a collection of textual and visual productions of Constructivism. Unfolding the tryptic in this manner

---

[15] Eve Blau. "Curating Architecture with Architecture." Log 20 (2010): 18-28.

locates relief in an intellectual context. Being an artistic production in between painting and sculpture, and sculpture and architecture, "relief" can be an already expanded field. Thus, in the second part, specific concepts by Krauss and Hal Foster and artistic and architectural examples from Robert Morris, Donald Judd, Dan Flavin, and Richard Serra are given. These examples help to unfold the tryptic textually and visually.

In the second chapter, a number of definitions of space of relief and operations to transform a surface into space are also explained. The aim is to determine the various relationships between surface and space in relief construction. In order to be able to understand the space of relief, it is necessary to understand the operations conducted to transform a surface into space. Starting from one of the first textbooks written on sculpture "The Creation of Sculpture" by Jules Struppeck, "relief" has been defined by referring to various surface operations. In this part, relief is revisited, first, with more analytical definitions relating to the formal aspects, and second, a specific Constructivist approach: Gabo's definitions of "space", and its repercussions. British Constructivist relief works in particular and the *Keparchitektura* theory, Hungarian Constructivist relief, "Image Architecture" works are selected. Thirdly, a more contemporary artist's work, Lucio Fontana and his "Spatialism", will contribute to the variety of definitions of relief space. Having covered various definitions and examples of "relief space" and introduced a common understanding, which is the trans-positional and unified relationship between the space and the referent surface, specific examples within the context of Constructivism are underlined. Two further examples from Schwitters and Lissitzky help make the assertion of this section more concrete.

Having looked into the process of relief construction, it becomes obvious that the vocabulary it defines has the potential to take on new architectural meanings. The relief embodies an interchangeable vocabulary. The terms combine two and three-dimensionality and different scales. The combination of cut-out words create phrases that inevitably represent the architectural nature of relief construction. In other words,

the vocabulary of relief construction as an analogy to analyze display environments, emphasizes a spatial unity in which the space of display and object(s) of the display are blended. This terminology is collected under the section "Text of Relief: Expanded Vocabulary", as a glossary. This glossary represents an expanded vocabulary and the terms will be used in the spatial analysis of specific display conditions.

In order to be able to assert "relief" not only as an art form or a medium, but also as a new way of seeing the display environments, the concept of "quasi-ness" is crucial. The second chapter "Quasi-ness: Expanded Scale" introduces and refers to quasi-definitions and properties of relief.

Following the second chapter that explains the space, text and scale relations of relief, the third chapter defines "display environments". As a frequently used term, "exhibition space", is the focus of this chapter. However, in order to be able to redefine the exhibition space, this research uses another phrase, which is "display environment". In the third chapter, the reason for using "display environment" as a critique of "exhibition space" is supported by artist Martin Beck's definition of "display" and architect Frederick Kiesler's definition of "environment". The examples given in this chapter include not only conventional exhibition spaces but a range of display environments starting from canvas surface and expanding to city space. The reason for including a list of display environments at the end of this chapter is to explain the variety of scales. Although the scale of "museum space" has a direct relation with the act of display, scales varying from canvas surface to city, are also defined as display environments. Considering the variety of scales of spaces, the trans-positional relationship between surfaces and spaces underlines unique conditions within existing display environments, which is exemplified in detail in the fourth chapter.

In order to be able to define a new way of seeing the exhibition space, the fourth chapter uses relief as a decoder. In this study, the definition of relief-space as an

architectural condition refers to its trans-positional surface to space relationship. Relief-space proposes a mutual relationship between surface and space, instead of creating hierarchy. By definition, it criticizes the privileges of dualities such as space over image, volume over mass and monument over fragment.[16] To support the definition of relief-space, specific concepts such as: "trans-positions between fragment, monument environment" and "surface and space as wall and display", are introduced. This part includes examples that are analyzed by referring to the pretext and the glossary "Text of Relief: Expanded Vocabulary".

In this study, using the term "case" is avoided since the examples illustrating the main argument are rather "conditions", including parts of different display environments. Thus, information regarding the contextual and historical aspects of the conditions is provided at the most basic level possible. Spatial conditions from the Sir John Soane Museum, Pergamonmuseum, and the Erimtan Archaeology Museum represent different display environments and are analyzed within their spatial properties that project qualities of a relief-space. Existing examples of relief as artistic production and related drawings are used in order to be able to make the surface and space relationship of each environment visually available. These examples include the works of El Lissitzky, Kurt Schwitters and Lucio Fontana. These artworks and conditions of display environments are chosen based on the experience of the author. In other words, "being seen" is an important common aspect for all of the artistic and architectural examples in this study, since they are used as interpretative illustrations. Besides, it is not a coincidence that most of the artworks frequently referred in this thesis are Constructivist and Minimalist, because the research process is benefitted

---

[16] Statements based on discussions with Assist. Prof. Dr. Umut Şumnu throughout this study.

14

from an academic environment in which Constructivism and Deconstructivism are deeply studied. [17]

Finally, it is important to state that this research is the result of a "double reading".[18] In this study, the relationship between text and image is not binary but multilateral. The overall assertion is associated with a process of interpretative illustration of existing definitions. Thus, this inquiry as a "second reading" proposes a series of hermeneutic illustrations[19] to support the main assertion.

This study aims to re-introduce relief as a scaleless concept that includes a number of relationships between surface and space. In the end, the study asserts relief as a scaleless surface and space formation. Therefore, it becomes a seeing/reading tool that can magnify the environments superimposed in one immersive medium. Space and the surface are read together as a display environment. The aim is to look into the term and condition "expansion" that surface defines while creating a relief-space as a display space. Thus, the discussion questions both the conventional singularity of museum and galleries as "the" exhibition space and the conventional stability of architecture, which has been accepted only as the "container".

---

[17] This thesis is conducted simultaneously with the research project "Getty Foundation – Keeping It Modern", which is a conservation planning project that studies on METU Faculty of Architecture Building Complex. The project process is mostly focused on 1930s International Style to 1960s Modern approaches.

[18] According to Derrida, "double reading" is a deconstructive process. The first reading is a reproductive reading, in which the text has a determinate meaning that is shared with common readers. The second reading is a critical and productive reading, which includes an active interpretation that disseminates the meanings that the first reading has already constructed. *Gerasimos Kakoliris. "Jacques Derrida's Double Deconstructive Reading: A Contradiction in Terms?" Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology 35, No. 3 (2004): 283-292.

[19] Statement based on discussions with Prof. Dr. Ayşen Savaş throughout this study.

CHAPTER 2

RELIEF: EXPANDED SURFACE

2.1. A Renowned Tryptic: Painting, Sculpture and Architecture

In this part, the aim is to locate "relief" in an intellectual context. An overview of the renowned tryptic[20] of "painting, sculpture, and architecture" will help to define "relief". To explain the fields "painting, sculpture, and architecture", two publications are chosen: "The New Vision", by Moholy-Nagy, from 1928, and "Circle: International Survey of Constructive Art" by J.L. Martin, Ben Nicholson and Naum Gabo, from 1971. These two publications are chosen because their contents are structured under the same tryptic: painting, sculpture, and architecture (Figure 8).

Figure 8. Table of Contents pages of the abovementioned books.

Source: "The New Vision", Moholy-Nagy and "Circle: International Survey of Constructive Art", J.L. Martin, Ben Nicholson, and Naum Gabo.

---

[20] Here, "tryptic" as a term is used to propose a critical point of view for the conventionality of combining these three fields in one phrase.

However, they include different definitions under the title of each field. In "The New Vision", Moholy-Nagy defines painting, sculpture, and architecture with notions of surface, volume, and space. His definitions are mostly supported with the examples from the student works of Bauhaus. The other publication, "Circle: International Survey of Constructive Art" defines painting, sculpture, and architecture with a collection of textual and visual productions of Constructivism.

In "The New Vision", Moholy-Nagy defines visual perception and creation of painting, sculpture, and architecture. He dwells on a number of examples to compose what Gropius calls a "standard grammar for modern design"[21]. "The New Vision" is an important publication for architectural education. With the recognition of this importance, here, only the content of the book is emphasized. There are three subtitles in the book, which are "The material (surface treatment, painting)", "Volume (sculpture)" and "Space (Architecture)". He forms a glossary, in which each subtitle is extended into a specific field of painting, sculpture, and architecture.

In the section "The material (surface treatment, painting)", he defines processes that convert a material into a planar space. He uses a terminology that derives from the physical presence of a material: "structure, texture, surface treatment, and mass arrangement".[22] For him, a surface becomes an artistic production if it has a structure, texture, surface treatment or mass arrangement.

In the part "Volume (sculpture)", Moholy-Nagy explains the creation of volume. He defines "sculpture development", again by emphasizing the treatment of the material.[23] The treatment of the material to create volume corresponds with the field of sculpture. According to Moholy-Nagy, when material treatment has a three-dimensional aspect, it creates complex volumes and it becomes a sculpture development.

---

[21] László Moholy-Nagy. *The New Vision* (1928): 6.

[22] Ibid, 25-27.

[23] Ibid, 41-55.

18

Lastly, in the part "Space (architecture)", Moholy-Nagy's approach is based on the integration of surface, volume, and space. He points out how "architectural" space includes different concepts. He emphasizes the blurry borderline between volume-creation and space-creation. He states:

> "Although architecture and sculpture are separate domains, the treatment of space at times easily may be confused with treatment of volume. In other words: to the untrained eye, sculpture may appear as architecture and a work of architecture as enlarged sculpture... If the side walls of a volume are scattered in different directions, spatial patterns or spatial relations originate."[24]

In the book, Moholy-Nagy defines terms for the treatment of material, to create surface (painting), volume (sculpture) and space (architecture). Although he explains these under different subtitles, the definitions are architectural in their fullest sense.

The other publication, "Circle: International Survey of Constructive Art" by J.L. Martin, Ben Nicholson and Naum Gabo, is a collection of textual and visual productions, which forms a dictionary of Constructivism under the titles of "painting, sculpture, and architecture". This publication includes articles by various architects, artists, and academics. Positing "Constructivism" as an immersive concept to frame these articles, reveals common properties that each field includes. In the book, "[t]he artists, architects and critics involved were not members of a formal movement but represented various tendencies that, when juxtaposed, were found to have important similarities, both stylistic and theoretical."[25]

In the book, the articles have discussions on the tryptic: painting, sculpture, and architecture. However, most of the articles underline the relationships in between. Here, only a selected set of the articles from the book are mentioned. In the part,

---

[24] Ibid, 60.

[25] John L. Martin, Ben Nicholson, and Naum Gabo eds. *Circle; International Survey of Constructive Art*. Praeger Publishers, 1971.

"Painting", the article "The Quarrel with Realism" by Le Corbusier[26], dwells on the integrity of painting and sculpture within architecture. Having started with painting and its "surface", Le Corbusier discusses architecture and architectural elements, which can be working media for painters and artists. He says "Architecture can exist quite independently. There is no need either of painting or of sculpture." [27] He also states that painting and sculpture as artistic productions can find themselves "a place" in architecture. As he defines architecture as "skeleton", he says that the integrity of painting and sculpture would create an organization from skeleton to flesh.[28] Referring to the use of architectural elements in the Modern Movement, he points out the "wall-surfaces, curved or oblique partitions", which are necessary for creating an architectural whole. He says that they are the "surfaces" that can become the "surfaces" for "architectural polychromy" for painters. Here, how he translates "surface" both as an architectural element and an artistic production should be underlined.

Similar to Le Corbusier's approach which can define the same surface as both an architectural element and a painting, in the part, "Sculpture", Gabo dwells on the notion of "space" as a sculptural and architectural element. Referring to the "Realistic Manifesto", he explains how they understand the materiality. He states that their "[c]onstructive technique is justified on the one hand by the technical development of building in space and on the other hand by the large increase in contemplative knowledge". [29] Gabo refers to architecture as "[n]ot only the building of houses but the whole edifice of our everyday existence"[30], so he says that creation of artistic

---

[26] Le Corbusier. "The Quarrel with Realism", *Circle; International Survey of Constructive Art*. Praeger Publishers (1971): 67.

[27] Ibid, 71.

[28] Ibid, 71.

[29] Naum Gabo. "Sculpture- Carving and Construction in Space", *Circle; International Survey of Constructive Art*. Praeger Publishers (1971): 103.

[30] Ibid, 111.

production, a sculpture, necessitates an architectural process of space-creation. Here, as "surface" of a wall or a painting, space becomes a common element for these different fields.

Lastly, in the part "Architecture", Siegfried Gideon introduces a comparative analysis between architecture, art, and engineering in his article "Construction and Aesthetics". Firstly, he focuses on works of structural engineer Robert Maillart, especially his use of material and elements in structural design. He compares methods of an engineer and a painter:

> "Are the methods which underlie the artist's work related to those of the modern structural engineer? In fact, there is a direct affinity between the principles now current in painting and construction? ... We know the great importance which surface has acquired in the composition of a picture... Surface, which was formerly held to possess no intrinsic capacity for expression, and so at best could only find decorative utilization, has now become the basis of composition... If Maillart, speaking as an engineer, can claim to have developed the slab or wall into a basic element of construction, modern painters can answer with equal justice that they have made surface an essential factor in the composition of a picture."[31]

Here, the architectural/structural element of slab and wall and the painting are all referred to as "surface". Although the content of the book is created under separate titles of painting, sculpture, and architecture, there is an inevitable search for common definitions. These common definitions are introduced with the "surface" and "space" elements. Defined by both surface and space, "relief" can stand as an immersive field in between painting, sculpture, and architecture. It recalls the relationship of "surface" and "space" elements by definition. Thus, the other publications that re-define the tryptic out of the separate titles, are also studied.

---

[31] Siegfried Gideon. "Construction and Aesthetics", *Circle; International Survey of Constructive Art*. Praeger Publishers (1971): 220.

2.2. Unfolding the Tryptic

This part refers to more contemporary publications such as Krauss' "Sculpture in the Expanded Field", "Passages on Modern Sculpture", "Architects' Drawings and Artists' Paintings" and Foster's "Art and Architecture Complex", and a relatively earlier publication; "The Union of Architecture, Sculpture and Painting". These authors proposed a more interrelated way of looking into the fore-mentioned tryptic. In contrast to the content formation of "The New Vision" and "Circle: International Survey of Constructive Art", the content of these publications unfolds the tryptic.

Rosalind Krauss, in the 1970s and 1980s, redefined and co-defined these fields, especially sculpture and architecture, with powerful references to linguistic discourse. Every work by Krauss has a remarkable influence on this research. Not only content of her work but also the titles of her works have a significant impact on the following discussions.

In "Sculpture in the Expanded Field", Krauss introduces the term "expansion" to explain the architectural space created by a sculpture. In an "expanded field" she shows different possibilities of sculpture. Her work defines an expansion from the field of sculpture to the field of (not) architecture. The article starts with a paragraph that emphasizes this changing space of sculpture:

> "Over the last ten years rather surprising things have come to be called sculpture: narrow corridors with TV monitors at the ends; large photographs documenting country hikes; mirrors placed at strange angles in ordinary rooms, temporary lines cut into the floor of the desert. Nothing, it would seem, possibly give to such a motley of effort the right to lay claim to whatever one might mean by the category of sculpture. Unless, that is, the category can be made to become almost infinitely malleable."[32]

She also states that the "categories" of sculpture and architecture are no longer statically defined and are capable of including a larger set of objects:

---

[32] Rosalind Krauss. "Sculpture in the Expanded Field." October 8 (1979): 31.

"In the hands of this criticism categories like sculpture and painting have been kneaded and stretched and twisted in an extraordinary demonstration of elasticity, a display of the way a cultural term can be extended to include just about anything."[33]

Figure 9. Rodin's Balzac, Paris, 1898

Source: https://collections.musee-rodin.fr
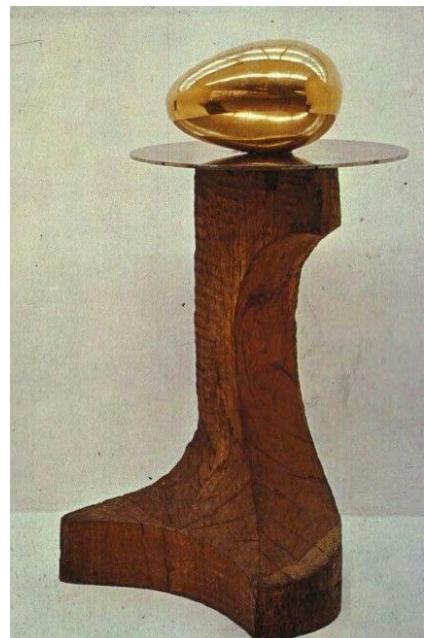
Figure 10. Brancusi's Beginning of the World, 1924

Source: https://arthive.com/

Firstly, Krauss dwells on sculpture; its pedestal that locates the "object" to the "site". By unveiling the definitions of object and site, and shifting them by pointing out examples and approaches from the 19th and 20th centuries, Krauss expands the category of sculpture. She compares the pedestals of Rodin's Balzac (Figure 9) to Brancusi's Beginning of the World (Figure 10). In Brancusi's work the pedestal becomes the sculpture whereas, in Balzac's work, the pedestal is not perceived as a part of the sculpture. It acts as a level difference that elevates the sculpture from the ground.

---

[33] Ibid, 31.

Krauss continues with another example, Robert Morris' work, exhibited in 1964 in the Green Gallery (Figure 11):

> "The-quasi-architectural integers whose status as sculpture reduces almost completely to the simple determination that it is what is in the room that is not really the room; the other is the outdoor exhibition of the mirrored boxes-forms which are distinct from the setting only because, though visually continuous with grass and they are not in fact part of the landscape. In this sense sculpture had entered the full condition of its inverse logic had become pure negativity: the combination of exclusions. Sculpture, it said, had ceased being a positivity, and was now the category that resulted in the addition of the not-landscape to the not-architecture."[34]

Figure 11. Left: Robert Morris, Green Gallery Installation. 1964. Right: Robert Morris, Untitled (Mirrored Boxes), 1965.

Source: Left: https://wsimag.com/grey-art-gallery, Right: http://www.lille3000.eu/gare-saint-sauveur/automne-2012/expositions

In both of the works, display spaces, the museum and the garden, are redefined with the notions of absence and presence. Morris uses the space of sculpture to transform the perception of the existing architectural and public spaces. Physically present, the wall is perceived as conceptually absent in Green Gallery. Similarly, physically

---

[34] Ibid, 36.

present, the Mirrored Boxes is perceived as conceptually absent. In Krauss' words, the sculpture becomes the combination of exclusions.
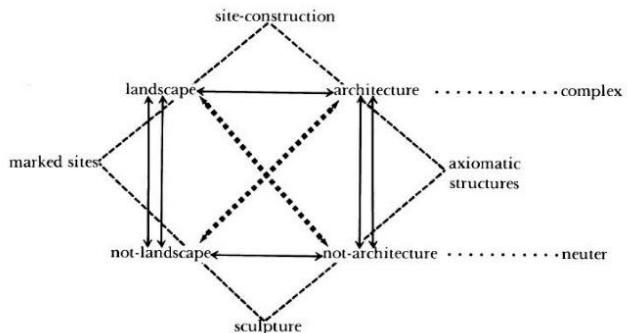
Figure 12. Krauss Klein diagram, 1979.

Source: Sculpture in the Expanded Field, Rosalind Krauss.

To illustrate the condition, Krauss proposes a semantic structure (Figure 12) that uses binary oppositions of architecture and landscape as defining tools. Her diagram illustrates an expanded field, which is defined by plural relations between (not)architecture and (not)landscape. These plural relations reveal that an artistic or an architectural production is no longer defined by one specific medium:

> "… within the situation of postmodernism, practice is not defined in relation to a given medium-sculpture-but rather in relation to the logical operations on a set of cultural terms, for which any medium-photography, books, lines on walls, mirrors, or sculpture itself-might be used… Thus, the field provides both for an expanded but finite set of related positions for a given artist to occupy and explore, and for an organization of work that is not dictated by the conditions of a particular medium."[35]

Krauss' diagram and related positions in between different fields, unfold the renowned tryptic into an expanded field. This expanded field has the capacity to create definitions.

---

[35] Ibid, 42.

In her book "Passages in Modern Sculpture", Krauss refers to a number of concepts and works of art. The last chapter "The Double Negative: A New Syntax for Sculpture" needs to be studied in detail. "Double negative" in this sense, is a strong and self-descriptive phrase that corresponds with the "trans-positions" of architecture and art. In this chapter, Krauss refers to Donald Judd's works (Figure 13) to underline the importance of "*espace*"[36]. *Espace* is a French word, meaning "interval space". "Double negative" refers to a dual negative condition in linguistics. As a spatial condition it defines *espace* as both solid and void. *Espace* in Judd's work defines a double negative space (Figure 13). To explain the term "double negative" Krauss talks about the relationship between Judd's work and the wall surface of museum space:

> "Judd's wall sculpture in which arithmetic progressions are used is a good example of this. The progression itself determines the size of the elements… The same progression determines (but in reverse order) the size of the negative spaces between the elements. The visual interpenetration of the two progressions—one of volumes and the other of voids —itself becomes a metaphor for the dependence of the sculpture on the conditions of external space, for it is impossible to determine whether it is the positive volume of the work that brings the intervals into being, or whether it is the rhythm of the intervals that establishes the contours of the work. In this way, Judd is depicting the reciprocity between the integral body of the sculpture and the cultural space that surrounds it."[37]

Judd's work expands into the museum space and the museum space becomes Judd's work's negative space. The *espace* in Judd's work is neither art nor architecture, but both. The wall surface and display space define a "double negative" condition, which can be read in different spatial conditions (Figure 14).

---

[36] Rosalind Krauss. "The Double Negative: A New Syntax for Sculpture." *Passages in Modern Sculpture* (1981): 243-88.

[37] Ibid, 270.

Figure 13. Untitled, Donald Judd, 1967.
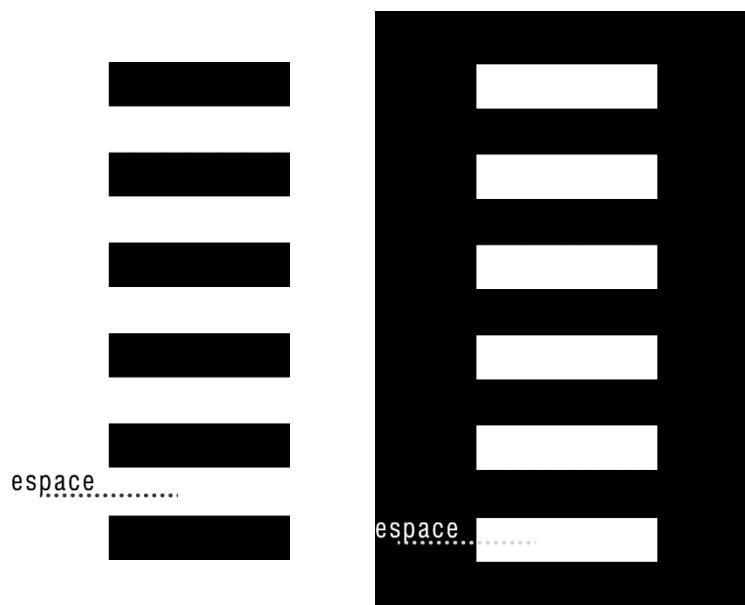
Figure 14. Double negative elevation diagram of Judd's work, showing volume and void as espace, *drawn by the author.*

27

In an article entitled "Architects' Drawings/ Artists' Buildings"[38], Krauss introduces another trans-positional condition between architecture and art, through the medium of "drawing". She says:

> "There is a certain, satisfying symmetry in the very statement of this category, in its suggestion that artists and architects have somehow mysteriously changed places, so that those who formerly concerned themselves with building, now draw, while those who formerly drew, now build. The suggestion is of a mutual and symmetrical displacement."[39]

She finds "symmetrical" relationships of architectural and artistic production. The illusion of three-dimensional space created within a surface of painting corresponds to the illusion of a three-dimensional space represented in a two-dimensional surface or the illusion of architectural space in a "built" three-dimensional structure. Although their spatial requirements are different, these displacements referred by Krauss, draw an immersive framework, in which the fields of architecture and art can overlap.

Twenty years after Krauss' article, Jane Rendell writes her seminal book entitled "Art and Architecture: A Place Between". The title of the book is very self-descriptive. There she explores ideas with which architects and artists seek to blur traditional boundaries between the two fields. In her book she also refers to Krauss and quotes her as:

> "The field provides both for an expanded but finite set of related positions for a given artist to occupy and explore, and for an organization of work that is not dictated by the conditions of a particular medium."[40]

Rendell says that Krauss not only talks about the complex relationship between architecture and art, but also questions the site-specificity of both fields. She blurs the borders in between painting, sculpture, and architecture.

---

[38] Rosalind Krauss. "Architects' Drawings / Artists' Buildings" *Drawings: The Pluralist Decade.* Institute of Contemporary Art, 1980.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Jane Rendell. *Art and Architecture: A Place Between*. London: IB Tauris, (2006): 57.

The book "The Art-Architecture Complex" by Hal Foster, is another publication that dwells on a similar subject. With reference to Krauss' "expansion" or "double negative", Foster introduces the term "complex":

> "I have used terms like "encounter" and "connection" to describe the recent relationship between art and architecture, so why opt for the semi-sinister "complex" in the title? I mean the word in three ways. The first is simply to designate the many ensembles where art and architecture are juxtaposed and/or combined, sometimes with art in the space of architecture, sometimes with architecture in the place of art…"[41]

Foster gives other reasons for his use of the term "complex", which are more closely related to the socio-political conditions that attribute to the word "complex" a meaning of blockage and disability. With the recognition of these other reasons, in this part, the main emphasis will be on the meaning of the term as a reinforcing definition for the "trans-positional" states of architecture and art. Foster introduces other terms such as "Sculpture Remade", "Painting Unbound", "Building contra Image".[42] They all indicate the trans-positional states of sculpture and architecture, painting and sculpture, building and painting.

In "Sculpture Remade", Foster enables a simultaneous perception of sculpture and painting. The part involves a glossary related to the definition of sculpture. Foster defines space of sculpture as "[b]etween an object and a monument"[43] corresponding to what Morris says[44] and points out that "[i]t has stretched to the point where great expanses could be contemplated as sculpture".[45] In the chapter, most of the emphasis is on Richard Serra. Foster says that Serra "[p]ositions sculpture between two other terms: opposed to painting on the one side, and critical of architecture on the other."[46]

---

[41] Hal Foster. *The Art-Architecture Complex*. Verso Books, 2013.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Please see Page 1: Morris' definition.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Ibid.

He says that Serra thinks of sculpture as an artistic production of its own, but also he defines sculpture in terms of its opposing relations with painting and architecture:

> "Serra approaches this differential understanding of sculpture through a philosophical point of procedure drawn from Bertrand Russell, "Every language has a structure about which nothing critical in that language can be said," Serra remarks; only a second language with a different structure can perform this analysis. … it also speaks to the relation of his sculpture to painting and architecture. On the one hand, Serra insists on the absolute status of sculpture as a language of its own; on the other hand, he manipulates this language to partake of aspects of painting and architecture, but only in order to articulate its differences from them. Thus, for example, even as his sculpture opposes painting to the degree that it resists figure-ground conventions, it also partakes of the pictorial in the sense of its framing of a site. And even his sculpture critiques architecture to the degree that it refuses the scenographic, it also partakes of the architectural in the sense that it also privileges the structural."[47]

Richard Serra's works have the capacity to transform the space of the display. For example, in his works such as "Between the Torus and Sphere" or "Torqued Ellipse" (Figure 15), the surfaces define a new spatial condition. This condition includes a space that belongs to both the artwork and the museum space. Space within is neither sculpture nor architecture, but both.

Figure 15. Left: "Between the Torus and Sphere", Guggenheim Museum. Right: "Torqued Ellipse", Guggenheim Museum.

Source: Left: https://www.guggenheim-bilbao.eus, Right: https://www.guggenheim.org

In another example, in "Maillart Extended", Serra uses an urban structure. He works in the Grandfey Viaduct, which is a famous bridge designed by Maillart and

---

[47] Ibid.

constructed over the River Sarine, the natural border between two sides of Switzerland. Serra's large metal profiles take reference from structural members of Maillart's bridge and extend these structural lines (Figure 16). The lines form the sculpture, which is located at the center of the arches.
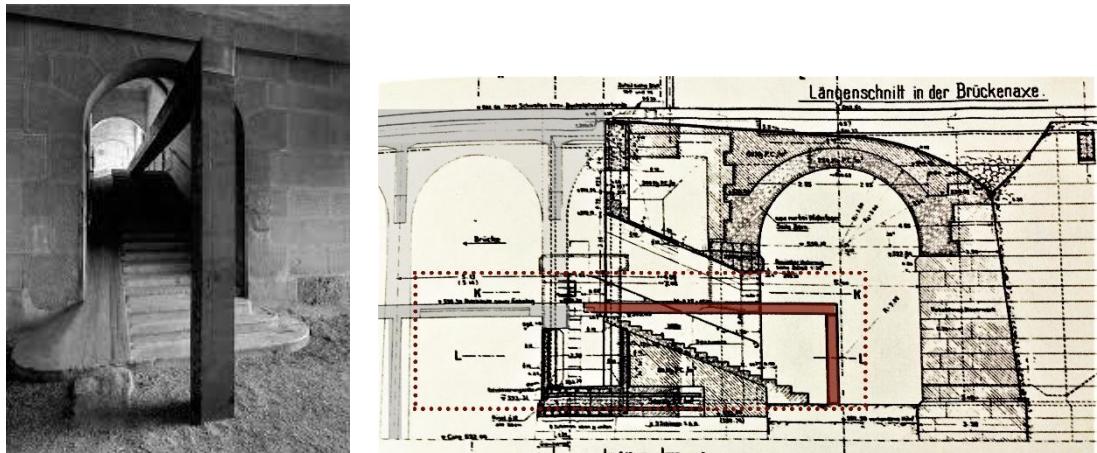
Figure 16. Maillart Extended, Photograph and Drawing, Richard Serra, 1988

Source: Left: www.googleimages.com, Right: The Art and Architecture Complex, Hal Foster.

The other chapter, "Painting Unbound", has various examples of contemporary art. Contrasting with the title, in the chapter the two-dimensional medium of painting is rarely mentioned. Rather, the examples have a dimensional diversity that emphasizes the "unbound" suffix. Foster says that "[p]ainting pushed to the optical and sculpture to the spatial illusion."[48] Here, the word "illusion" is significant to underline. Foster reads Dan Flavin's works and Tatlin's constructions simultaneously and states "illusion" as a common aspect. He defines Flavin's works as located in between transcendental and immanent.[49] Flavin also defines his works in a similar way, referring to the "incomplete" and "physical feeling" of Tatlin's constructions and the illusion of the picture plane in traditional painting. His works (Figure 17) have a

---

[48] Op.cit. Foster.

[49] Ibid.

capacity to unbound the two-dimensionality of the painting frame and include the museum space within, with the help of the lighting frames.

Figure 17. Untitled (to Bob and Pat Rohm), Dan Flavin, 1969.

Source: https://www.artsy.net

The last chapter "Building contra Image" trans-positions the title of the first chapter of the book, "Image-building". This chapter involves an interview with Richard Serra. Since the chapter "Image-building" gives examples of architecture as "images", it would not be a coincidence that the chapter "Building contra Image" gives Serra's environments as examples, contrasting with the keyword of "building".

Hal Foster's terms that are used as chapter titles - "Sculpture Remade", "Painting Unbound", "Building contra Image" - unfold the tryptic with the help of related examples that unify the fields of painting, sculpture, and architecture.

Tracing the keyword "union", related publication is an older publication: "The Union of Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting". [50] The title of the book refers to a renowned museum, the Sir John Soane Museum. Thus, the "union" of the tryptic projecting to a

---

[50] John Britton. *The Union of Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting*, 1827.

museum space helps to support the intention of unfolding the tryptic. In particular, the two-dimensional depictions in the book illustrate the objects in Soane's collection and their three-dimensional space. (Figure 18).
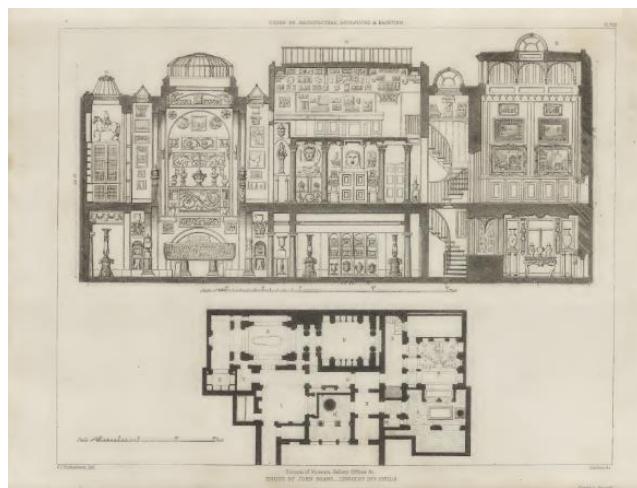
Figure 18. Section drawing, Sir John Soane Museum.

Source: Union of Architecture. Sculpture and Painting, John Britton.

Ayşen Savaş refers to this "union":

> "As observed in John Britton's book The Union of Architecture, Sculpture and Painting, published in 1827, the way Soane collected and preserved artifacts showed that he did not differentiate between architectural, artistic, sculptural, or landscape artifacts. This idea of a "union of arts" was also reinforced by the confluence of collected artifacts from different nations and times. All the styles, types, materials, and modes of representation overlapped within the physical borders of Soane's house."[51]

The section drawing in the book can be read as an interior elevation (Figure 18). As such, it illustrates a three-dimensional wall that includes reliefs, sculptures, and

---

[51] Aysen Savaş. "Between Document and Monument: Architectural Artifact in an Age of Specialized Institutions." unpublished PhD. Dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, (1994): 33.

architectural models. The wall becomes three dimensional and becomes an entity of not only architecture / sculpture / painting, but all of them.

Although it necessitates further research to dwell on the subject, De Stijl group should also be mentioned in the light of the keyword "union". The repercussions of the De Stijl group and their works affect various discussions including this study. As they have a significant presence in the theoretical and artistic production within the Bauhaus, they are inevitably seeking a "unity of painting, sculpture, and architecture", "*gesamtkunstwerk*". This German word is very self-descriptive. It means "a total work of art". The totality includes the union of painting, sculpture, and architecture.

In this part, with each publication, the trans-positional relationship of painting, sculpture, and architecture is revealed. Understanding these concepts blurs the borders between the fields of painting, sculpture, and architecture and helps to unfold the tryptic. Unfolding the tryptic has the capacity to locate relief in an intellectual context. Being an artistic production in between painting and sculpture, and between sculpture and architecture, "relief" can be an already expanded field. In the following part, "relief" is analyzed in order to be able to posit it as a new way of seeing / a method of reading spaces in every scale.

2.3. Relief

As a representational medium, relief has a history dating back over 20,000 years. [52] Most of the notable examples of reliefs can be traced back to Ancient Egypt, Assyria, Ancient Persia, Ancient Greece, Mesopotamia, Ancient Rome, Medieval Europe, India, and South-East Asia. In art history, relief has a major role, which can be a subject for other research. Here, related historical information will be given in a more

---

[52] Thayer Tolles. "American Relief Sculpture." *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000T- *http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/amrs/hd_amrs.htm (October 2006)*

focused manner that will act as a foundation for the rest of the study. The book published in 1974 by L. R. Rogers, refers to reliefs as autonomous objects cut from their historical and cultural contexts. Rather than the content, the author talks only about the formal aspects of historical reliefs. Rogers' interpretation is explained as follows:

> "To discuss relief without, or almost entirely without, a reference to its content, concentrating exclusively on its form, seems a difficult task, yet the author has accomplished it.His aim is to make us aware of relief in terms of its technique, depiction of space, composition, contour, relationship to the background, use of line or of light and shadow; in brief, all those elements of a work of art which are intrinsic parts of its successfulness, yet are usually the most difficult to notice because their impact is global and our perception of it almost subconscious."[53]

Relief is defined as a unique technique, which depicts space by using line, light, and shadow. Reliefs create contours to suggest different relations to the background. Therefore, rather than their historical and cultural contexts, the formal aspects of reliefs are at the core of this research.

Art historian François Quiviger says that "[r]elief is ubiquitous across ages and cultures"[54]. As such, relief is omnipresent as artistic production. To understand its formal properties, it can be perceived detached from its context. Concentrating on its technical and spatial properties with its relationship to the background is the method of this study. Thus, here, not the historical context of relief but its formal processes will be significant for the rest of the research.

Starting from the most distinguished examples of relief art, formed out of different materials, can provide a starting point. One of these distinguished Classical examples of relief is the Parthenon Frieze, a marble work located in the Acropolis (449–432 B.C.) (Figure 19). The other is Lorenzo Ghiberti's Gates of Paradise (1426–52 A.D.) (Figure 20), for the Baptistery of Florence. Gates of Paradise is a bronze work. Another example is the Assyrian alabaster relief, from the Palace of Nimrud. In the

---

[53] Brunilde S Ridgway. "Review of Relief Sculpture, by L.R. Rogers." (1976): 64.

[54] Donal Cooper. *Depth of Field: Relief Sculpture in Renaissance Italy*. Peter Lang, 2007: 29.

Parthenon Frieze (Figure 18), the lines have different depths that result in different space formations. The depth of marble space depicts different light and shadow configurations. The surface becomes three dimensional, in which referent lines are both shadow contours and space creators.

Figure 19. A part of the Parthenon Frieze, the Athenian Akropolis, 449–432 B.C.

Source: http://repository.parthenonfrieze.gr/frieze

Likewise, in the Gates of Paradise (Figure 20), the material is different, but lines transform the surface material into a three-dimensional space. The more the depth of lines increases, the more the surface expands. The surface literally goes out of the frame and defines a three-dimensional spatial continuity.

In the Assyrian relief, the material is a form of gypsum. The alabaster is carved to create different depths. Similar to the first two examples, the lines become three dimensional and introduce an illusion of depth (Figure 21).

Figure 20. Lorenzo Ghiberti's Gates of Paradise, 1426–52.

Source: http://www.museumsinflorence.com/musei/Baptistery_of_florence
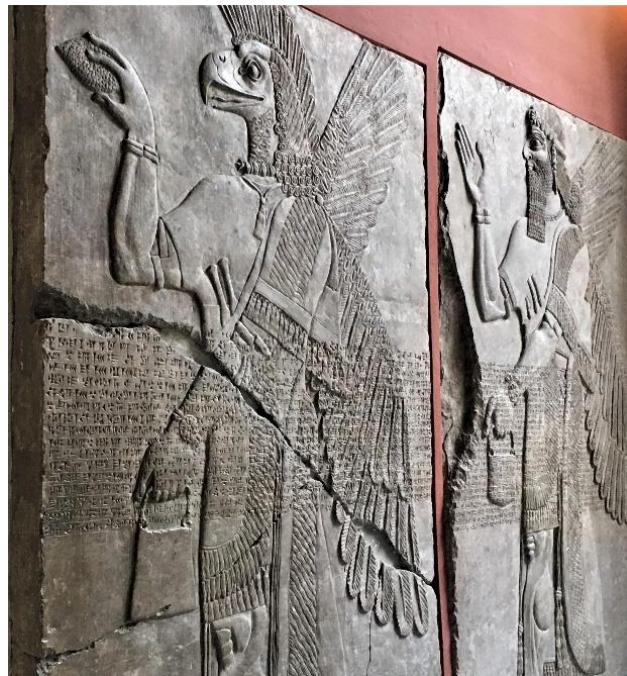
Figure 21. Assyrian alabaster Relief, Palace of Nimrud, Pergamonmuseum.

Source: Photograph captured by the author.

Although they have different materials, these examples analytically propose similar techniques for creating three-dimensional visual compositions from a two-dimensional surface. Relief, *relievo*, (from the Italian *relievare*: "to raise"), includes any work in which the figures project from a supporting background, usually a plane surface.[55] Operations that change the pictoriality of the surface plane can differ, however, the transformation from the surface to space remains the same. The types of reliefs are generally determined according to their relationships to the referent surface. Alto-relievo (high relief) approaches three dimensions while bas-relief (low relief) is more close to a two-dimensional drawing. Sunken relief, on the other hand, requires a reversed type of solid-void composition that changes the surface space relationship of high/low relief.

Contrasting to the examples that were strongly dependent on the architectural context in which they were created, the "modern" interpretation of relief is more autonomous. Robert Goldwater explains the evolving relationship of relief with the architectural surface in his book "What is Modern Sculpture?":

> "Reliefs, in the past, have generally been tied to an architectural setting. The sculptor has been called upon to create a work for a particular, predetermined spot, and asked to make it fit in appearance and spirit. Usually, his subject has been decided for him. The modern sculptor has rarely been employed in this fashion."[56]

In the Modern era, new definitions and techniques are used for relief. The different surface operations of relief can be read especially from the examples of Constructivist relief from Russia, Britain and Hungary and examples from Fontana under the title of "Spatialism".

Overall, relief, as an artistic production, has its own space, operations, and vocabulary. Its space, operations, and vocabulary have a quasi-condition, which has the capacity to include contrasts. Quasi- stands for a condition of being in-between. For example, relief has structural autonomy. However, it has an inevitable referential to and spatial

---

[55] Encyclopedia Britannica. *https://www.britannica.com/*

[56] Robert John Goldwater. *What is Modern Sculpture?* Museum of Modern Art, (1969): 114.

dependency on the ground/surface. It can be defined as an art form with its own structural laws and its own *raison d'etre.*[57] However, it is also defined as a point in evolution between flat and freestanding forms[58] and as the medium combining elements of both sculpture and painting.[59] Its quasi-ness relates to both its position in between architecture and sculpture and in between sculpture and painting.

2.3.1. Space of Relief: Expanded Surface

In order to be able to understand the space of relief, it is necessary to understand the operations conducted to transform a surface into space. Starting from one of the first textbooks written on sculpture, "The Creation of Sculpture" by Jules Struppeck, "relief" has been defined by referring to various surface operations. In this part, relief is revisited; first, within more analytical definitions relating to the formal aspects, and second, a specific Constructivist approach: Naum Gabo's and Antoine Pevsner's definitions on "space", and its repercussions. Especially British constructivist relief works and the *Keparchitektura* theory, Hungarian Constructivist relief, "Image Architecture" works are selected. Thirdly, a more contemporary artist's work, Lucio Fontana and his "Spatialism" will contribute to the variety of definitions of relief space. Two specific examples within the context of Constructivism will be underlined. These examples from Kurt Schwitters and El Lissitzky will make the assertion of this part more concrete. In this part of the research, the focus will be mostly on the space of Constructivist and Minimalist reliefs, since the more contemporary examples necessitate additional discussions that should be traced in a broader context. As the main goal is to assert "relief" as a new way of seeing in an architectural scale, it is

---

[57] Alastair Grieve. "Charles Biederman and the English Constructionists I: Biederman and Victor Pasmore." The Burlington Magazine 124, no. 954 (1982): 540-551.

[58] Ron Kostyniuk. "Polychrome Relief Constructions from Acrylic Sheet." Leonardo 19, no. 4 (1986): 297-300.

[59] Ibid, 298.

necessary to understand the various methods for transforming the surface into space. The intention here is to extract various relationships between the surface and space of "relief space", in order to be able to develop visual tools to understand architectural scale.

Struppeck, the author of one of the first textbooks on sculpture, states that the space of relief is composed of planes, lines, textures, masses, and volumes.[60] The definitions of positive and negative space are made through the line compositions. Since the surface grows and empties into a spatial composition, the co-existence of the surface and space can be read through virtual planes and virtual lines as well.[61] Struppeck defines the volumes in relief as "virtual negative masses".[62] This virtuality is affirmed within the definition of "relief", which Struppeck states as "illusion of depth".[63] Since lines do not exist in the third dimension[64], these virtual lines can be read through the "actual" space they created, which is an architectural process. Struppeck reinforces this similarity by saying "[d]rawing is gradually de-emphasized: gives us the form".[65] The act of de-emphasizing conveys the process of an architectural production which also oscillates in between two dimensional and three-dimensional creations. (De)emphasizing the two-dimensional composition necessitates an incompleteness since what the two-dimensional surface composes remains intact but also hides a potential to transform into space. This fertile incompleteness defines unity between surface and space.

Relief as an art form suggests operations in relation to the existence of a background. The two-dimensional "figure and ground" relation expand as diverse spatial compositions. Struppeck introduces "space-displacing" and "space-enclosing"

---

[60] Jules Struppeck. *The Creation of Sculpture*. Holt, 1952.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Ibid.

operations in the process of creating a relief.[66] Both "displacing" and "enclosing" interplay with the space that expands from the surface. These operations emphasize the surface by a deconstructive illusion. According to Struppeck, "[a]rchitectural unity of a wall is not necessarily lost, the illusion is strongly related to architecture".[67] Struppeck's statement as a sculptor allows an architectural understanding of surface and space. Here, architecture becomes the surface of the operations, and the illusion created on the surface has the capacity to create space.

In his book "Real Spaces", art historian David Summers proposes a methodology in historiography, challenging the linear history. Summers develops a framework in which he rediscovers "spaces" in the intersection of architecture and art. There are eight chapters in his book: "Introduction", "Facture", "Places", "the Appropriation of the Centre", "Images", "Planarity", "Virtuality" and "Conditions of Modernity". In the chapter "Virtuality", he discusses the capacity to complete images by seeing three dimensions in two or by perceiving what is absent from what is given."[68] In this chapter, he introduces the term "relief space":

> "Relief space simply but surely pushes planar presentation in the direction of the optical. As the original plane comes to define the limit of relief of forms when the secondary plane is defined, the secondary plane itself becomes the limit of their visibility as defined by their contours. Then, like the original plane, the secondary plane becomes invisible or transparent, at the same time reinforcing the original plane, with all its potential values, and establishing a virtual "somewhere" around and behind the completed figures... But the co-ordinate plane is also ambivalent; because, although the multiplication of planes might proceed indefinitely, such multiplication is impracticable. That is, only so many bands can be multiplied across the virtual plane before the nearer figures utterly occlude the farther. But the indefinite extension of the plane in the virtual dimension gives a new force to the notional; the "somewhere" opened up from the plane into the virtual dimension might be of any extent."[69]

---

[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid.

[68] David Summers. *Real Spaces: World Art History and the Rise of Western Modernism.* London: Phaidon, (2003): 449.

[69] Ibid, 450.

Summers' description of relief posits a scaleless analytical approach. Moreover, his terminology of understanding and explaining the relief "plane" and "space" complicates visibility. He proposes that the visibility of original and secondary planes is changeable and "[t]he secondary plane becomes invisible or transparent, at the same time reinforcing the original plane, with all its potential values". [70] He refers to the space created as "virtual". Summers proposes an immersive nomenclature, which can magnify the richness of relief space, as intended in this research.

Summers sees "relief space" as "[t]he multiplication of shapes into virtual depth along with a virtual co-ordinate plane according to divisions parallel to the format itself. It is as inflectable and adaptable as it is simple."[71] (Figure 22). He defines an order according to the referent plane, in which the whole process of creating a relief space out of a "plane" becomes a geometrical formation with new axes.
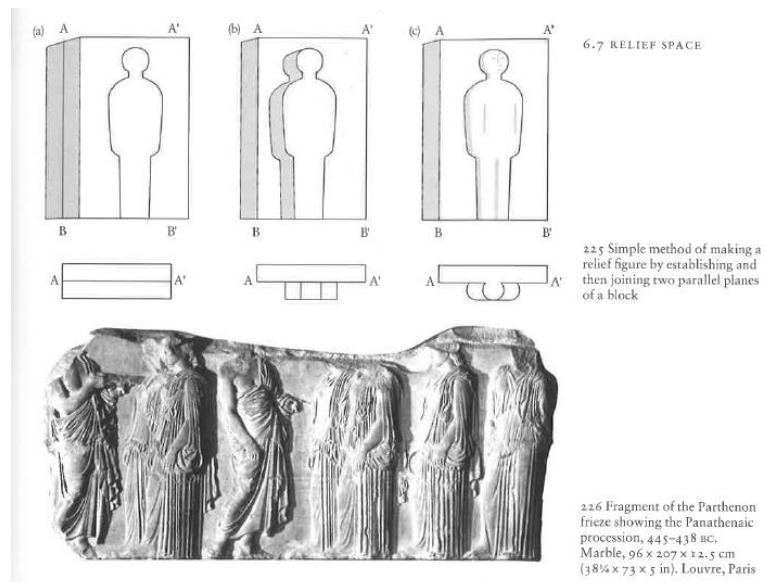
Figure 22. Diagram of relief making

<u>*Source: Real Spaces, David Summers.*</u>

---

[70] Ibid, 449.

[71] Ibid, 449.

Yudong Wang, in his article, "The Relief Problem - Some Notes from an Art Historian" refers to Summers' definition of relief space and extends the definition in a similar approach. Although he refers to specific relief works from history, he is able to posit a comprehensive theoretical framework for the field. He says that "[t]hinking with and about relief is to remind ourselves constantly of its singular workability: its dialectical relationship with the wall, and its ability to turn the space where it resides into a site, a locale, and a place. Second only to the mural painting of various sorts, relief reveals the role that the wall—and hence the site—plays in art-making by covering the wall."[72]

Having prioritized more neutral and context-free definitions for relief space up to this point, the following part will frame more specified approaches, including Constructivism in Russia and Britain and its repercussion in Hungary as "Image Architecture" theory. In addition, Lucio Fontana and his interpretation of relief space within "Spatialism" will be mentioned.

Firstly, as an extensive paradigm, Constructivism and space of Constructivist relief is discussed. Constructivism includes more than architecture and art. However, here, the focus is on what Constructivism suggested spatially. Constructivism defines different spatial properties for painting, sculpture and architecture. Especially relief techniques creating space out of the surface, includes a great variety of examples. These various examples are revisited to understand Constructivist relief, which is also defined as both surface and space.

Constructivism derives from Cubism, Gabo says. He claims that Cubism understands objects in their own analytical structure.[73] According to Gabo, art is built up from

---

[72] Ibid, 449.

[73] Naum Gabo. "Sculpture- Carving and Construction in Space", *Circle; International Survey of Constructive Art*. Praeger Publishers (1971): 3.

"content" and "form", which are the same in Constructivist ideas.[74] Construction as a keyword is projected to the experiments with a variety of materials. "Truth to materials" is another key concept. The main goal is to use the "construction" potential of each material, which can inevitably generate a technique of creating. In their Realistic Manifesto of 1920, Gabo and Pevsner renounced "[v]olume . . . and mass as sculptural elements," and asserted that "[d]epth is the one form of space."[75] Other than volume and mass, "depth of space" has been underlined, which is defined as "distance from a surface".[76]

An important artist at the beginning of Constructivism, Vladimir Tatlin is known for his relief works. His specific approach in relief was derived from Picasso's wooden reliefs and three-dimensional collages. Krauss explains Picasso's approach with respect to the relations or real space and virtual space:

> "The extraordinary lesson of the cubist reliefs of 1912-15, is similar, then, to the lesson of Rodin's Gates of Hell: that the partial experience of the external object is already fully cognitive, and that meaning itself surfaces into the world simultaneously with the object. In order to make this point, Picasso takes the language that had formerly been a part of the virtual space of illusionism—locked within the confines of pictorial space and thus separated from the real world—and makes that very language an aspect of literal space."[77]

Tatlin's encounter with Picasso's works is an initial point for his work on reliefs. "Tatlin appreciated that the reliefs were not carved or modeled in a traditional manner but composed in an entirely different way - indeed they could be said to be 'constructed' - put together from pre-formed elements."[78] This technical approach of creating space from a surface has triggered a crucial understanding of space-construction. Beyond carving and subtracting, other operations on / out of referent

---

[74] Ibid, 5.

[75] Ruth Olson. *Gabo - Pevsner*. Museum of Modern Art, 1948.

[76] Oxford Dictionary, *https://www.lexico.com/en.*

[77] Rosalind Krauss. "Analytic Space: Futurism and Constructivism" *Passages in Modern Sculpture*. MIT Press (1981): 51.

[78] *https://www.theartstory.org/movement-constructivism.htm*

surface are introduced. Thus, the definitions of surface and relief space have expanded. In his works, Tatlin's corner reliefs are controversial in terms of their spatial and planar definitions (Figure 23). Krauss dwells on the inclusion of real space and existing architectural elements:
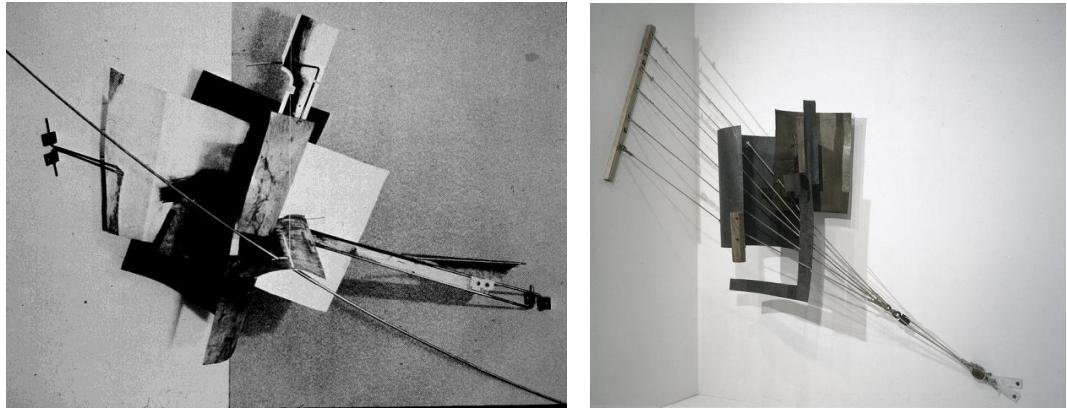
Figure 23. Left: Corner Relief, Right: Corner Counter-Relief, Vladimir Tatlin, 1914-15

Source: Left: https://www.wsws.org/en/articles, Right:
https://rusmuseumvrm.ru/data/collections/sculpture

> "The radical quality of Tatlin's corner reliefs stems from their rejection of this transcendental space in two different ways, first in the anti-illusionism of their situation and second in the attitude they manifest toward the materials of which they are made. Each corner relief is demonstrably organized in relation to the conjunction of two wall planes that Tatlin uses to support the work physically. This architectural integer—the corner —… is part of the real space of the room in which the counter-reliefs are to be seen."[79]

Tatlin's art is significant in this research since it attains surface and space as the architectural components. The integration he proposes within his relief work reinforces the idea behind magnifying this relationship into an architectural environment.

Emerging initially in Russia, Constructivism as an idea has repercussions in other geographies. Before the 1920s, there was no reference to the word "constructivism" in Hungarian art. With the political and social changes during the first half of the 20th

---

[79] Op.cit. Krauss.

century, many of the Hungarian avant-garde artists left their country. There were a lot of theoretical and artistic encounters in Vienna and Berlin, which ended in new approaches and theories. Here, Lajos Kassák's *Keparchitektura* theory is significant. *Keparchitektura*, meaning "Image Architecture", is a combination of Kassák's admiration for Archipenko's "sculpto-painting", and his attraction to the idea of "building" a picture as an architect constructs buildings.[80] The theory is strongly based on architecture as a medium and a series of operations. In other words, relief construction, in this case, becomes an architectural operation, which posits a trans-position:

> "Kassák takes the "constructive" method of architecture as his model for the theory of Keparchitektura, the art form… The architecture was seen in the Central European literature of the day to be the ultimate *Gesamtkunstwerk*. The art that unites within itself the realms of pure creativity, the "constructive" approach (both figuratively and actually) and the potential for direct and large-scale social usefulness. Kassák's decision to include the terms "picture" and "architecture" in the name for his art can thus be seen to be part of a deliberate effort to meld the principles associated with "architecture" and the traditional artistic format."[81]

The works of "*Keparchitektura*" (Figure 24), are "[c]onstructed not inwards from the plane but outwards from it. It takes the surface as a given foundation and does not open perspectives inwards, which is always illusory, but through its layered colors and forms steps out into real space, and thus the picture is given the unlimited potentialities of a picture's life: natural perspective."[82] The "expansion" of the surface gives reference to the process, in order to be able to build up the relief space.

---

[80] Oliver AI Botar. "Constructed Reliefs in the Art of the Hungarian Avant-Garde: Kassák, Bortnyik, Uitz and Moholy-Nagy 1921-1926." The Structurist 25-26 (1985): 85-86.

[81] Ibid, 85.

[82] Ibid, 86.

KASSÁK, (RELIEF), CA. 1924, PAPER, TINFOIL AND WOOD.

KASSÁK, (RELIEF), CA. 1924, PAPER, CORRUGATED CARDBOARD, CLOTH AND WOOD.
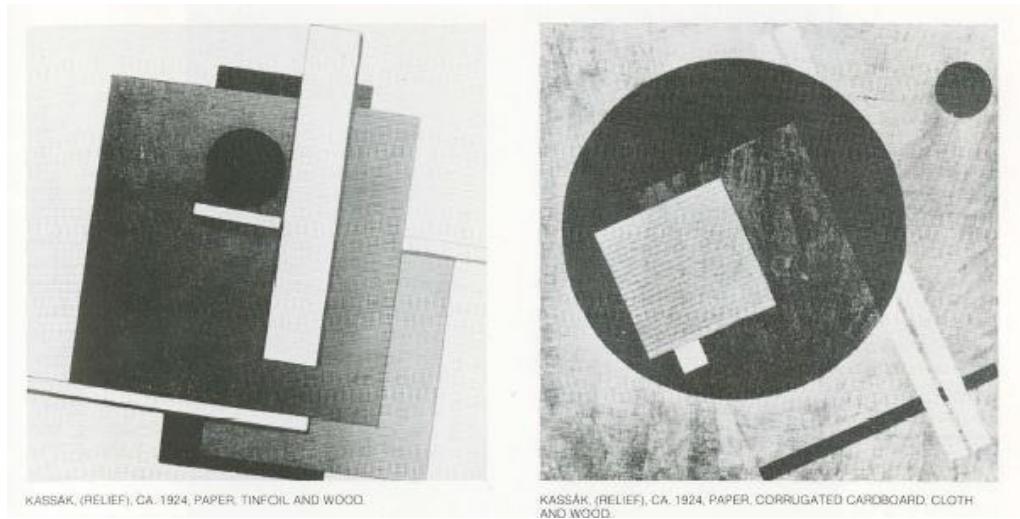
Figure 24. Kassák's Relief works.

Source: Constructed Reliefs in the Art of the Hungarian Avant-Garde: Kassák, Bortnyik, Uitz and Moholy-Nagy 1921-1926, Oliver Al Botar.

Tatlin's introduction of surface and space as real architectural components can also be followed in *Keparchitektura* theory. In *Keparchitektura*, artists "[r]ather than involving illusory perspective, by actually building away from the picture plane, introduce real perspective.[83] Using architecture and its creative operations to create space, the artists claim: "[l]ike any architect we begin from our own ground-the picture plane-and work as from a foundation into space, like ones who no longer want to serve the world, but to reshape it in their own image."[84]

Image Architecture or *Keparchitektura* theory expanded on the quasi condition of relief in between painting and sculpture. The architectural references to "build" up to space within a surface, became theoretically founded. Thus, the magnification of relief space to an architectural environment can be strongly endorsed by the idea of *Keparchitektura.*

---

[83] Ibid, 88.

[84] Ibid, 88.

Following the Constructivist repercussions, Charles Biederman and English Constructivists including Victor Pasmore, Mary Martin and Anthony Hill are another group that deserves focus. Alastair Grieve discusses a lot of specific historical and artistic encounters between Pasmore and Biederman as well as the other Constructivists. The "exchange" of thoughts between these artists in the 1950s constructs a textual ground. However, in this part of the research, rather than the historical context and sequence, definitions and theoretical formulations for relief space are presented.

Grieve argues that for Biederman, "[r]eliefs, made from industrial materials by precision machines, are an 'art for a Science-Machine culture' composition. With the aid of a diagram, he shows the key position of the relief as a point in evolution between flat and freestanding forms"[85] (Figure 25).
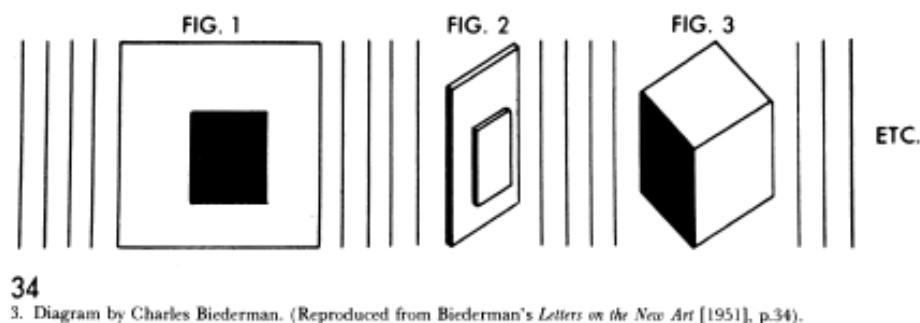
Figure 25. Diagram by Charles Biederman, illustrating the position of relief in between.

Source: Charles Biederman and the English Constructionists I: Biederman and Victor Pasmore, Alastair Grieve.

---

[85] Alastair Grieve. "Charles Biederman and the English Constructionists I: Biederman and Victor Pasmore." The Burlington Magazine 124, no. 954 (1982): 540-551.

Compared to Biederman, Pasmore's relief space shows an obvious difference. This difference can be related to their reference to the surface. "The spatial elements in Biederman's reliefs tend to spread out and expand across the surface while Pasmore's seem to stay fixed, stuck firmly to the flat base plane…"[86] (Figure 26).
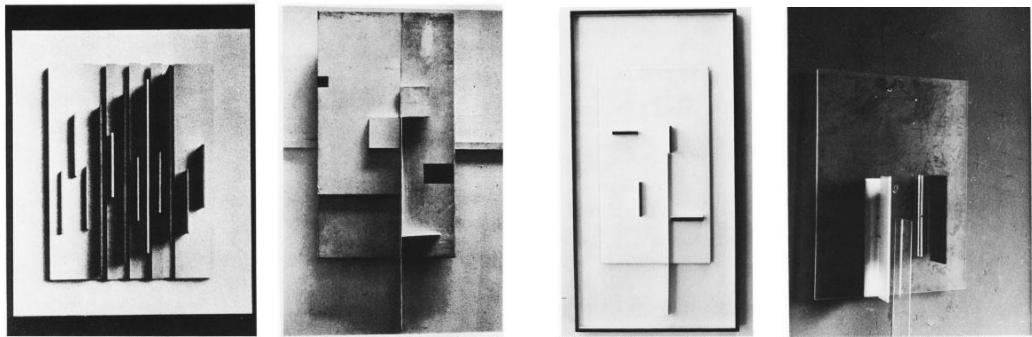
Figure 26. Left: Relief work of Charles Biederman. Three works at the right: Relief works of Victor Pasmore.

<u>*Source: "Charles Biederman and the English Constructionists I: Biederman and Victor Pasmore, Alastair Grieve.*</u>

Grieve argues that for Biederman, "[t]he relief is necessarily a stage in the evolution from painting to fully three-dimensional work".[87] However, Pasmore sees it rather as "[a]n art form with its own structural laws and its own raison d'etre."[88] This contrast can render relief space as both a processual creation and an immersive medium. Both can be seen in the works of Pasmore and Biederman. In terms of surface and space relationships, Pasmore's work posits a more embedded space while Biederman has an additive approach, in which the surface and space can be read separately.

Contrasting to Biederman's approach, Mary Martin follows a more expanded spatial framework for her works. "Mary Martin's concern to relate the planes of her reliefs to

---

[86] Ibid, 551.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Ibid.

the surface of the wall on which they are placed and her systematic use of permuted units, usually a cube or half-cube, her work is always architectural in character and differs markedly from Biederman"[89] (Figure 27).
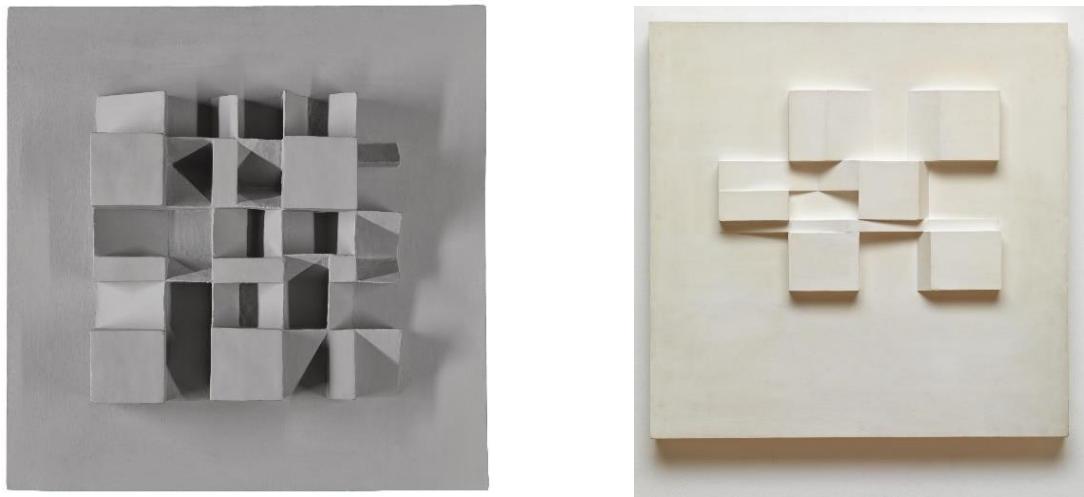
Figure 27. Left: Grey Relief, Mary Martin, 1952. Right: Expanding Form, Mary Martin, 1954.

Source: https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks

Martin's definition of creating space out of a surface is based on "[t]he idea of using actual positive and negative space".[90] Her approach reinforces relief space as a "double negative"[91] space. Her intention of expanding the relief space into an architectural character relates to the intention of this inquiry.

Although Biederman posits that it is unnecessary to include the architectural environment in the formation of relief space, his own words approve the inevitability

---

[89] Alastair Grieve. "Charles Biederman and the English Constructionists II: An Exchange of Theories about Abstract Art during the 1950s." The Burlington Magazine 126, no. 971 (1984): 67-77.

[90] Ibid, 668.

[91] Rosalind Krauss. "The Double Negative: A New Syntax for Sculpture." *Passages in Modern Sculpture* (1981): 243-88.

of this inclusion. In a letter that Biederman wrote to Martin, he shares his thoughts on the process of relief construction[92]:

> "…The notion of form become planes; planes that divide space, the planes turning space into rhythmic composing. It is then that volume or mass either in form or space, which is typical of the sculptural period, disappears. Form and space are no longer occupying separate areas, but plane and space intermingle into an entirely different unity than the one that characterized the old medium of sculpture."[93]

Biederman's sentences underline the architectural aspect of relief, which is the correspondence between volume and mass to space and form. Despite the contrast between their approaches, both Biederman and Martin refer to the "unity" of surface and space and its potential to create "relief space".

Biederman's definition of relief space is based on the field of painting. He sees relief construction only as an extension of painting. However, English Constructivist artists with whom he exchanged thoughts are not only influenced by Biederman but also by the "Realistic Manifesto". Therefore, they are after a larger scale expansion and "[e]ager to collaborate with architects to produce 'an art of environment'".[94]

---

[92] Op.cit. Grieve.

[93] Ibid, 71.

[94] Ibid, 76.

Although it can be related to the definition of space in Constructivist relief, Spatialism defines space of relief in a different way. In the 1950s, Fontana was the representative of the movement "Spatialism". In 1947, he and a group of young artists published a manifesto "Primo Manifesto dello Spazialismo (First Manifesto of Spatialism)".The idea was to point out "a new kind of art, unshackled from the classic disciplines of painting and sculpture and closely linked to the dimensions of space and time".[95] In his works, Fontana points out the "actuality" of space. He sees the surface as "a sculptural solidity; and various punctures and cuts which create space literally, by opening up a painted surface"[96] (Figure 28). Fontana operates on the canvas surface in order to be able to create "actual" spaces that refer to the surface of the canvas and surrounding space. This "actual" position of space becoming an object of the operations opens up a possibility to understand the surface on a larger scale.
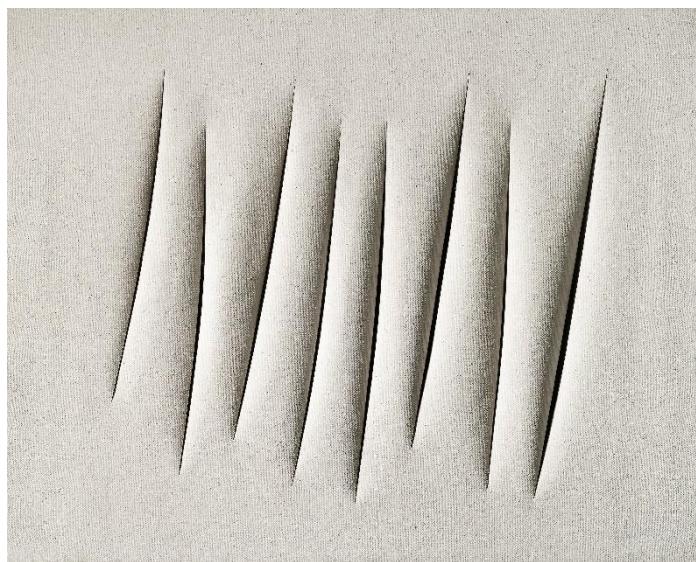
Figure 28. Concetto spaziale, Attese, Lucio Fontana, 1964.

Source: http://www.artnet.com

---

[95] *https://www.hangarbicocca.org/en/9-things-you-may-not-know-about-lucio-fontana/3-he-founded-the-spatialist-movement/*

[96] Anthony White. "Lucio Fontana: Between Utopia and Kitsch." Grey Room (2001): 54-77.

Having covered various definitions and examples of "relief space" and introduced a common understanding, which is the trans-positional and unified relationship between the space and the referent surface, it is necessary to re-emphasize the intention of this study. In order to be able to clarify the intention, specific examples within the context of Constructivism need to be underlined. The two examples from Schwitters and Lissitzky will make the assertion of this part more concrete. As the main goal is to assert "relief" as a new way of seeing in an architectural scale, it is necessary to understand the various methods for transforming the surface into space. The following examples are self-explanatory in this sense, since they are "environments" of "magnified" relief space.

In the catalog of the exhibition: From Surface to Plane, Rowell mentions the 1912-18 works by Picasso, Lipschitz, and Gris, adding that they illustrate the transformation of the planar surface into three-dimensional space:

> "Cut, layered, curved and painted, parallel or perpendicular to other surfaces, the plane has been progressively released from the wall to exist in space as skeleton or shell, generating increasingly conceptualized images, autonomous architectures and open, active spatial volumes.[97]

Although the explanation above is related to the work of the Cubists, it can be the subtext of El Lissitzky's 1923 Proun exhibition environment. Lissitzky conceived the Proun as a substitute for painting, an "[i]nterchange station between painting and architecture."[98] (Figure 29). Rowell explains Lissitzky's Proun environment in detail:

---

[97] Margit Rowell. *The Planar Dimension: Europe, 1912-1932*. Vol. 71. Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation (1979): 15.

[98] Ibid, 29.
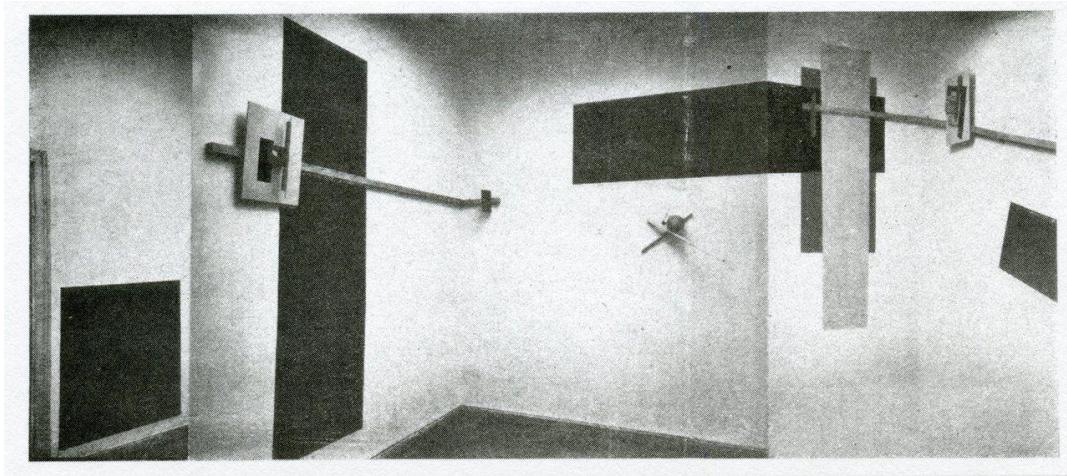
Figure 29. Proun Environment, El Lissitzky, 1923.

"The 1923 Proun exhibition environment expressed Lissitzky's ultimate attempt to control space… His objective was to model emptiness or rather to "construct" a space in which the viewer would be forced to participate actively with his whole self. The axes and thrusts of the diversified and spatialized wall motifs were to direct the viewer in his physical movements and emotional responses within an environment of real (human) scale, real substance (painted and natural textures) and real color (red, black, white and gray). The forms were positioned in different relations to the viewer's activity: flat to the wall, projecting toward him, guiding him according to vertical, diagonal, horizontal axes. Each axis or structural function was dictated by a material: wood was hung against the wall, the color was applied flat to it. The colors obeyed a physiological and symbolic logic: black was used as an opaque plane, blotting out the volume, red as a dynamic stimulus, white as infinite space."[99]

In other words, the Proun environment can be considered as an architectural space, and the scale shift of the surface and space defining a display environment is important to Lissitzky's approach. Lissitzky's Prouns are three-dimensional surfaces (Figure 30), and the Proun environment carries the three-dimensionality in an actual architectural space.

---

[99] Ibid, 29.

54

Figure 30. Three-dimensional relief works, reproduced from Lissitzky's Prouns, for the graduate course Arch 524, in the scope of METU First Year Education Symposium and Exhibition.

<u>Source: Photograph captured by Ali Rad Yousefnia.</u>

The other example is Kurt Schwitters' Merzbau (Figure 31), which has a similar "magnification" as in the Proun environment. The architectural surface(s) are operated to become a "spatial construction" that defines a relief-space. Rowell mentions the Merzbau project in the catalog as well:

> "… the reliefs are also architectural because the supports, although finite, imply the whole wall, the relief elements project into the viewer's space and they are of human (as opposed to miniature, monumental or arbitrary) scale. One could say that these are a kind of idiosyncratic proun or a relay between painting and architecture… Furthermore, the few free-standing objects by Schwitters' hand were conceived as fragments of an architectural whole, the artist's Merzbau."[100]

---

[100] Ibid, 27.

'

Figure 31. The Hannover Merzbau by Kurt Schwitters, 1933.

Source: https://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers.

In both cases, the environments are explained either as "an interchange between painting and architecture" or "a relay between painting and architecture". These explanations render relief as an immersive medium and reveal the potential of "relief space" as a self-explanatory term to redefine and reconstruct a display environment. These "environments" are not necessarily defined in the boundaries of museum and galleries, but the aim of this study is to exemplify relief spaces that constitute trans-positional spatial compositions.

2.3.2. Text of Relief: Expanded Vocabulary

Having looked into the process of relief construction, it becomes obvious that the vocabulary it defines has the potential to take on new architectural means. The relief embodies an interchangeable vocabulary. In other words, the vocabulary of relief construction as an analogy to analyze display environments, emphasizes a spatial

unity, in which the space of display and object(s) of the display are blended. The discourse it suggests does fuse dimensions and scales. The assemblage of cut-out words creates phrases that inevitably represent the "architectural" nature of relief construction. In this part, not only the groups of words used to explain the relief works, but also phrases that are generated from existing vocabulary, are explained. The aim is to form a glossary for relief-space:

- "Space-displacing" – "Space-enclosing"
- "Original plane" – "Secondary plane"
- "Virtual dimension"
- "Literal space" – "Virtual space"
- "Real perspective"
- "Spatial Construction"
- "Developable surface"
- "Developable column"
- "Space drawing"
- "Sculpto-painting" and "Building a picture"
- "Spatial painting", "spatial concept" and "spatial environment"
- "Double negative"
- "Trompe L'oeil"
- Quasi-

As stated before, Struppeck uses the phrases "Space-displacing" – "Space-enclosing" as the surface operations to create relief space. "Displacement" inevitably suggests a relation or a non-relation with a "place". Space-displacing as an operation renders a certain kind of trans-position and it posits space as a component that can be displaced or placed. Although the term is used within the formation of relief, "space-displacing" is by its very nature based on architecture and its intrinsic power of display. Likewise, the act of enclosing is an act to create space, it stands for an "enclosure" which

inevitably defines a spatial formation. "Space-enclosing" is also an intrinsic act of architecture, which makes it a beyond-scale operation.

David Summers uses "Original plane" – "Secondary plane" in order to construct a new dimensional reference system for relief space. The "original plane" stands for the surface of operations. The "secondary plane" is the "expansion", which controls the visibility of the total space. Both of the terms are based on a geometry of "plane" surface, however they also define spatial properties and visual limits for the relief space.

Summers uses "virtual dimension" as the dimension of "depth" of the relief space. Since the space of relief is based on the illusion of "depth", the dimension of the expansion becomes "virtual". Virtuality means the capacity to see three-dimensions in two. Thus, it posits a dimensional abstraction. However, in a relief space, it is vice-versa, which strengthen the "oxymoron" of the term: "virtual dimension".

As virtuality is defined above, the duality of "literal and virtual space" is an opposition that relief space includes naturally. On the one hand, the literal space is operated to create relief space. On the other hand, the virtual space is created as a part of the relief space, since it constructs an illusion.

Although the term "perspective" connotes a complex technique especially within architectural drawing and visuality discourse, with the adjective "real" it posits a specific meaning for relief space. Thus, the phrase "real perspective" will be understood as an entirely other concept. Perspective as a technique suggests a reference system that constructs an illusion in order to be able to represent three-dimensionality in a two-dimensional environment. "Real perspective", in this sense, stands for an actual space of the reference system, in which the depth is not represented with guidelines but with three-dimensional compositions or components.

"Spatial construction" is used for the majority of Constructivist sculpture, which explains the process of revealing three-dimensional compositions out of two-dimensional surfaces. Likewise, Kassák's works are explained with the process

"spatial construction". Here, the assemblage of "construction" and "space" has a strong contrast. The solidity of the process "construction" and the volatility of the term "space" reveal information about both the medium and the methodology of relief creation.

Besides this selective vocabulary, as being the important representatives of Constructivist relief art, titles of works by Gabo and Pevsner vary the phrase "space construction". The term "construction" is mostly used with a two- dimensional geometrical referent. In other words, the process of constructing space from/out of a surface is multiplied in different geometries. Here are some of the examples that combine the act of construction with geometrical referents:

- Construction
- Construction on a Line
- Construction on a Plane
- Construction in Space
- Spherical construction
- Linear construction
- Kinetic painting
- Projection into Space
- Developable surface
- Developable column

Space drawing is another term that is created within Constructivism. The phrase semantically combines the three-dimensional environment with a two-dimensional operation. The act of "space drawing" necessitates the multiplication of the drawing surface, by extending the surface to another axis. As the term includes the product and process of architectural creation, the relation it suggests is also inevitably visible. Robert Goldwater states that "[s]pace drawings are constructions; that is, they are made of separate elements which are attached at clearly discernible joints and

intersections. Since constructivist sculpture (whether geometrical or expressionist in emphasis) aims at the clear and evident spatial configuration, it has affinities with architecture, which also composes space. But architectural space is actual— it can be entered and used; sculptural space is virtual—it remains external and abstract, grasped through the eye alone".[101] To add more to Goldwater's explanation, thought of as a process of relief construction, "space drawing" transforms the virtual space to an actual one, which refers back to a "wall" or a "ground".

"Sculpto-painting" and "Building a picture" are used for the works of Alexander Archipenko. The term also reveals a quasi-ness, which takes the process of sculpture and fuses it with the painting. The medium of relief corresponds with this term, which operates on the two-dimensional canvas of painting with the three-dimensional expansion. Likewise, "building a picture" is another term that Kassák relates to the art of relief construction. Here, not only the dimensional clash of the words "building" and "picture" but also the scale-shift they form once they combine, refer to relief and its capacity to transcode multiscale spaces.

The terms "spatial painting", "spatial concept" and "spatial environment" refer back to Fontana's Spatialism. Fontana entitled his first work as "spatial concept", in which he seeks "a transformation in the conventional relationship between art object and surrounding space".[102] Fontana allowed space to take center stage. This space is no faraway illusion, but is woven into the material existence of the canvas itself. Similarly, he entitled his work in as "spatial environment".

The term "double negative" is a significant phrase in this research. Krauss uses the term in order to be able to explain the dual visibility of Donald Judd's works. The term suggests a dual reading of space, which is parallel to what relief space suggests: a trans-positional visibility of surface and created space.

---

[101] Robert John Goldwater. *What is Modern Sculpture?* Museum of Modern Art, 1969.

[102] Anthony White. "Lucio Fontana: Between Utopia and Kitsch." Grey Room (2001): 54-77.

"*Trompe l'oeil*" is a French phrase that means "deceiving the eye". The ambiguity created here is based on the reality of the object in a three-dimensional medium. Referring to the term "illusion", a relief space itself becomes a quasi-three-dimensional *trompe l'oeil*. Reading the relief space in different scales, *trompe l'oeil* can become a technique for the visual quality of the display environment.

These phrases forming a glossary are referred in the following chapters in order to be able to develop a textual ground to understand relief-space in architectural scale.

The term "quasi", on the other hand, is defined under a separate subtitle, since it is a broader concept that indicates an "expanded scale" that requires a broader definition.

2.3.3   Quasi-ness: Expanded Scale

The spatial definition of relief in various different conceptual frameworks reveals different qualities. From a more focused point of view, however, an Ancient Greek relief and a Constructivist relief, or Fontana's Spatialist work, posit common formal properties. In this regard, "quasi-ness" becomes the main aspect of any relief. The terminology used within each relief definition underlines the quasi-ness of relief space.

In order to be able to assert "relief" not only as an art form or a field but also as a new way of seeing display environments, the concept of "quasi-ness" is crucial. Relief by its nature has a quasi- prefix, in terms of its definition, dimension, and relations. The quasi- position of relief, between painting and sculpture, and between sculpture and architecture, unveils new definitions. Similarly, it has quasi-two / quasi-three dimensions. Transcoding the existing terminology of each object/medium and their methodologies for space-making, reveals the potential of relief medium as a spatial reading method. Quasi, meaning "almost, partly", is defined as an expanded scale. "Quasi-scale", in this sense, is addressed not only as a term dependent on dimensional

61

properties but also dependent on conditional properties. Referring to its intrinsic quality of being "quasi", relief is defined as a "scaleless" spatial analysis method.

As it is stated before, it is necessary to understand the role of "scale" as a concept to posit relief as a way of seeing. Although "scale" has a specific potential to become the focus of another research, here, it is significant that it becomes a tool to construct a way of seeing. Considering the term "expanded" as an adjective of "scale", guides us through a redefined condition in which scale becomes variable. Relief is neither two-dimensional nor three-dimensional, its scale can be perceived referent to both "surface" and "space". Quasi- the condition of relief, can be used in shifting definitions of painting, sculpture, architecture as fields of the display. Other than the scalar ambiguity, the dual surface-space condition emphasizes the concept of being quasi. Thus, quasi-scale can also be understood, for the shifting definitions of fragments, monuments, and environments as objects of display. Being quasi-two and quasi-three-dimensional as well as being quasi-surface and quasi-space, the relief-spaces can be read in various spatial combinations.

Here, it is necessary to refer to Morris once again:

> "The size range of useless three-dimensional things is a continuum between the monument and the ornament. The sculpture has generally been thought of as those objects, not at the polarities but falling between. The new work being done today falls between the extremes of this size continuum. Because much of it presents an image of neither figurative nor architectonic reference, the works have been described as 'structures' or 'objects'."[103]

Here, although the terminology is constructed on "sculpture", the part in which he posits the terms "structure" and "object" corresponding/expanding the "size continuum between ornament and monument" suggests an architectural definition. The terms "structure" and "object" are also used by Julian Rose, nearly 50 years after Morris. In "Retracing Krauss' Expanded Field", Rose mentions architecture as a

---

[103] Op. cit. Morris.

"physical structure" and sculpture as a "physical object"[104]. In this sense, when we insert relief in this size and relation continuum, the spatial quality it requires indicates the potential of being both: structure and object. Considering the pretext of the research, in a relief-space, definitions of structure and object do not necessarily correspond to architecture and art separately. However, an object may not be a sculpture, but an architectural fragment of a monument. Similarly, a structure may be an artwork and define a space of its own. Thus, the "scale" of and within a relief-space may change the "basic level category" images of structure and object.

Quasi-scale, dimensionally and conditionally, suggests a space transcoded reciprocally between media. As the relationship between architecture and sculpture becomes less distinguishable[105], their display necessitates an inclusive scale which can unveil "quasi" terminologies. Therefore, defining "relief", which is intrinsically quasi, not only as a medium but as a space-reading method, concretizes the plurality of the definitions.

---

[104] Julian Rose, "Architecture as a Sculpture, Landscape and Method" *Retracing the Expanded Field: Encounters Between Art and Architecture*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press (2014): 54.

[105] Op. cit Rose.

CHAPTER 3

DISPLAY ENVIRONMENTS: EXPANDED SPACE

Being a frequently encountered term for architectural discourse, "exhibition space", is the main reconsideration topic of this research. However, in order to be able to reframe the existing concept of exhibition space, this research substitutes it with another phrase: "display environment".

3.1. to/the Display

Here, the reason behind this semantic choice can be clarified in Beck's sentences. Beck explains the difference between display and exhibition in terms of their meanings. He says:

> "Despite the possibility of using the term as a noun, the display is presented here as a verb. This slight grammatical differentiation makes manifest a discursive operation that … can produce display as either a static or a dynamic category: "the display" or "to display". This might explain why, despite their difference, the terms exhibition and display continuously cause confusion: both are part of a discourse that constitutes itself through this tension that emerges from the grammatical conflation of display's double meaning: the display, to display. The exhibition is, despite its ephemeral status, is a static format. In contrast, display emerges from this definition as a method used to generate form within the exhibition." [106]

Beck underlines the ubiquitous presence of the word "display". He sees "display" as a method, which attributes a broader concept to the act of display. The verb "display" means "unfurl, unfold" in Middle English and it is related to the Old French "*despleier*", and Latin "*displicare*" meaning "scatter, disperse".[107] When something

---

[106] Martin Beck. "The Exhibition and the Display." *Exhibition.* Ed. Lucy Steed. London: Whitechapel Gallery 27 (2014): 27.

[107] Oxford Dictionary, *https://www.lexico.com/en.*

is "on display" it is there for people to look at.[108] Thus, display by nature necessitates a kind of "expansion" or unfolding. Intrinsically it posits a visual field that is for being looked at.

Thus, "exhibition" becomes an inadequate word, since "display" requires not necessarily an event but a visual field. Considering this inadequateness, Francesco Bonami refers to Rem Koolhaas, to explain the changing definitions of "exhibition". Although Bonami dwells on the large-scale exhibitions, what he claims is valid for the "expanded" state of exhibition space. Bonami says:

> "I think the main question is whether we can still talk about "exhibitions" when addressing phenomena like Documenta or the Venice Biennale. I feel very close to the idea of bigness that Rem Koolhaas applies to architecture: A building is not a building anymore but something else, with a plurality of functions. Similarly, an exhibition, when taken to a certain scale, is no longer an exhibition but a plurality of visions…We experience fragmentation in the world, and that's what these big-scale events should reflect, with all the contradictions and tensions this implies."[109]

Bonami's definition of the exhibition as "plurality of visions" is crucial in the sense of understanding "display" as a broader term to enable a certain "plurality of visions". In this study, the phrase "display"[110] is used, since the act of display does not necessarily point out an exhibition, but a visual field that is "on display".

---

[108] Cambridge Dictionary, *https://dictionary.cambridge.org/*.

[109] Tim Griffin. James Meyer, Francesco Bonami, Catherine David, Okwui Enwezor, Hans-Ulrich Obrist, Martha Rosler, and Yinka Shonibare. "Global Tendencies: Globalism and the Large-scale Exhibition." *Artforum* 42, no. 3 (2003): 152-163.

[110] Here, the exhibition "METU Lodgings Documented" organized within the scope of the graduate course Arch 524 "Architecture and Different Modes of Representation" at METU Department of Architecture, should be referred to. The catalogue of the exhibition is structured under the keyword "display". The aim is to emphasize both the condition of being "on display" and the act "to display".

3.2. Kiesler's Correalism and Environments

Referring to the phrase "display environment", it is also necessary to explain the use of the word "environment" instead of space. The environment is a term that is frequently used in encounters of architecture and art.

Having been used with the adjectives "spatial"[111], "integrated"[112] or "fused"[113], "environment" has been used in plenty of different phrases, referring to an "expanded" mode of spatial arrangements. The inclusion of the term "environment" will unveil the intention of this part of the research in a more precise way. Remembering De Stijl "environments", there is one specific example that stems from the De Stijl and Constructivist ideas: Frederick Kiesler and his display environments.

Kiesler worked on the theory of "correalism", which is "[a]n investigation into the laws of the inter-relationships of natural and man-made organisms"[114] and "the integral relationship between each object and its environment".[115] According to Kiesler:

> "The traditional art object, be it a painting, a sculpture, or a piece of architecture, is no longer seen as an isolated entity but must be considered within the context of this expanding environment. The environment becomes equally as important as the object, if not more so, because the object breathes into the surrounding and also inhales the realities of the environment no matter in what space, close or wide apart, open air or indoor."[116]

Kiesler and his work have a significant role in this research. Following the examples of the Proun environment and Merzbau in the previous chapter, it can be said that Kiesler's work takes the discussion one step further, both textually and spatially.

---

[111] Op.cit. Rowell.

[112] Ibid.

[113] Ibid.

[114] Lisa Phillips and Dieter Bogner. *Frederick Kiesler*. Whitney Museum of American Art (1989): 82.

[115] Ibid, 82.

[116] Frederick Kiesler, "Second Manifesto of Correalism," Art International, (1965): 27.

Directly related to the term "environment", he proposes an integrated and correlated spatial possibility that can intrinsically merge architecture, art, and body.

Since his school years in Vienna, Kiesler was always surrounded by important groups of artists and architects. He studied with the leaders of the Secession movement, worked with Adolf Loos on a slum-clearing project, and in 1923, he was invited to join the De Stijl group as its youngest member and worked closely with Jean Arp, Theo van Doesburg, and Piet Mondrian.[117] He also worked closely with Moholy-Nagy and El Lissitzsky. As an inevitable result of the constant exchange of thoughts between these productive people, Kiesler managed to form his own understanding of space and especially "environment". His approach was strongly influenced by "avant-garde" movements:

> "Kiesler developed this concept under the influence of revolutionary Russian theater art in combination with an idea dominant in Constructivism—that of striving to unify art and life. But this ambition was one that he had known from his Vienna days—the unification of art and life had been a precept of the Vienna Secessionists at the beginning of the century."[118]

Not forgetting De Stijl group's desire for the "unity of painting, sculpture, and architecture", he tried to "reorganize the field of vision according to rules of sympathetic magic to achieve an integration of architecture, sculpture, and painting."[119] Kiesler's approach proposes a certain kind of architectural totality spatially and theoretically. Thus, "environment" is a keyword that can summarize his approach and can render the intention of this research as well. Kiesler projected his thoughts on "embracing medium" to his design understanding of "display environments":

> "An integrated approach to art was Kiesler's credo. He insisted on "correlation," not "segregation"…This led him to conceive of an embracing "medium" that included painting, sculpture, collage, architecture, poetry, design, stagecraft, graphic design, and dance, where the multiplicity of an idea could be explored and new hybrid forms

---

[117] Ibid, 13.

[118] Ibid, 52.

[119] Ibid 30.

invented. This vision called for an interactive, environmental approach—not an art of illusion but an art of real space; not an art of isolation but an art of participation, where both space and the viewer would be activated. He wanted art and architecture without boundaries, declaring in an early manifesto, 'no more walls.'"[120]

In his display environments, each architectural element, surface, and component correlates with the act of display. In "International Exhibition of New Theater Techniques" in Vienna, in 1924, (Figure 32) Kiesler designs a totality, including each detail from stationery to the admission ticket. The whole design followed a Constructivist principle as an exhibition system. "No other exhibition of that time had presented such distinct design or had so closely approached the idea of *Gesamtkunstwerk…*"[121]
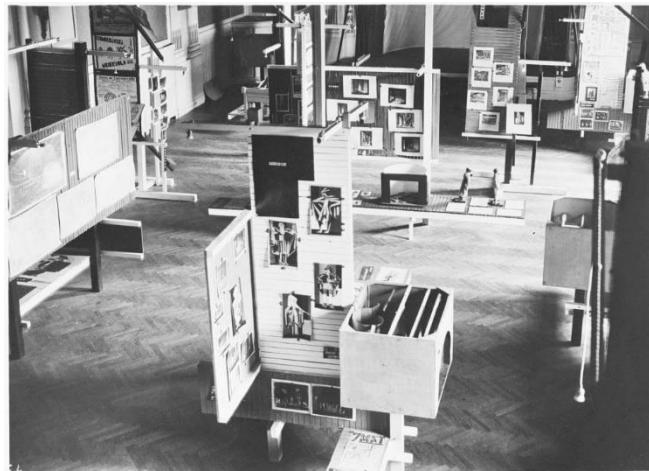
Figure 32. International Exhibition of New Theater Techniques, Frederick Kiesler, Vienna, 1924.

Source: Frederick Kiesler, Lisa Phillips, and Dieter Bogner

In 1925, Kiesler was invited by Josef Hoffman to design an area in Grand Palais, in Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs, Paris. He designed a monumental environment with De Stijl gestures, which he believes is a visionary architecture for

---

[120] Ibid 108.

[121] Ibid, 53.

the futuristic city; "City in Space" 1925 (Figure 33). The display environment revealed his reference to the "visionary ideals of international Constructivism and Neoplasticism". He was part of a group including Le Corbusier, who built L'Esprit Nouveau, the French Pavilion, and Konstantin Melnikov, who built the Soviet Pavilion.
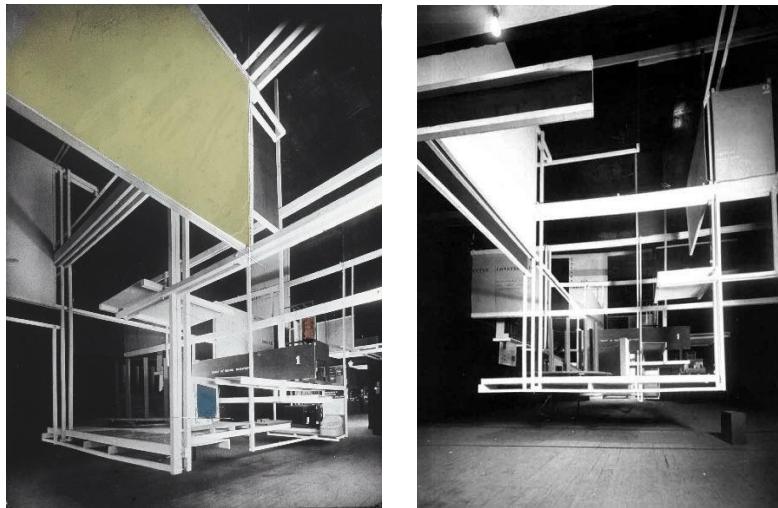
Figure 33. City in Space, Frederick Kiesler, Paris, 1925.

Source: Frederick Kiesler, Lisa Phillips, and Dieter Bogner.

In 1942, he designed Peggy Guggenheim's "Art of This Century Gallery" in New York. There were four distinct galleries: Abstract Gallery, the Surrealist Gallery, the Kinetic Gallery, and the Daylight Gallery (Figure 34). Each gallery was designed by Kiesler with a meticulous approach in which he put each architectural component on display, or operated on them in order to be able to fulfill his manifesto: "no more walls". He proposed "an innovative method of installing paintings to its lighting, sculpture stands, and seating".[122] He literally operated on the architectural surfaces; walls were distorted, frames no longer existed and pedestals and hangers were in a continuity that there were no borders between art and architecture. Kiesler's work is

---

[122] Ibid, 53.

not only architecture, or art, or curation. Since he is an architect who has the capability of trans-positional thinking, he designed a display environment, to its fullest sense. Even Marcel Duchamp, who was one of the curators of Guggenheim's gallery, said in an interview that: "As an architect, Kiesler was far more qualified than I to organize a Surrealist exhibition."
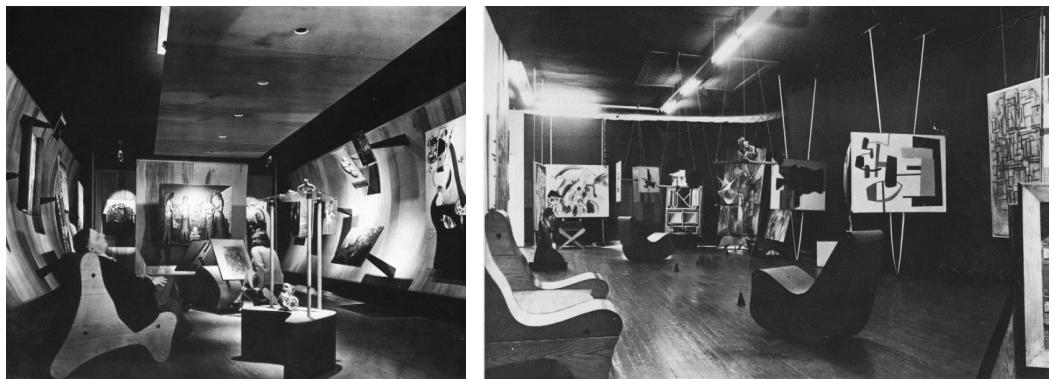
Figure 34. Peggy Guggenheim's "Art of This Century Gallery", Frederick Kiesler, New York, 1942. Left: Surrealist Gallery. Right: Abstract Gallery.

Source: Frederick Kiesler, Lisa Phillips, and Dieter Bogner.

3.3. Display Environments: Expanded Spaces from Canvas to City[123]

Learning from Kiesler, a display environment in its fullest sense should be an "expanded" space. The "expanded" space necessitates the terms "display" and "environment". The space of what is exhibited became the exhibit itself, in Savaş' words by "representing itself"[124]. Daniel Buren points out, "More and more, the subject of an exhibition tends not to be the display of artworks, but the exhibition of

---

[123] Ibid, 53.

[124] Title of the graduate course conducted by Prof. Dr. Ayşen Savaş: Arch 724 "Representing Itself" in 2016 and 2018, at METU Department of Architecture.

the exhibition as a work of art."[125] Using "display" instead of the term "exhibition" and using "environment" instead of the term "space", are directly related with what this study asserts, that is the "embodied" presence of the container and the content. In this point, it is necessary to state that the phrase "site-specific" is avoided in this assertion, since it does not correspond to the idea of relief space and its intrinsic potential of display.

This part includes a brief list of already known display environments, which is not a continuous spatial development but rather a selected range of already-known display environments[126].

Canvas is a textile surface, known as the medium of painting. The construction of the space as an architectural concept can be analyzed from the 'continuity' of the space *from* and *through* canvas which locates a human subject with the structure of the lines. Norman Bryson's title for the chapter "The Gaze and the Glance"[127] clarifies the fragmentation and expansion of the surface of the canvas. The examples given do not necessarily use canvas as the surface. Here, the intention is to explain how the different techniques surpassed/emphasized the defined picture plane.

The desire of the spatial illusion started before the invention of the perspectival drawing technique, as in the example of Giotto and Giottesque fresco cycles. (Figure 35). It is a surface-oriented trial for creating an intermediate space. Bryson states:

> "… the surface area between scenes is worked in two contradictory styles: both as band, joining the seceding episodes back together in a spatial coherence of mural space, to counter- balance the increasing fracture of the narrative space; and at the

---

[125] Daniel Buren. "Exhibition of an Exhibition." *Exhibition*. Ed. Lucy Steed. London: Whitechapel Gallery 27 (2014): 43.

[126] Here, the graduate course conducted by Jale Erzen, AH 513 "Aesthetics and Criticism" at METU Department of Architecture, should be referred to. The reading list and studies within the course help to support the framework of this part of the research.

[127] Norman Bryson. "The Gaze and the Glance." *Vision and Painting*, Palgrave Macmillan UK (1983): 87-131.

same time as interval, pulling the scenes apart and reinforcing their individuation by transforming the space of the wall into that of the frame. The mural space, formerly the most powerful assertion of the primacy of architecture in the visual economy, is now suppressed as plastic form, and becomes neutralized into a kind of non-space, neither part of the three-dimensional surround of the edifice, nor clearly affiliated to the individual episode"[128] .

Figure 35. Giotto and Giottesque fresco cycles, in Assisi and Padua, Italy.

Source: Left: https://www.wga.hu/html_m/g/giotto/assisi, Right:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palazzo_della_Ragione,_Padua

This example and technique can be considered as a transition to the perspectival space. The architecture of perspectival painting required a unified and complementary space. The lines from and through the canvas locate the human subject, which also defines a superimposition of spaces. Bryson points out that the codes of perspective require that the viewer takes up a position opposite the vanishing point indicated by the plunging arcades, cornices and flagstones; this second construction of a viewer who must have assumed an exact point in space is then superadded to the first.[129]

---

[128] Ibid, 98.

[129] Ibid, 102.
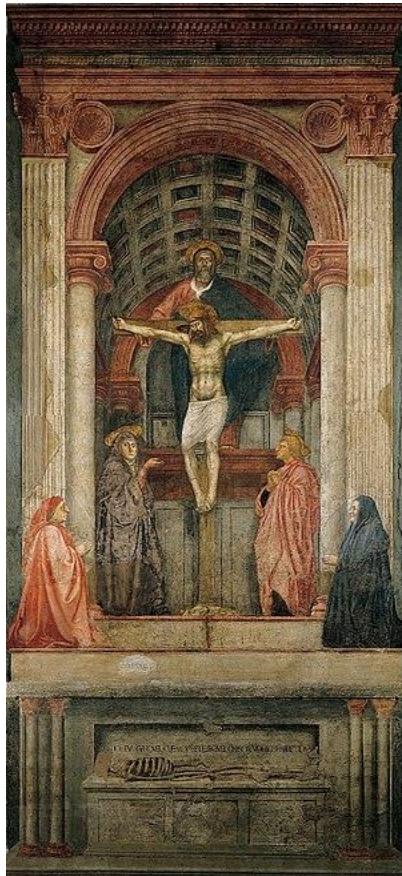
Figure 36. Masaccio's Trinity

Source: https://www.artsy.net

For example, in Masaccio's Trinity (Figure 36), the perspective technique constructs a space continuity that merges the viewer and viewed space on the same ground. The flatness of the surface becomes the merging plane which erases itself and makes the perception process uninterrupted.

Within time, the position of the viewer and the continuity of the space got fragmented with the "motion" of the Baroque period. The architecture of the perspectival lines deconstructed as the perception experience of the surface space of the wall. Quoting "gaze" and "glance" from Bryson's chapter, one can say continuous space of "the gaze" turned into the fragmented space of "the glance". The transformation process

has a technological witness: the camera obscura. Vermeer used the device as a drawing tool, the technique of the camera obscura as the eye of Vermeer, framed real spaces, emphasized the light. For instance, in Vermeer's The Artist in his Studio, "the viewer and the painter no longer cohabit in the same continuum."[130] The unity of merged space is fragmented (Figure 37).
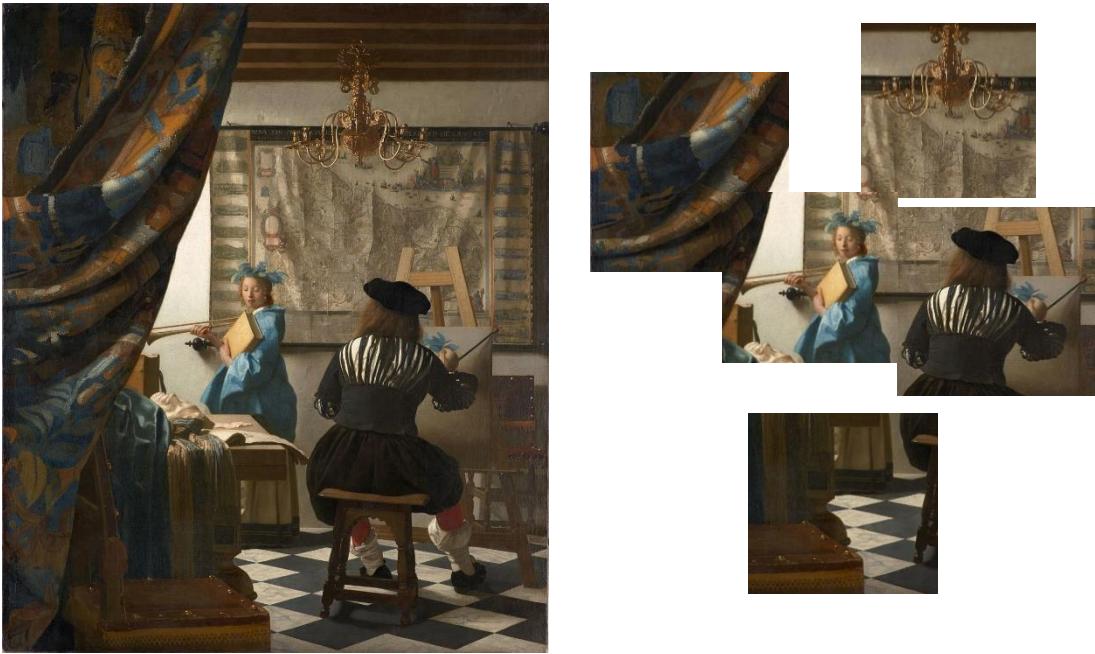
Figure 37. Vermeer's Artist in Studio and "glances" mentioned by Bryson, edited by the author.
Source: *https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Art_of_Painting*

The surface of the canvas is also deconstructed, as fragments mimic the experience of the eye and plot its movement. In this discontinuous space, the act of "seeing" shifted from the illusionary space *through* the canvas to the flat surface *on* the canvas. Art critic Clement Greenberg points out that "The Old Masters created an illusion of space in depth that one could imagine oneself *walking* into, but the analogous illusion

---

[130] Ibid, 114.

created by the Modernist painter can only be *seen* into; can be traveled through, literally or figuratively, only with the eye."[131]

As stated by Greenberg, starting with Cezanne, the space of seeing and perception evolved. Both Impressionism's surface emphasis and the classical sense of depth were merged, and distorted the surface space of the canvas. Construction of the space of canvas was pluralized to Van Gogh's strokes and Seurat's points. The techniques varied. The more abstract it became, the more the surface is emphasized. The surface of canvas has been physically expanded as well, introducing relief as an art form, which has already been elaborated and exemplified in Chapter 1.

Canvas surface, as a display environment, has a variety of surface and space relationships within the painting medium. It is regarded as an initial example of display environments since the surface of the canvas is a physical and literal reference to the surface of "relief". In addition, the canvas itself has a structure that is inherently "on display".

The other environment, the "Cabinet of curiosity", is the German Wunderkammer, which is understood as a disordered jumble of unconnected objects, many of which were fraudulent in character"[132]. These were spatially and conceptually accepted as the nucleus of museums. Hooper-Greenhill, refers to the term "cabinet" and its different meanings within history. In the late Renaissance, "cabinet" was used as a kind of "container", furniture having shelves and drawers, which had a space to hold collected fragments. She also states that "the cabinets were often made to hold specific items and were constructed accordingly"[133]. The space within the cabinet had a spatial reference to the objects that it would hold. Thus, they were "constructed accordingly". In some examples, it occurs that the term "cabinet" was used interchangeably with the

---

[131] Clement Greenberg. *Modernist Painting*. Voice of America, 1959.

[132] Eileen Hooper-Greenhill. *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge*. Routledge (1992): 94.

[133] Ibid, 94.

term "collection".[134] In other words, the cabinet and the collection within, were read as a display environment altogether. According to Hooper-Greenhill, the concept of the cabinet of curiosity is not bound to the scale of "cabinet". A wall, a room, or even a house can be considered as a cabinet of curiosity. In the 17th – 18th centuries, the term "cabinet" was used both for small cupboards or room spaces that were including various collections.[135] For example, a "Studiolo" which is a "room" of cabinets, is both a collection and working space for one. Space can be a library full of books or a room cladded with various paintings.

"Cabinet of curiosity" as a display environment, is important to mention in this part since it posits not only space, but a concept that is accepted as the origin of museums. The "cabinet" and "collected things of curiosity" define a display environment together.

Following cabinets of curiosity, museum space can be considered as an expanded display environment. Similar to a cabinet of curiosity, museum space develops as a container of a great variety of objects. Museum studies have been a broad research field, which has been integrated with concepts of archive, library, and display. However, rather than their institutional or historical value, the main focus of this study is the physical space of museums. Here, the changing definitions of the museum will be the initial framework, since the "expansion" as a condition will be emphasized.

As it is a space for "storing" and "exhibiting", museum space posits an inherent expanded state, which does not involve only the physical presence of the building as the container, but also what is conserved within. Here, the first museum of Europe that Hooper-Greenhill mentions, the Palazzo Medici, can be an example for this part as well, in order to be able to understand the inherent value of display within the formation of a museum. Hooper-Greenhill focuses on Palazzo Medici to reanalyze it

---

[134] Ibid, 88.

[135] Ibid, 88.

in the framework of Foucault's "effective history". However, here, the physical space of Palazzo Medici will be examined:

> "…Medici Palace, in fifteenth-century Florence, is cited and celebrated as the identity of origin for European 'museums' and for European collecting practices. This complex combination of subjects, objects, spaces, and practices is our first case study."[136]

The complex combination of subjects, objects, spaces and practices, defines museum space. Although the interrelationship and involvement between them change, they define space on display altogether. The involvement of subjects, objects, spaces and practices in a museum space have expanded and transformed its spatial definition. Hooper-Greenhill also states:

> "Museums are no longer built in the image of that nationalistic temple of culture, the British Museum. Today anything may turn out to be a museum, and museums can be found in farms, boats, coal mines, warehouses, prisons, castles or cottages…"[137]

Expanding from the scale of a "cabinet", museum space overflowed its definition. As the surface space of canvas that expanded and changed, the museum space has also expanded; from the museum to venues and from the act of collection to the act of curation. The museum space expanded to the space of the city.

As another example of display environments, Salon Exhibitions in Paris, the official art exhibitions of the Académie des Beaux-Arts, were annual-biannual events constituting visibility to the artists, art students and a variety of artifacts. Art galleries today can be considered as fragments of this visibility, which defines display environments for the new art and concepts. In Salon Exhibitions, the main idea was being visible. Unlike the museum space, it was not the collections of several ancient objects, artworks or fragments but the new definitions and artworks of various artists that were on display. Within time, space of the Salon transformed into the space of galleries. Most of the museum spaces are expanded with the addition of contemporary art galleries. Other museums, with collections of important modern artworks, are

---

[136] Ibid, 23.

[137] Ibid, 1.

founded, which are the "white cubes" of the display environments. Marshall's spatial terminology introduced for galleries and museums states that "[m]useums constitute inherently projective spaces, whereas art galleries remain committed to the ideal of a more self-contained and reflective space."[138]   Through this surface-reactions of "projection" and "reflection", the gallery space posits itself in a threshold, which can be considered as an attempt to erase the walls with the modern "white". Gallery space, as a display environment, also overflowed its "sterilized" definition, it fused with the variety of different scales and spaces.

> "Looking back at Krauss' 1979 essay, which treats a space of logical oppositions as an expanded site of the artwork, perhaps it is the city, the always already expanded field of architecture, which becomes the missing term from the essay and its well-known diagram…"[139]

Referring to Beatriz Colomina, the city is the expanded field of architecture, and it became a display environment in its fullest sense, especially within the "large-scale" exhibitions. Both the museums and art galleries have expanded their collections and spaces in an environment in which the scale of display varies and shifts.

Large-scale exhibitions, as an ephemeral spatiality of the display, exhibit not only temporary artifacts but also permanent spaces. Through time, the concept and space of biennials are pluralized, reflecting the transformations in art and architecture. Especially since the 1990s, these transformations have proliferated in number and involvement and function of exhibition expanded to mind-shifting discursive acts and theoretical knowledge production, as its space leaked from the neutrality of "the white cube" into each fragment of city space. Since they are basically another layer of space that has crawled into the structure of city space, (dis)appearing spatially and resonating between space and time, they can be perceived as spatial metronomes which are multi-scale display environments. In a large-scale exhibition, the display environment posits

---

[138] Christopher R. Marshall. "The Contemporary Museum as Art Gallery." *Reshaping Museum Space.* Ed. Susanne MacLeod. (2005): 93-170.

[139] Beatriz Colomina. "Responses" *Retracing the Expanded Field: Encounters between Art and Architecture.* Cambridge, Papapetros, Spyros, and Julian Rose, eds. MA: MIT Press (2014): 211.

a new city map, which involves not only the existing museums or galleries, but the "venues" which can be in any space or scale. Rosa Martinez states that "[e]xpanding the Biennial throughout the city as a way to test the idea of the exhibition as an urban promenade"[140], which becomes a technique of display on a large scale. Thus, this promenade in the city scale, the display environment involves a more complex surface and space relationship.

The city, therefore, like architecture, by nature, is a display environment. It has an inherent potential to correlate with different scales and spaces of display. Hans Ulrich Obrist defines biennial space as a "[r]eciprocal contact zone that can mediate between museum and city, the challenge is to provide new spaces and new temporalities."[141] Once the display space crawls into the city space, the walls of museums became "permeable"[142]. The term "extramural", used in Campo Urbano, a collective urban art movement, corresponds to the expansion of display space from the museum to the city. [143] The urban scale of expansion, in this sense, defines extra-mural relationships in between museums, galleries and public spaces, which defines a large-scale surface and space relationship within the city.

The reason behind including a list of display environments at the end of this chapter is to explain the variety of scales. Although the scale of "museum space" has a direct relation to the act of display, scales varying from canvas surface to city, are also defined as display environments. Considering the variety of scales of spaces, the trans-positional relationship between surfaces and spaces underlines unique samples within existing display environments, which are exemplified in detail in the fourth chapter.

---

[140] Rosa Martinez. "Curating Biennials" Manifesta Journal, No.2, Winter 2003/Spring 2004.

[141] Hans Ulrich Obrist. "Biennial Manifesto." Log 20, 2010.

[142] Hilde Hein. *Public Art: Thinking Museums Differently*. Rowman Altamira, 2006.

[143] Eeva-Liisa Pelkonen, Carson Chan, and David Andrew Tasman, eds. *Exhibiting Architecture: A Paradox?* Yale School of Architecture, (2015): 42.

CHAPTER 4

RELIEF AS A WAY OF SEEING THE DISPLAY ENVIRONMENTS

4.1. Relief as a Way of Seeing

The second chapter defined the spaces of relief, referring to the existing examples, and in the third chapter "display environments" is substituted for the term "exhibition space" with a more expanded meaning. Following these two chapters, the fourth chapter will discuss "relief" as a way of redefining the display environment. The intention is to learn from relief and the variety of spatial definitions it has to interpret the display environments. This chapter focuses on specific concepts of "trans-positional relationship of fragment, monument, and environment" and "surface and space as wall and display". These concepts frame the inquiry of the study, which pursues the possibility of redefining the spatial relations in exhibition space by using relief as a scaleless surface and space formation.

Referring to John Berger and his renowned book "Ways of Seeing", "[t]he way we see things is affected by what we know or what we believe".[144] Likewise, magnification of relief space suggests a correspondent reading/seeing of surface and space relationships in architectural scale. Berger states that:

> "We never look at just one thing; we are always looking at the relation between things and ourselves. Our vision is continually active, continually moving, continually holding things in a circle around itself…"[145]

Referring to Berger, again, the "pretext" of this study should be remembered. The ruins of the Temple Erechtheion illustrate different physical positions of architectural elements and combinations of architectural spaces that refer to intricate surface and

---

[144] John Berger. Ways of Seeing. Vol. 1. Penguin UK (2008): 9.

[145] Ibid.

space relationships. These relationships help us to redefine "relief" as a method for spatial reading. Morris, in a way, discovers that the scalar relationship between fragment and monument can magnify the vision of the surface and space. These trans-positions that become visible within the ruins of the Erechtheion, can be regarded as a "relief space". The different trans-positional relations becoming visible in the ruins of the Erectheion will be traced in existing display environments. Here, "trans-positions" stand for not only the physical relations of architecture and art or content and container; but also for the correspondence between spatial operations of relief medium and architectural display. The intention is to seek the possibility of using the visual field of relief as a decoder, in order to be able to define a new "way of seeing" the visual field of exhibition space.

In relief, it is delightfully difficult to differentiate the referent surface and the space created by expansion. The "illusion" here is correspondent to a display environment that involves the relationship of the "container" and "content". The illusion of space, which constructs a volume out of a surface, is basically the space of architecture and display, proposing one architectural environment on display. The renowned phrase "paradox of exhibiting architecture" corresponds with the surface-space relationship of relief construction.[146] Thus, "relief-space" becomes a term that will be used to refer to the selected existing display conditions.

This study interprets the relief medium as a display environment. "Surface" here is the back/foreground/space, which is the container. The container can be a "white cube", a stuffed museum, a façade, an exposed concrete wall or a public square. The surface can be expanded by the architecture of display, which keeps the surface as referent and included, to create three-dimensional unity of a "relief-space". The act of display does not necessarily define an organized exhibition space, but it defines a unity, in which the surface and space create diverse spatial combinations. The examples can be

---

[146] Eeva-Liisa Pelkonen, Carson Chan, and David Andrew Tasman, eds. *Exhibiting Architecture: A Paradox?* Yale School of Architecture, (2015): 9.

defined as relief-space. (Figure 38). In a relief-space, architecture is on display intrinsically.

Figure 38. Top, from left to right: Cité de l architecture ét du Patrimoine, Sir John Soane Museum, Norskmiddelalderkunst Exhibition in Henie Onstad Kunstsenter. Bottom, from left to right: "Support" by Lorenzo Quinn, "Noviembre 6 y 7" by Doris Salcedo, béton brut and waffle slab of METU Faculty of Architecture Building.

In this respect, it is possible to state that the definition of relief-space may suggest different levels of surface-reference/inclusion. The scaleless relief-space posits various positions of wall surface, changing from the level of absence to presence, which can be both conceptual and physical.

Figure 39. Gates of Hell, Auguste Rodin, 1880-1890.

Source: http://www.musee-rodin.fr/en/collections/sculptures/gates-hell
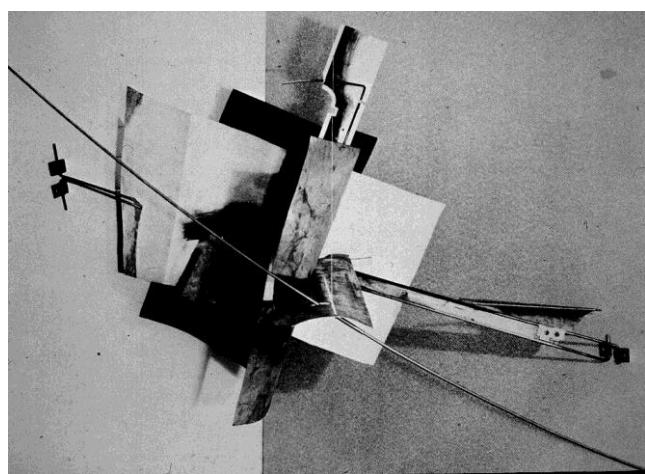
Figure 40. Corner Relief, Vladimir Tatlin, 1915.

Source: https://www.wsws.org/en/articles

Selected art and architectural works created by different artists in different periods, by different materials and different methods, can be the best illustrations for this debate. Anthony Vidler restates Krauss' argument, reflecting on the gradual loss of such specificity that began with Rodin's Gates of Hell and was completed by modernist abstraction's final loss of "site."[147] An expanded field of sculpture declares site-boundedness as redundant. However, it also redefines a strong relation with the display environment. This process can be "magnified" to the relief-space, which is based on the potential of the spatial ambiguity of the display environment. Relations can be de-constructed or re-constructed between the "surfaces" and "spaces". This spatial ambiguity can be exemplified starting from the given example of Rodin's Gates of Hell[148] (Figure 39). The sculpture is basically a "door space", which normally necessitates an architectural context. However, it asserts an unbounded three-dimensional architectural space itself, expanded from the element of "gate". Another example is a distinct one, Tatlin's corner relief (Figure 40). Here, in contrast to the Rodin door space, the work is strongly bounded to the architectural space of the wall. The corner becomes visible through the expanded forms that make the existing surface space. These relief space examples do not directly correspond to the "display environments". However, these selected relief examples representing different concentrations of surface and space relationships can be considered as an explanatory visual fitting.

Another corresponding reading can be relevant to Brancusi's and Kiesler's works. Although these works do not indicate any common formal relevance, once they are asserted as relief-space, the scaleless surface and space relationship makes them exemplary. For example, in his "Young Bird" work, Brancusi's pedestal does more than just being an indicator of what it bears, but becomes a part of it (Figure 41). Therefore, it becomes difficult to differentiate the base from the work. As an architectural example, Kiesler designs environments that are "*Gesamtkunstwerk*" in

---

[147] Op. cit. Vidler.

[148] Ibid.

its fullest sense. The architectural elements; walls, pedestals, hangers are designed as "on display" within artists'/architects' works. It becomes almost impossible to differentiate the surface and space separately. (Figure 42). These given examples include common properties that relief-space posits inevitably.

Figure 41. Young Bird, Brancusi, Paris, 1928.

Source: https://www.moma.org/collection

Figure 42. Surrealist Gallery, Frederick Kiesler, 1942.

Source: Frederick Kiesler, Lisa Phillips and Dieter Bogner.

4.2. Learning From Contemporary Discourse of Display Environments

In this part, the contemporary discourse of exhibition space is revisited. The Place and Displacement project initiated in Oslo School of Architecture and related publication with the same title, have a strong impact in this discussion. Moreover, "Retracing the Expanded Field", which is another publication that affected the process of the study, is also referred to consecutively.

Being one of the scholars conducting the project "Place and Displacement", Tina Di Carlo is a MoMA curator and completed her Ph.D. studies in the Oslo School of Architecture. She proposed an approach called "exhibitionism" (not as the disorder but a spatial concept), which can be considered as collateral to the definition of relief-space in this thesis. In her article "Exhibitionism", she defines exhibition space as an "expansive" space. She says that "[t]o speak through the exhibition means to see it as a complex, heterotopic, spatial, and temporal mirroring that extends like the Miesian space it occupies: infinitely forward and back, up and down, sideways."[149] She underlines the intermingled situation of space of display: "[o]bject and subject, viewed and viewer, object, and frame no longer reside as dichotomous counterparts. Rather they are co-constitutive elements, evidentiary and embodied, a complex, multivalent event registered within the material properties of things in space."[150]

Di Carlo states that "[e]xhibitionism was inspired by the "shift" in architecture that began to take place between 2002 and 2004, away from technology as the content of architecture - often manifested as specular and spectacular form - and toward a more engaged, political practice and expanded, even immaterial, spatial field."[151] She underlines how the notion of space within art and architectural projects are no longer categorized in a "sterilized" way, however, she emphasizes the shift in between.

---

[149] Tina di Carlo. "Exhibitionism." Log 20 (2010): 151-158.

[150] Ibid, 152.

[151] Ibid.

> "… exhibitionism… is an aberrant form of behavior. Could aberrance suggest categorizations for collecting architecture that no longer rely on the pure, autonomous, modernist divisions of media such as painting, sculpture, photography, drawing, architecture, and film to posit a spatial aesthetics that is implicitly, qua concept, propositional, political, and instrumental; that is appropriate for a local context in which multiculturalism, transnationalism, and globalization are central?"[152]

Her discussion is on the renowned paradox of exhibiting architecture, which is a spatial quality that has the potential of having an ambiguity in terms of container and content. She defines this potential, by using the concept of "exhibitionism":

> "Exhibitionism as a method and open project proposes a mode of praxis involved in the creation of the sensible. It proposes an architecture and the architecture curator as a spatial practitioner within a broader spatial aesthetic discourse; that as architecture, the exhibition should not represent architecture within the space of the gallery but should present or produce architecture within the space that is architectural; and that architecture is often best presented through its alterity."[153]

Tina di Carlo, with her definition of "Exhibitionism", asserts "presentation" or "production" of architecture as an intrinsic value of any architectural space. Her definition of exhibition space as "expansive space" can be read together with Rowell's sentences in the catalog of the exhibition "From Surface to Space". Margit Rowell refers to Alexander Dorner's words: "[m]atter is dissolved into pure planes and lines, penetrating each other, devoid of mass and transparent. Thus, instead of a space filled with solid mass, cubic, static and extended, space appears as the crisscrossing of streams of movements and streams of events."[154] These observations are as true of painting as of sculpture and architecture today. It is worth considering that the assertion of open space which characterizes much twentieth-century art came about through the extension of two-dimensional surfaces, or a pictorial spatial concept, into actual space.[155]

---

[152] Ibid, 152.

[153] Ibid, 154.

[154] Op.cit. Rowell, 9.

[155] Ibid.

Rowell's comment regarding the twentieth-century art is still valid for twenty-first-century art, architecture, and display. Referring to the pictorial and actual space that a relief space can define simultaneously, the interchangeability of architecture in and of the display environment can point out different spatial illusionary compositions. Di Carlo's definitions, in this sense, reinforce the definition of relief-space. Both of the definitions explain above-mentioned interchangeability of architecture on display.

Another name, also from the Oslo School of Architecture, Place and Displacement project, Thordis Arrhenius, posits a similar approach to di Carlo. Arrhenius emphasizes the reflexive relationship between the container and the content of the display. She questions the "negotiation" between the architecture *of* the exhibition and the architecture *in* the exhibition. She says:

> "This reciprocity between exhibitions and architectural history opens up a question about the media of architecture. In the exhibition space the idea of architecture as "bricks and mortar" is hard to maintain and the notion and border of architectural work come under discussion. The media of the exhibition and that of architecture stands in a complex interdependency where one often takes the place of the other; a negotiation must take place between the architecture *of* the exhibition and the architecture *in* the exhibition."[156]

In this study, the definition of relief-space inevitably addresses "an interrogation of borders" in display environments. Arrhenius' use of the term "negotiation" in between the architecture *of* the exhibition and the architecture *in* the exhibition, is directly related to the discussion of the research.

Another topic that should be remembered here is the relationship between the fields of painting, sculpture, and architecture, which has been introduced in Chapter 2. With the help of the complex relationship in between, the paradigmatic shifts in painting and especially sculpture can help to translate the shift in the architectural scale of the act of display. Relief defines an expansion from pictorial space into an actual space. Tracing back how the sculptural space expanded into the architectural space, can

---

[156] Thordis Arrhenius, Mari Lending, Wallis Miller, and Jérémie Michael McGowan, eds. *Place and Displacement: Exhibiting Architecture*. Lars Müller (2014): 15.

render the definition of relief as a way of seeing. The relationships within a display environment can be referred back to the paradigmatic shift in sculpture. Robert Goldwater's book "What is Modern Sculpture?" gains significance as he refers to the dialectic relationships between sculpture and architecture. His approach can also be "trans positioned" with how relief-space is explained.

> "… exterior and interior shape [the covering and the covered] may be in close conformity, so that appearance anticipates entrance, or relatively independent so that the interior space surprises by its contraction or expansion. These relations—mass to void, the surface to volume, skin to the skeleton—are also fundamental to sculpture, and thus all architecture is in some measure sculptural." [157]

The paradigmatic shift in sculpture can be read through the horizontal plane, the pedestal-the base, which is a shifter[158] of sculpture. The disappearance, fusion or domination of pedestal pointed out an important change in sculptural space. Papapetros explains this change by referring to Krauss:

> "Such a paradigmatic shift is marked by a horizontal plane- or rather its disappearance: "Because they thus function in relation to the logic of representation and marking, sculptures are normally figurative and vertical, their pedestals an important part of the structure since they mediate between an actual site and representational sign." The pedestal both accentuates and segments the statue's primal verticality. The pedestal is oppositional but also complementary to the pit. Both structural elements functions as thresholds that "mediate" between two terrains: the site and the sign of representation."[159]

Learning from the sculpture, can we interpret the ambiguity of architecture of display act as another disappearance? In a display environment, dis/reappearance of the wall as an exhibit or a shifter can empower the term "relief" as a method, since the wall has the potential of being both the surface and space of relief-space. Tina di Carlo sees "the exhibition as architecture, architecture as the exhibition". She explains the trans

---

157 Op.cit. Goldwater.

158 Rosalind Krauss. "Notes on the Index: Seventies Art in America." October (1977): 69.

159 Anthony Vidler. "Responses" *Retracing the Expanded Field: Encounters between Art and Architecture*. Cambridge, Papapetros, Spyros, and Julian Rose, eds. MA: MIT Press (2014): 228.

positional relationship as "a reflexive mirror that proposes what Foucault calls a heterotopic space."[160]

Learning from sculpture, Vidler uses the paradigmatic shift in space of sculpture as a tool to explain the shift in space of architecture. He refers to Krauss in his essay "Architecture in the Expanded Field". Anthony Vidler revisits Krauss' expanded field in a broader context. He underlines sculpture's transformation to unfold the expansion of the architecture. He says:

> "It is perhaps not too much an exaggeration to state that this expanded field for architecture owes greatly to the previous expansion of the sculptural field. Thus, the spatial arts now come together in their superimposed expanded fields, less in order to blur distinctions or erode purity than to construct new programmatic and formal conditions that for the first time may constitute a truly ecological aesthetics."[161]

Here, "the superimposition of spatial arts and their expanded fields" should be underlined since a relief suggests not only trans-position but also a superimposition. Once we assert relief space as a scaleless surface and space formation, it becomes a seeing/space-reading tool that can magnify the environments superimposed in one immersive medium. Thus, what di Carlo, Arrhenius, and Vidler posited, become correspondent to the main focus of this research. The concepts of "exhibition as an expansive space", "architecture as exhibition and exhibition as architecture", "interrogation of the border of the exhibition" and "architecture in the expanded field", refer to a specific approach, which can be defined under the title of relief-space.

---

[160] Op. cit. di Carlo, 154.

[161] Op. cit. Vidler, 228.

4.3. Trans-positions: Fragment, Monument and Environment

In order to understand relief-space, the concept of transpositions between fragments, monuments and environments should be understood. Trans-position means "to exchange the positions of two things.[162] Exhibition space inevitably defines diverse trans-positional relations in between container and content of the exhibition, which produce intricate visual fields. "Trans-position" stands for not only the physical relations of content and container, but also the correspondence between the spatial operations of relief and architectural display. The pretext of this study, the Temple of Erectheion, illustrates "the physical positions of architectural elements suggest different spatial conditions; from "structure" to "object" and from monument to fragment".[163] Here, the scale gains significance since it has the capability to define intermediate spatial combinations through relations of monument and fragment.

Firstly, fragment, monument, and environment will be defined separately, then, their trans-positional potentials will be exemplified. Morris' article "Notes on Sculpture" and Mari Lending's works based on the ideas of Quatremére De Quincy, will be referred to consecutively.

Being a part of an architectural whole, an architectural fragment has various potentials; one is directly related to its intrinsic spatial value due to its original scalar properties. The other is its displacement, which introduces possibilities of re-constructions of its display. Here, Morris' words on the perception of "fragments" can be re-examined:

> "Most ornaments from the past, Egyptian glassware, Romanesque ivories, etc., consciously exploit the intimate mode by the highly resolved surface incident. The awareness that surface incident is always attended to in small objects allows for the elaboration of fine detail to sustain itself. Large sculptures from the past that exist now only in small fragments invite our vision to perform a kind of magnification."[164]

---

[162] Cambridge English Dictionary, *https://dictionary.cambridge.org/*.

[163] Please see Chapter I: Introduction.

[164] Op.cit. Morris, 230.

Due to the scalar shifts or "magnification", as it is called in this study, architectural/ sculptural fragments posit an inevitable position of being on display. Within their contextual composition, fragments themselves as well as their environment are on display. Here, "*spolia*" is a relevant example. Although it does not propose an intention of the display, its "fragment" value reveals an intrinsic act of display as it is positioned in another environment. Mari Lending, a professor at the Oslo School of Architecture, rephrases De Quincy, for explaining this relationship. De Quincy says (in Lending's translation):

> "In architecture, a fragment of a cornice and an entablature is sufficient to re-establish the totality. Hence, nothing would be easier than to construct, in plaster or masonry, the line of the anterior columns and the tympanum of the Parthenon in a museum, to place below this colonnade a molded part of the frieze; and to incrust the metopes between the triglyphs, and to fill the tympanum with plaster casts of the statues that once decorated it. In one glimpse one would grasp the spirit and purpose of all these parts as they were once conceived and experienced in the atelier."[165]

De Quincy's sentences correspond to a conventional implementation of the fragment that has the power to stand for its spatial totality. However, it can be interpreted. Knowing the total spatial configuration, the re-construction can reveal different possibilities for displaying the fragment, which refers to the inherent architectural quality of the fragment.

Here, the definition of "fragment" should be considered with the definition of "monument". Morris states:

> "… enormous objects in the class of monuments elicit a far more specific response to size qua size. That is, besides providing the condition for a set of responses, large-sized objects exhibit size more specifically as an element. It is the more conscious appraisal of size in monuments that makes for the quality of "scale"…."[166]

Being monumental does usually necessitate elements that are more or less uniformly increased in size. The "grandeur" of the structure can be achieved by large-scale

---

[165] Mari Lending. "Negotiating Absence: Bernard Tschumi's New Acropolis Museum in Athens." *The Journal of Architecture* 23, no. 5 (2018): 579.

[166] Op. cit. Morris, 230.

columns and cornices. The scale distortion of the elements is the most obvious technique for indicating monumentality.[167] Thus, the relationship of such "monumental" content with container, reveals a strong trans-position that queries the indoor-outdoor perception that gives layers of visual information.

The relationship between fragment and monument defines a variety of "spatial compositions" when it is recontextualized in a display environment. A "fragment *of* a monument" has the possibility of reconstructing a variety of environments, by defining new surface and space relations. For example, in Soane Museum, fragment(s) of monument(s) are on display. Since most of the fragments are part of different wholes[168], they have the capacity to create various different visual fields (Figure 43). The relations of fragments themselves and their relation to wall surface can reconstruct various displays.

Figure 43. Interior view of Sir John Soane Museum, spatial composition of "fragment(s) of monument(s)".

Source: https://www.soane.org/collections-research

---

[167] Cecil D. Elliott. "The Variety of Scale." Journal of Architectural Education 18, no. 3 (1963): 36.

[168] Seray Türkay Coşkun. "Part and Whole: A Mereological Framework for Architectural Form" unpublished PhD Dissertation, METU, 2017.

A "fragment *in* a monument" corresponds to another relationship, which is the spatial relations of "*spolia*". "*Spolia*" has an intrinsic potential of being on "display". The condition of Erimtan Archaeology and Arts Museum can illustrate the physical position of "fragment in a monument" (Figure 44). In his article "*Spolia* on the Wall", Ulf Meyer refers to the concept and object of *spolia,* which is significant for the space of the Erimtan Archaeology and Arts Museum. He says that "[t]he openings mirror *spolia* from the Citadel fortifications that act as displays. The Citadel walls incorporate sculptures, capitals, stone ornaments, and pieces from antique columns. The *spolia* determine the depth of the walls and windows."[169] Referring to the contextual significance of *spolia*, he emphasized its capacity to create space both as a concept and as a fragment.

Figure 44. "Spolia" in Erimtan Museum, interior views, spatial composition of "fragment in a monument".

Source: https://www.onuryuncu.com/51-2011-erimtanarchaelogyartsmuseum

A "monumental fragment" has a sculptural value, which does not have a contextual reference despite being a "fragment". A monumental fragment is not a part of an architectural whole, but indicates an idea of monumentality through a scale-shift within an image of an architectural element (Figure 45). It indicates a scale shift in

---

[169] Meyer's text is based on an article written by Ayşen Savaş. "Erimtan Museum: A Research on Architectural Integrity", Casabella, (in the process of publication).
https://www.world-architects.com/en/architecture-news/reviews/spolia-in-the-wall

order to be able to glorify a specific event or person. Pelin Yoncaci, in her Ph.D. dissertation, defines a freestanding monumental column: "[a] culminating statue is generally viewed as a relatively limited genre in Roman art and architecture. The purpose of such a column varies between glorifying a victory and honoring an individual for his or her achievements."[170]

Figure 45. Reconstructed Trajan's Column in V&A Museum, London, showing a "monumental fragment".

Source: http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/t/trajans-column/

Lastly, a "fragmented monument" has a similar spatial condition to a "fragment of a monument". However, a fragmented monument unveils a more defined surface to space relationship due to its reference to a specific whole. For example, in the Pergamonmuseum, intact fragments of a monument compose a spatial composition within the museum space (Figure 46). The Pergamon Altar is reconstructed within the walls of the museum. In a way, the spatial reference in between existing fragments of the monument defines a recontextualized continuous space.

---

[170] Pelin Yoncacı Arslan. "Christianizing the Skyline: The Appropriation of the Pagan Honorary Column in Early Constantinople." PhD Dissertation, UCLA, 2015.

Figure 46. Friezes from Pergamon Altar, spatial composition of "fragmented monument".

Source: https://www.smb.museum/en/museums-institutions/pergamonmuseum, https://news.umanitoba.ca/olympus-lecture-the-pergamon-altar/

These trans-positional relationships involve the conditions of "de-contextualization" and "re-contextualization"[171] as Mari Lending mentions in her article. She learns from archaeologist and architectural theoretician Quatremére De Quincy:

> "A decontextualized monument will thus, like a rare plant, run the risk of withering away if replanted in alien soil. Only '*la matiere*' (its materiality) follows a relocated monument while purpose, immaterial qualities, and aesthetic impact are lost, Quatremere claims, with a special address to Alexandre Lenoir, director of the Musee des Monuments Français."[172]

However, De Quincy, after he sees Parthenon fragments "decontextualized" and "recontextualized" in London, says that "the Museum is presented as even more attractive than, in this case, the Acropolis".[173] De Quincy also states:

> "In a completed building, the individual sculptural object, seen in its place, loses its grandeur; observed in the company of everything surrounding it, it is available from merely one side, in only one rapport: the more the total ensemble has of harmony and proportion, the more the eye and mind are given to generalize and to see the individual

---

[171] Mari Lending. "Out of Place: Circulating Monuments" in *Exhibiting Architecture: A Paradox?* Pelkonen, Eeva-Liisa, Carson Chan, and David Andrew Tasman, eds. Yale School of Architecture, (2015): 23.

[172] Op. cit. Lending, 574.

[173] Ibid, 575.

part within the totality. Thus, both the idea of the details and the feeling for their painstaking execution is lost."[174]

In other words, although De Quincy believes that decontextualization of architectural fragments and monuments has a risk of losing their historical value, he also states that recontextualization has a potential to make the object more visible than it is. Mari Lending comments on De Quincy's thoughts:

> "It was the Parthenon-as-exhibit that had inspired De Quincy to claim that, in architecture, a fragment is sufficient to reestablish wholeness and perfection. A well-mounted fragment of a monument could enable the spectator to restore, in his imagination, order, and wholeness, which means ultimately that a monument can only be fully grasped out of place."[175]

Here, the potential of the architectural fragment to reestablish an environment, which defines a different kind of wholeness, can refer back to Morris' term of inherent "magnification" of architectural fragments on display. The term "recontextualization" that Lending uses is complementary to the definition of relief-space. Surface and space relationships of architectural objects and the environment can be reconstructed and change the visibility of both. The term "environment" has an immersive meaning that can include a variety of physical positions and spatial combinations of architectural objects; monuments and fragments.

Display environments include the recontextualized compositions of fragments and monuments. Museologist Tony Bennett refers to this recontextualization as "an assemblage". Referring to the South Kensington Museum, he says "[t]o make the whole world, past and present, metonymically available in assemblages of objects…they brought together and from their towers to lay it before a controlling vision…"[176] However, once they are recontextualized, the fragments and monuments

---

[174] Op. cit. Lending, 23.

[175] Ibid.

[176] Quoted in Michael Falser. "From Gaillon to Sanchi, from Vézelay to Angkor Wat. The Musée Indochinois in Paris: A Transcultural Perspective on Architectural Museums." *RIHA Journal* 71, no. 19 (2013): 528-32.

and their trans-positions define a whole new environment. Rather than an assemblage, this new environment is a relief-space, which is a continuous surface to space formation.

In addition to environments formed through fragments and monuments of architecture and art "on display", environments themselves can be "on display". According to Helena Mattson, there is a difference between "full-scale architecture" and "real-full scale architecture" in terms of the display techniques. "One can say that "real full-scale architecture" inside the museum creates a category of its own, being neither the architecture constituting our everyday life outside the museum nor representations of architecture."[177] In other words, whereas "full-scale architecture" proposes various possibilities of defining different display environments within the museum-gallery space, "real full-scale architecture", as an environment, can be on display without any correlations within the museum-gallery space. On the other hand, "real full-scale architecture" can be on display without any displacement, demonstration or representation. Architecture in its context and scale, has the intrinsic quality of define complex relationships. Thus, the architectural environment itself can also be on display without any necessary institutional frame. In the words of Hubert Damisch, "Architecture has its own particular way of presenting itself to vision, of exhibiting itself."[178] Architecture has the capability of "representing itself".[179]

The trans-positional relationships in between fragments, monuments, and environments of architecture and art, define intellectually complex surface to space compositions, which overreaches the spatial terms "in" and "out" or adjectives "large" and "small". Once they are read as relief-spaces, they transform into "quasi"

---

[177] Helena Mattsson. "Life as a Full-Scale Demonstration: Konsument i Oändligheten: 1971." *Exhibiting Architecture: Place and Displacement*, Arrhenius, Thordis, Mari Lending, Wallis Miller, and Jérémie Michael McGowan, eds. Lars Müller, 2014.

[178] Hubert Damisch. "A Very Special Museum" *Skyline: The Narcissistic City*. Stanford University Press, 2001.

[179] Title of the graduate course conducted by Prof. Dr. Ayşen Savaş: Arch 724 "Representing Itself".

conditions, which are neither in nor out but both surface and space, and neither large nor small but scaleless.

4.4. Relief-Space

The trans-positional relationship between art, architectural objects, and architecture forms various compositions within environments. These compositions may refer to different relationships in display environments, which can be conceptualized with the definition of relief-space. In this study, the definition of relief-space as an architectural condition refers to its trans-positional surface to space relationships.

In order to be able to define the common qualities, a common glossary is formed out of the terms used in Classical, Constructivist and Spatialist reliefs, which is titled as "Text of Relief: Expanded Vocabulary".[180] The expanded vocabulary revealed that there are common concepts, which can be the visual tools to convert relief as a scaleless spatial reading method. One is the relationship between "surface and space", and the other is the elements of trans-positions between surface and space, "lines, planes, masses, volumes".

The display environments are redefined as relief-spaces through formal analyses of their surface and space relationships. These analyses define an alternative reading of "wall" and "display". This reading is based on drawings, which make arguments clear for architecture. Thus, existing architectural drawings are studied. In order to be able to read the surface-space relationship of the conditions within architectural drawings, existing relief examples are projected as architectural drawings. The intention is to emphasize spatial correspondence.

This study acknowledges that architecture with the complex surface and space relationship can define a display environment itself. In other words, without any trans-positions between container and content, a building, as an architectural production,

---

[180] Please see Chapter 2, p. 45: Expanded Vocabulary: Text of Relief.

has the capability of defining a relief-space. Relief-space can illustrate architectural processes and production in every scale (Figure 47). With the recognition of that, the discussion in this study dwells on the trans-positional spatial conditions of display environments, which seeks for a dual engagement in between container and content.

In this study, using the term "case" is avoided since the examples illustrating the main argument are rather "conditions", including parts of different display environments. Thus, information regarding the contextual and historical aspects of these conditions is provided in the most basic level possible. Conditions from Sir John Soane Museum, Pergamonmuseum, and the Erimtan Archaeology Museum represent different display environments and they are explained as relief-spaces. Selection of these conditions are based on the experience of the author. As stated before, "being seen" is an important common aspect for all of the spatial conditions in this part, since they are used as interpretative illustrations for necessary definitions.
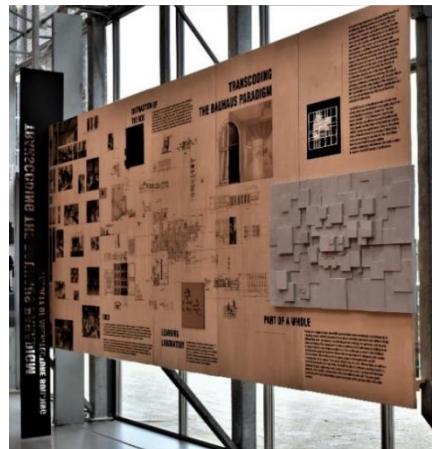

Figure 47. Relief II: Part of a Whole, representing the spatial composition of METU Faculty of Architecture Building complex, from the exhibition "METU Campus Documented" in TUDelft.

Source: Photograph captured by F. Serra İnan.

Existing conditions in different display environments of Sir John Soane Museum, Pergamonmuseum, and Erimtan Archaeology and Arts Museum are read as relief-

spaces. In order to be able to read the surface-space relationship of these conditions, existing relief examples such as El Lissitzky's Proun Environment, Schwitter's Hannover Merzbau, and Schweres Relief, and another work from Fontana's Concetto Spaziale Attesa series, are analyzed together with the architecture of display environments. Section drawings of these artworks are provided to understand the spatial correspondence in between.

4.4.1. Relief-Space I: Sir John Soane Museum
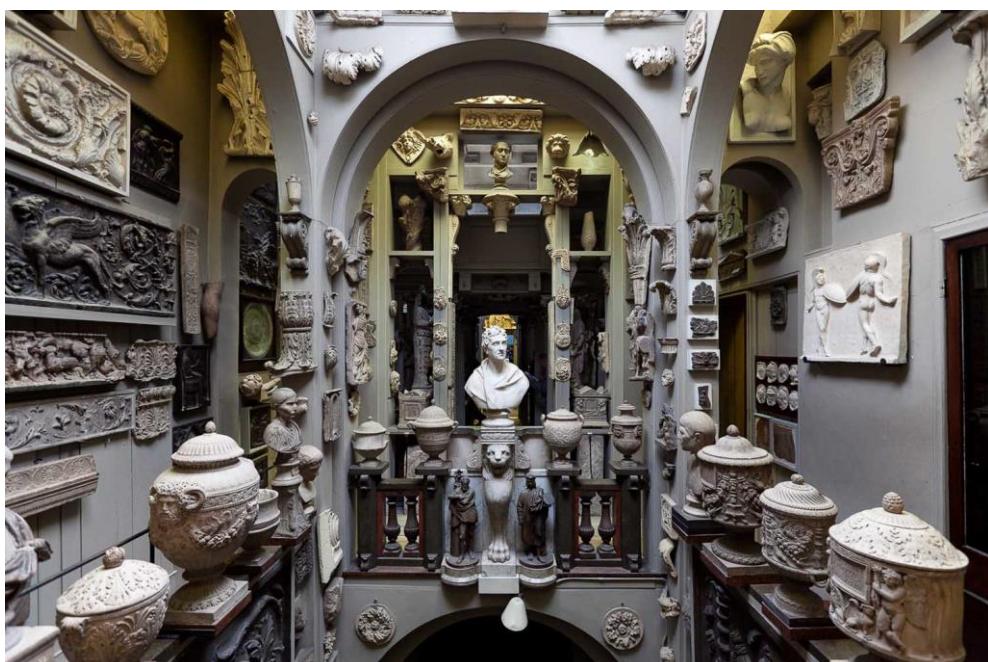
Figure 48. Sir John Soane Museum

Source: https://www.reddit.com

Sir John Soane, as an architect and a collector, acquired various architectural artifacts, drawings, and documents. Instead of categorizing the objects, he created an environment that has a spatial continuum within the architectural space, independent from the historical context of the artifacts. The space that he created to display these

artifacts, drawings, and documents, is located in Lincoln's Inn Fields, London. Soane expanded the space of his "cabinet". Number 12, which was initially his own house and office, between 1792 -1837, was expanded into number 13 in 1807. He rebuilt the space in order to be able to use it as a museum and an education space. Despite the continuous changes within the museum environment, the expanded space of the museum still protects its explicit spatial relationships.

The Sir John Soane Museum is referred to as a "relief-space", since the physical positions of the container and the content and spatial combinations of fragments, reveals complex surface and space relationships (Figure 48). As stated before, the book "The Union of Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting"[181] refers to the Sir John Soane Museum. Re-referring to Savaş' words, the "physical borders" of Soane's house and "artifacts" overlapped within these borders[182] to define a display space. Especially the drawings in the book show that this union unveils another perception of the display space, which is in a way beyond any scale (Figure 49).

Figure 49. Relief work from the first page of the book and section drawing of Sir John Soane Museum.

Source: The Union: Architecture, Sculpture and Painting, John Britton.

---

[181] John Britton. *The Union of Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting*, 1827.

[182] Aysen Savas. "Between Document and Monument: Architectural Artifact in an Age of Specialized Institutions." PhD dissertation. Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1994.

The detailed architectural drawings presented in Britton's book are the documentation of not only the physical borders of the museum, but also objects on display. Thus, it is obvious that in the Soane Museum, the architectural surface is expanded to define a totality. As a self-explanatory part of the book, the surface and space relationship is represented in Figure 49. The image on the left can be projected to the image on the right, which is a section drawing showing the interior elevation of the John Soane Museum.

In this regard, the Soane Museum will be mentioned as a relief-space, which will be analyzed through drawings, diagrams, and photographs. The museum, as the container, is composed of three different dwellings. The merging forms an architecture that is the "surface". The surface is expanded with the various objects of art and architecture. The space on display defines an expansion by multiplying the "original plane" to "secondary planes"[183] (Figure 50), by keeping it as referent and included.
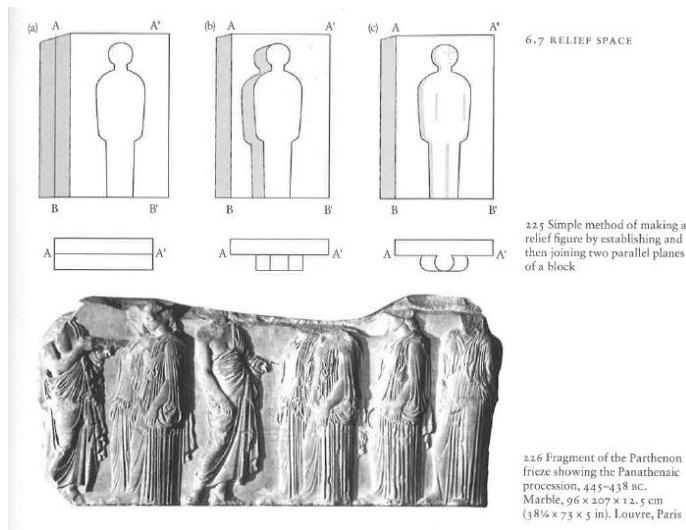

Figure 50. Diagram of relief making

<u>*Source: Real Spaces, David Summers.*</u>

---

[183] Op. cit. Summers, 449.

The plan(s) of the Soane Museum make(s) the "original and secondary planes" visually available (Figure 51 – Figure 56). In the architectural drawings of the museum in John Britton's book, not only the building, its structure and physical borders, but also the "secondary planes" that are on display, are documented (Figure 52). It is significant that the representation of the display environment reflects the totality of surface and space. The section drawings with interior elevations, presented in a relation to the plans, show fine detail of the "double negative" space on / of display (Figure 52).
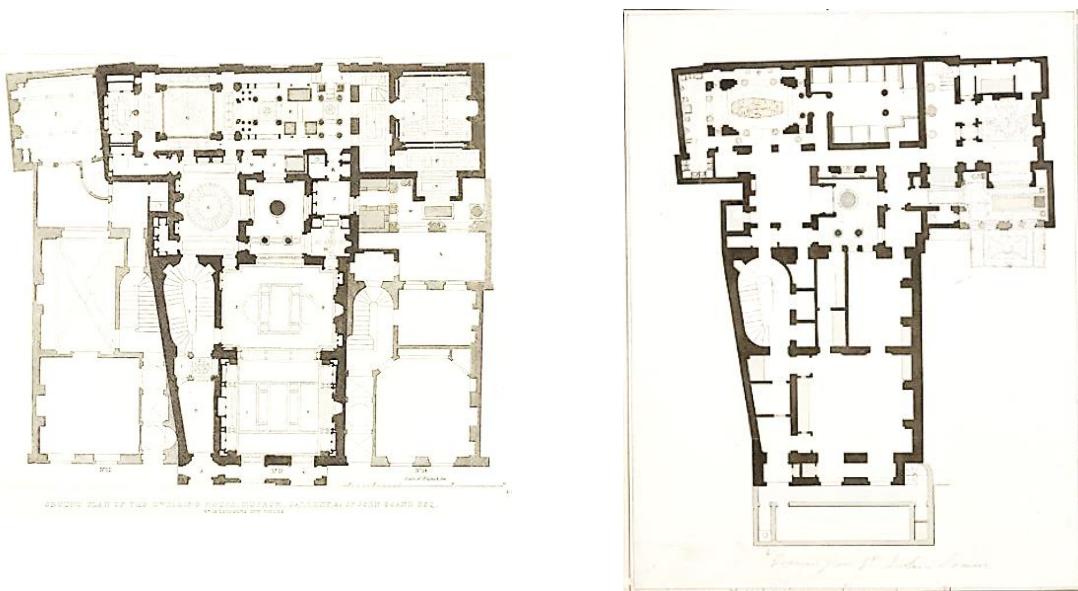

Figure 51. Sir John Soane Museum Plan drawings.

*Source: The Union: Architecture, Sculpture and Painting, John Britton.*
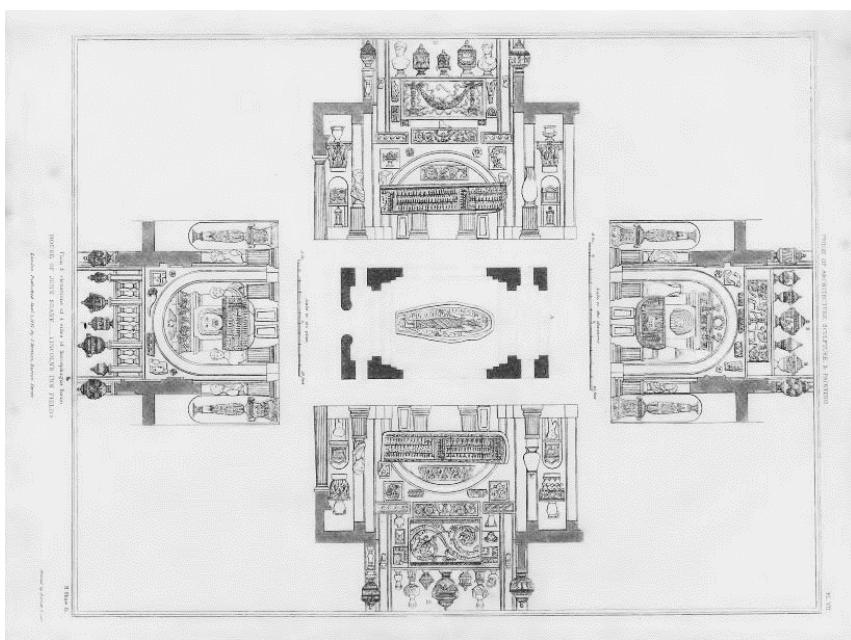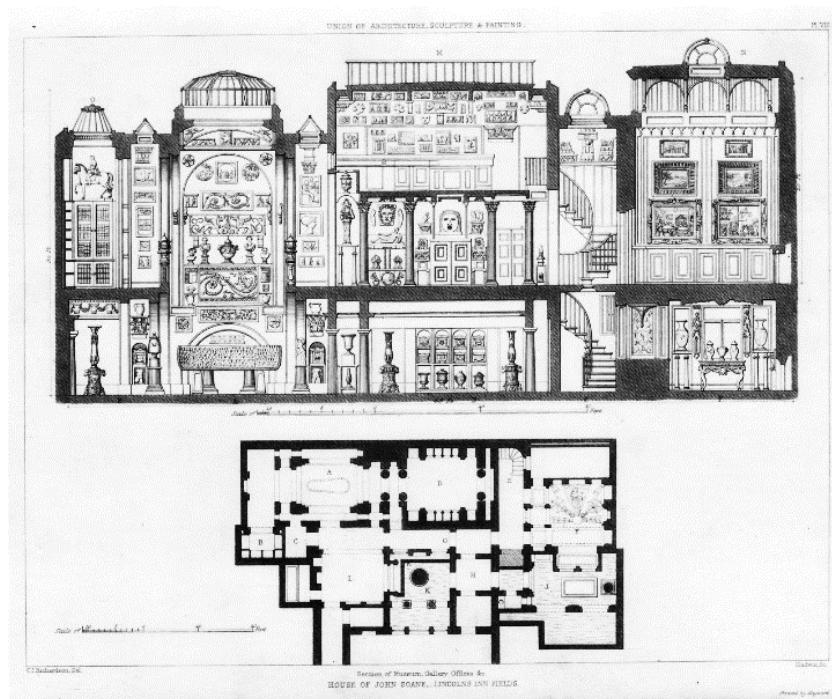
Figure 52. Sir John Soane Museum section drawings with interior space details.

Source: The Union: Architecture, Sculpture and Painting, John Britton.

106

To develop a spatial comparison, spatial conditions from the Soane Museum and Proun Environment, El Lissitzky's relief work in architectural scale (Figure 53), are read together. Here, spatial conditions from the museum, as relief spaces, are analyzed, regarding the layered relationship of surface and space. The layered relationship of the Soane Museum will be visually available with the help of relief work of El Lissitzky (Figure 53- Figure 54).
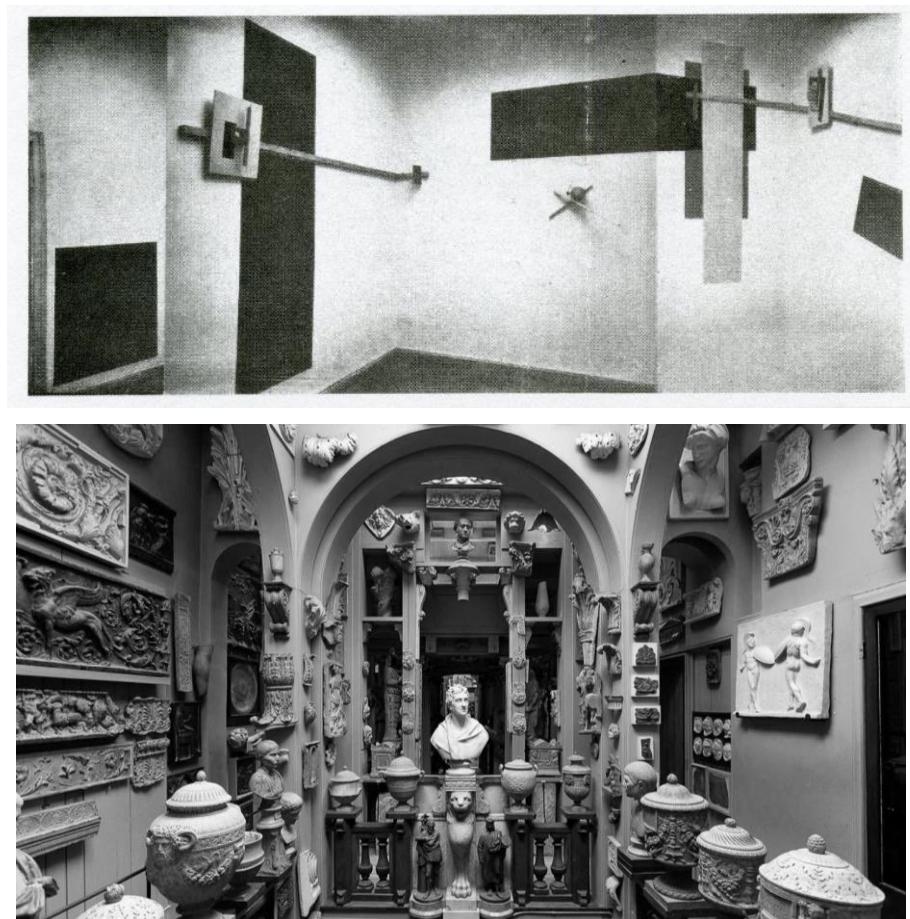
Figure 53. Top: Proun Environment by El Lissitzky, 1923. Bottom: Sir John Soane Museum

Source: Top: The Planar Dimension: From Surface to Space Exhibition Catalogue, Margit Rowell. Bottom: https://www.reddit.com
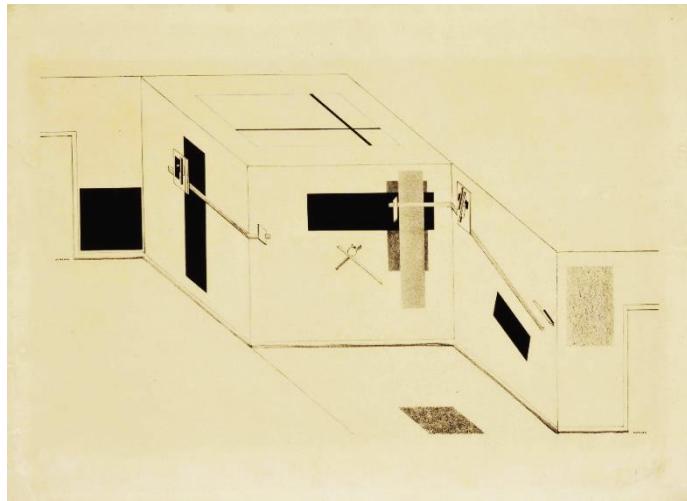
*Figure 54. Proun Environment by El Lissitzky, 1923*

In the forementioned catalog of the exhibition: "From Surface to Space", Margit Rowell explains the process applied by relief artists as: "[t]hey detached the two-dimensional surface from the wall and installed it, as surface, in front of the wall. And these abstract components of pictorial space are translated into concrete materials and actual space."[184] Rowell's definition can be reread with the work of Lissitzky. In the same catalog, Lissitzky's concept of space is also mentioned:

> "Lissitzky's text of 1923 refers to his Proun exhibition space designed for the Grossen Berliner Kunstausstelhing of the same year in similar terms. For Lissitzky, this and other spaces were to be integrated environments, not walls hung with pictures, and they should be articulated to induce active participation."[185]

Here, the intention is to understand the concept of Lissiztky's work. His spatial construction in his Proun works and especially the Proun environment, provide new relations with respect to the presence of the "surface":

> "The 1923 Proun exhibition environment expressed Lissitzky's ultimate attempt to control space (see cat. no. 100). His objective was to model emptiness or rather to

---

[184] Op. cit. Rowell, 9.

[185] Ibid, 28.

108

"construct" a space in which the viewer would be forced to participate actively with his whole self. The axes and thrusts of the diversified and spatialized wall motifs were to direct the viewer in his physical movements and emotional responses within an environment of real (human) scale, real substance (painted and natural textures) and real color (red, black, white and gray). The forms were positioned in different relations to the viewer's activity: flat to the wall, projecting toward him, guiding him according to vertical, diagonal, horizontal axes."[186]

The conceptual understanding and formal properties of Lissitzky's relief work can be traced in the integrated space of the Soane Museum. In order to be able to provide a visual correlation with the plan drawings of the museum and existing relief space, a partial horizontal section of Lissitzky's work is drawn (Figure 55). In the following parts, conditions from Soane Museum will be represented with an emphasis on layers, which are referring to the original plane -surface- and secondary planes -space-.
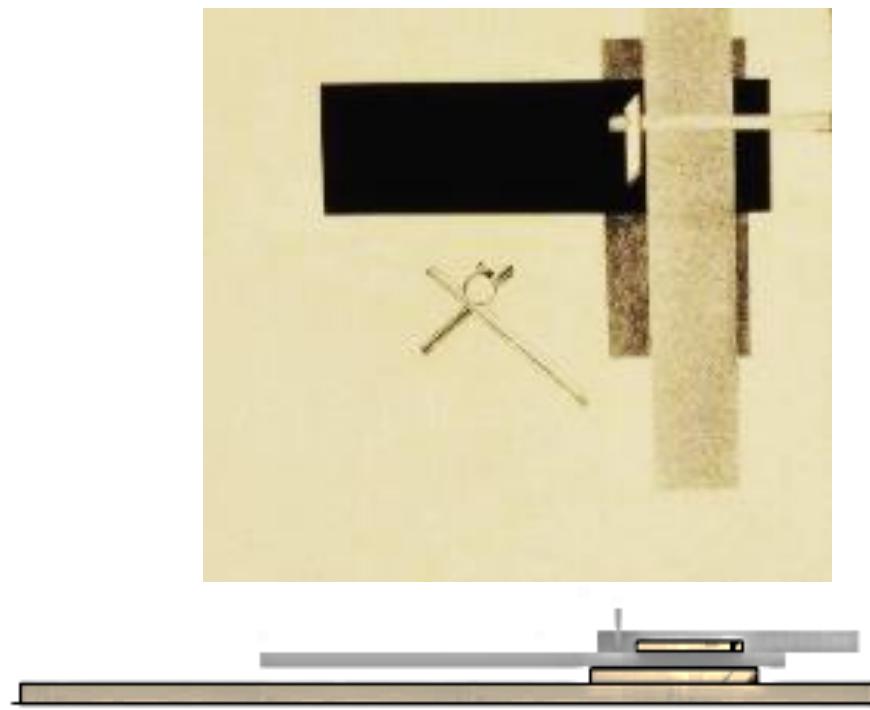

Figure 55. Proun surfaces and section model of the relief work created by the author of the thesis.

---

[186] Ibid.
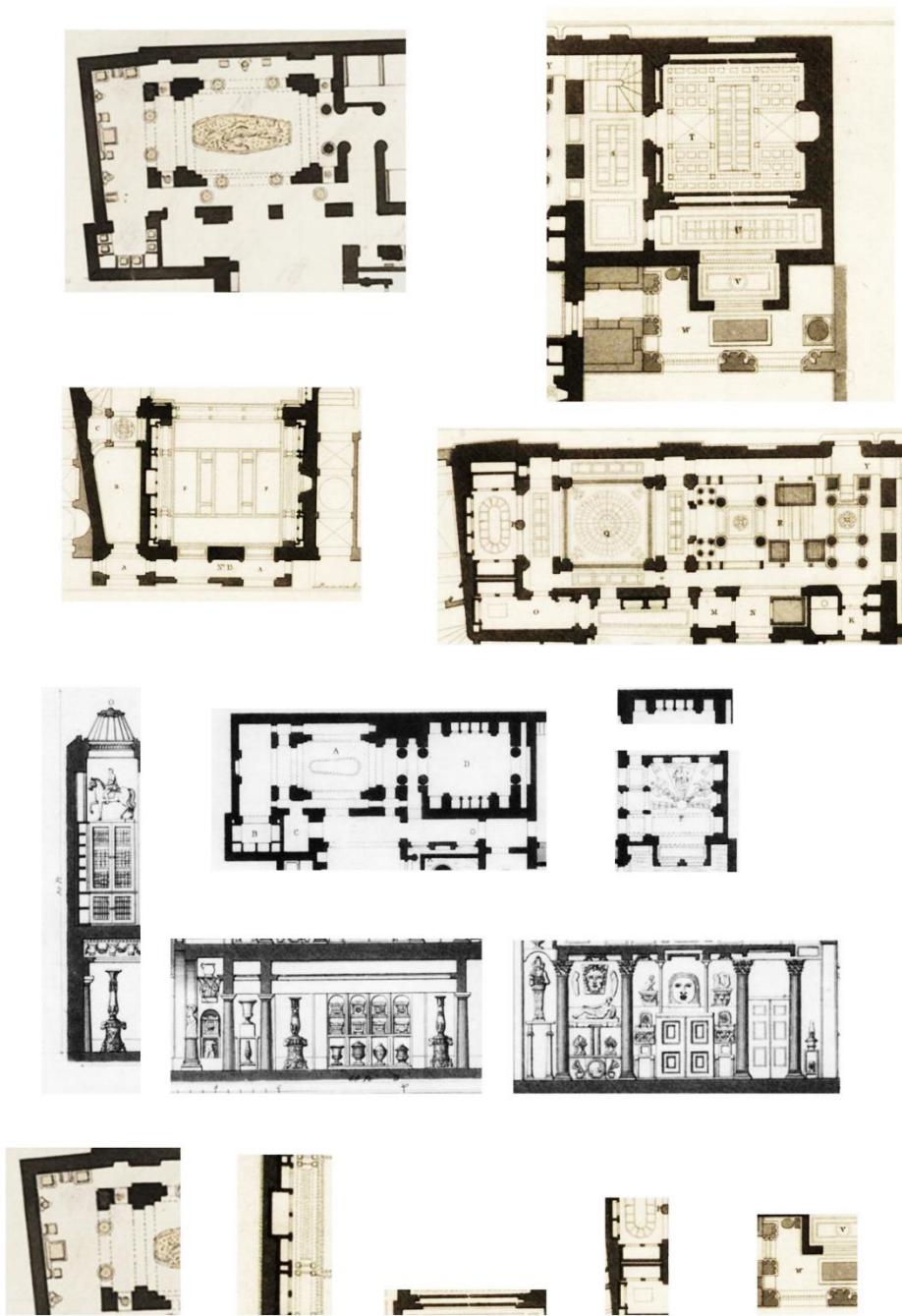
Figure 56. Spatial conditions – as relief spaces- from the drawings of Sir John Soane Museum.

Source: The Union: Painting, Sculpture and Architecture, John Britton.

4.4.2. Relief-Space II: Pergamonmuseum

Before the construction of the first Pergamonmuseum, the Altes Museum, the Neues Museum, and the Alte Nationalgalerie were already erected. The Pergamonmuseum was designed by Alfred Messel. "In 1881 the Berlin Architects' Association was commissioned to design structures to house the finds from Olympia and Pergamon, as well as an extension for the enormous collection of plaster casts… A full-scale reconstruction of the Pergamon Altar that could be viewed from all sides served as the museum's centerpiece…"[187] However, within years, change of plans in the expansion projects, structural damage during World War II and political divisions and reunifications affected the development progress of Pergamonmuseum and the Museum Island. "The new, larger Pergamonmuseum was built as a three-wing complex. The museum now houses three of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin's collections: the Antikensammlung (Antique Collection), Vorderasiatisches Museum (Ancient Near East Museum), and the Museum für Islamische Kunst (Museum for Islamic Arts). The impressive reconstructions of massive archaeological structures – the Pergamon Altar, Market Gate of Miletus, the Ishtar Gate and Processional Way from Babylon, and the Mshatta Façade."[188] The architecture of the museum has also been changed with other projects. One of them is the "archaeological promenade" that David Chipperfield proposed for the Museum Island, and the other is the refurbishing and expansion project of Oswald Mathias Ungers. Despite these changes, the museum still protects its valuable space and spatial relationships.

Specific spatial conditions in Pergamonmuseum are defined as relief-spaces, since the relationship between the museum and the objects on display has the potential to transpose the visual perception of architecture in and of the display. The relationship between the container and the content reveals a complex surface to space relationship

---

[187] Pergamon Museum: Collection of Classical Antiquities, Museum of the Ancient Near East, Museum of Islamic Art - Museum Guide, Prestel, 2011.

[188] https://www.smb.museum/en/museums-institutions/pergamonmuseum/home.html

that can also be read from the partial drawings showing these conditions (Figure 60). In the conditions that will be described, the existing architecture, museum walls, and the architectural objects on display, the Hellenistic façade / an entrance, play with the positions of background / foreground.

To develop a spatial comparison, works of Kurt Schwitters are discussed. One of them is Untitled (Schweres Relief) (Figure 57). The other is a sculptural environment in architectural scale: Hannover Merzbau (Figure 57). The embedded relationship of surface and space in Pergamonmuseum will be visually available with the help of relief work and environments of Kurt Schwitters.
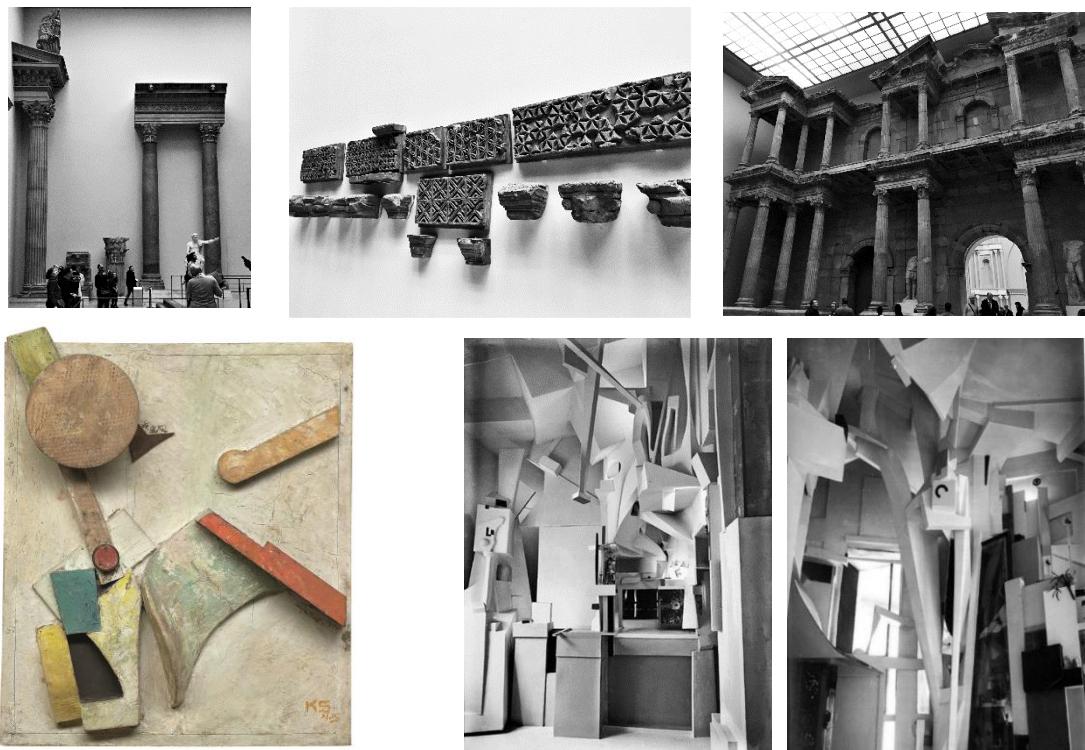
Figure 57. Top: Photographs from Pergamonmuseum, captured by the author. Bottom: Left, Untitled (Schweres Relief). 1933. Right, Hannover Merzbau, by Kurt Schwitters, 1945.

Source: https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks

Although its name is "Schweres Relief", Schwitters's work reveals an image of assemblage in which different textures and masses come together. His work proposes an emphasis on the unity of these different parts, which defines various spaces embedded into one surface. In order to be able to visually correlate the plan drawings of the display environments in Pergamonmuseum to Schwitters works, a horizontal section is drawn (Figure 58).

Figure 58. Section model of the Schweres Relief created by the author.

The other example is Hannover Merzbau, which is a work using an existing architectural context. Similar to Lissitzky's Proun Environment, the artwork has another scale that refers to architectural space.

The various plan diagrams of Merzbau enable a reading of a complex relationship between the "original and secondary surfaces". The embedded relationship in between defines spaces embedded within the surfaces. In Hannover Merzbau, the space of circulation is literally embedded in between the existing wall surface and installed surfaces (Figure 59).
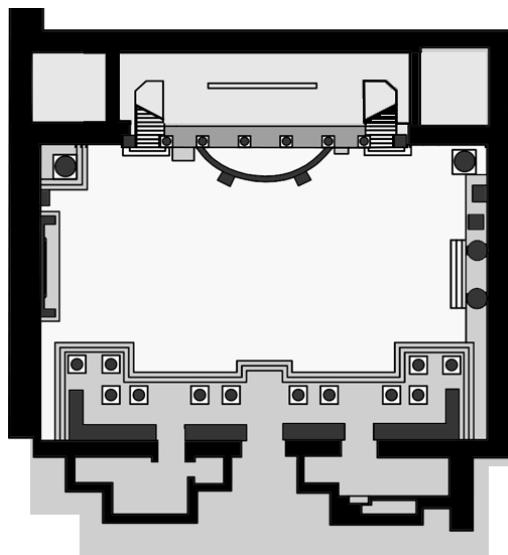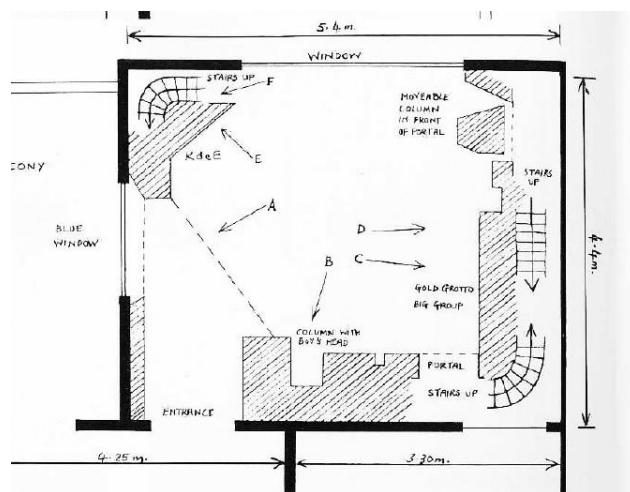
Figure 59. Top: Plan diagram of Hannover Merzbau. Bottom: Plan drawing of Miletus Room, Pergamonmuseum.

The formal properties of these relief works can be traced in the spaces of Pergamonmuseum. The spatial conditions of Pergamonmuseum are represented with an emphasis on the embedded space of the object within existing surfaces, which effaces the distinction between them and creates a relief-space. A detailed reading of this embedded condition will be further discussed by referring to the wall surface.

114
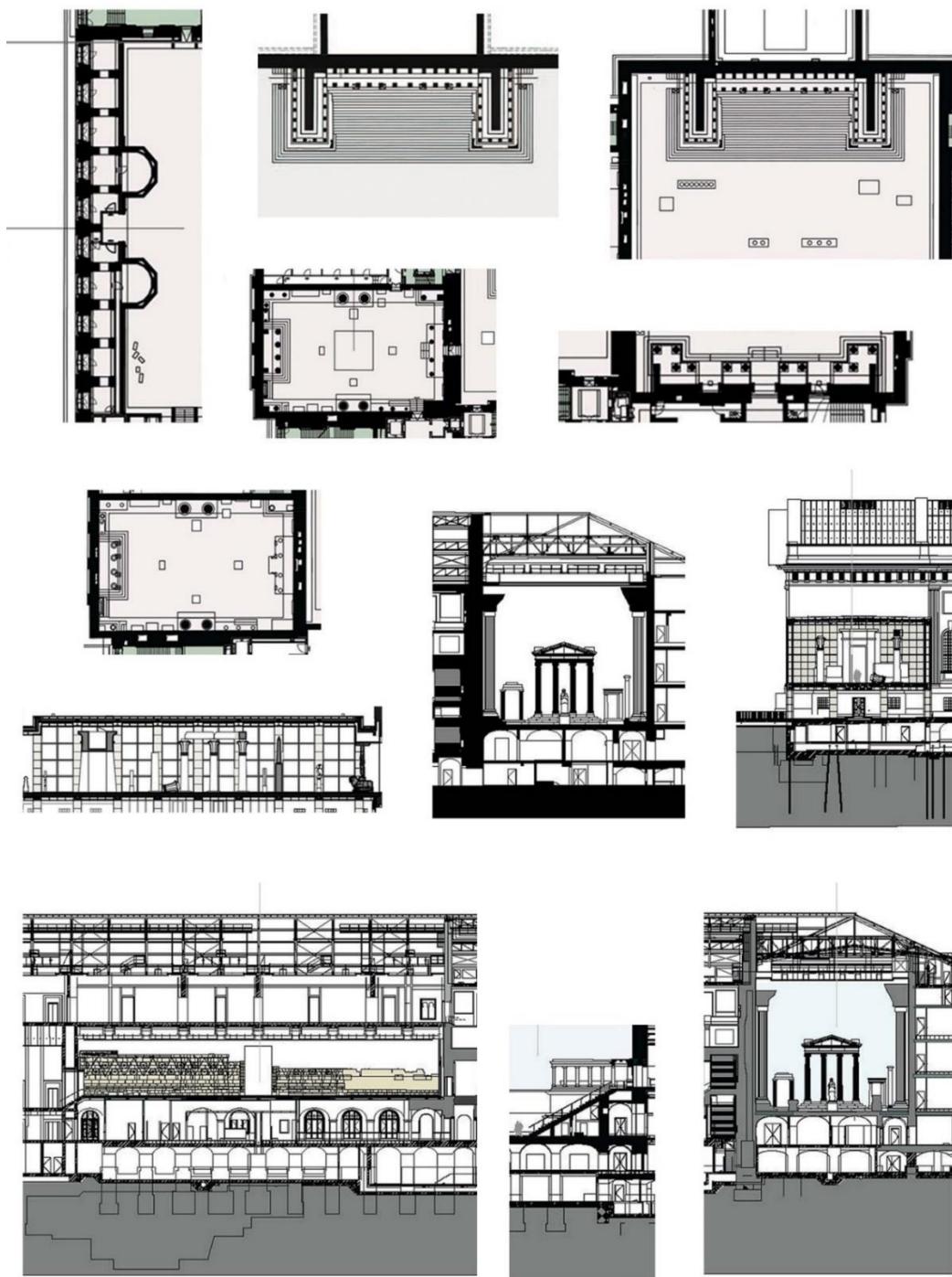
Figure 60. Spatial conditions – as relief spaces-, from the drawings of Ungers' renovation project.

Source: https://kleihues.com/pergamonmuseum-berlin/?lang=en

4.4.3. Relief-Space III: Erimtan Archaeology and Arts Museum
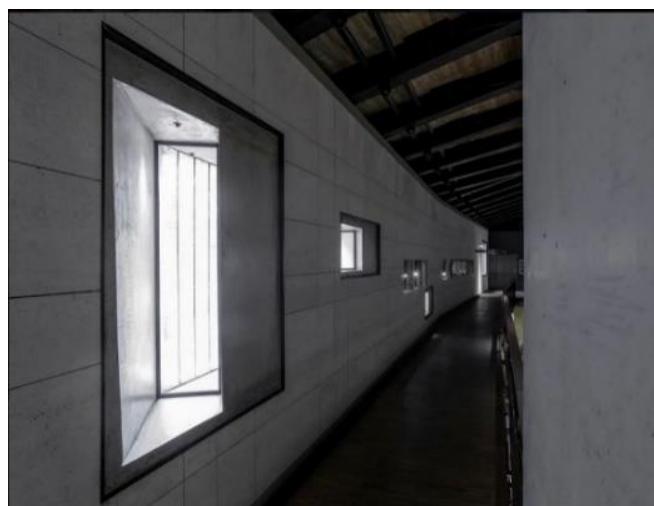
Figure 61. Views from the interior, Erimtan Archaeology and Arts Museum

Source: https://xxi.com.tr/i/tarihi-izleri-mekanlastirmak and https://www.onuryuncu.com/51-2011-erimtanarchaelogyartsmuseum
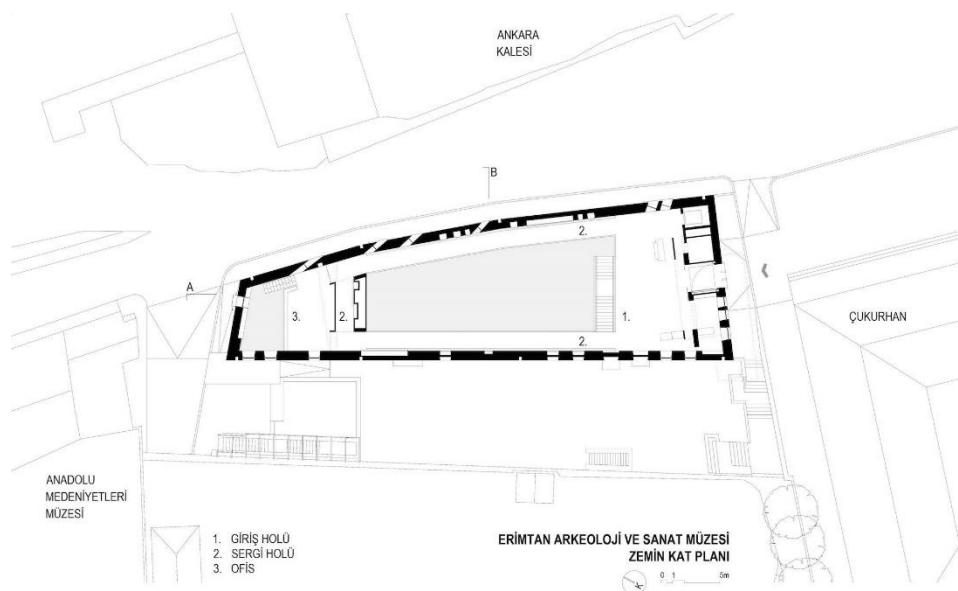
Figure 62. Ground plan drawing of Erimtan Museum.

Source: https://www.onuryuncu.com/51-2011-erimtanarchaelogyartsmuseum

Completed in 2015, the Erimtan Archaeology and Arts Museum includes the private archaeological collection of Yüksel Erimtan. The museum is located in Ankara Citadel, Ulus, Turkey. The museum is a modern renovation project of three historical houses located near the Citadel of Ankara. The museum is designed by the architects Ayşen Savaş, Can Aker and Onur Yüncü. The display of the collection that constitutes the museum environment is designed by Ayşen Savaş. The architecture of the museum refers to the historical traces of the old structures. These traces can be found in the architectural details and material connections within the museum space, which establishes a different environmental dialogue with its surrounding. The walls of the museum, which also follow the traces, are expanded to accommodate various functions within the museum program. The expanded walls are not only interpreted as the display space within themselves but also include the services and necessary technical infrastructure. The "thickness" of the walls proposes an architectural integrity that forms a totality of space of display and space on display.

117

As one of the main design decisions in the Erimtan Museum is to define wall surface as space, the spatial properties intrinsically correspond with relief operations. In the Erimtan Museum, surface and space relationship of the display environment does not propose a spatial expansion since the wall itself has already been expanded. Thus, the existing space of the museum wall is supplanted with the display space of the archaeological objects (Figure 61). Erimtan Museum is defined as a relief-space and the existing drawings of the museum represent it clearly (Figure 65).

In order to be able to analyze spatial conditions as relief-spaces, a spatial comparison between the existing space and Lucio Fontana's relief works is made. Correlating Fontana's relief work to the existing architectural drawings of the museum enables a reading of the Erimtan Museum as a relief-space.

Figure 63. Left: Erimtan Museum, interior view. Right: From the series Concetto Spaziale Attesa, Lucio Fontana.

Source: Left: https://www.onuryuncu.com/51-2011-erimtanarchaelogyartsmuseum. Right: http://www.artnet.com

The series of "Concetto Spaziale Attesa" is composed of a variety of canvas that is cut either once or multiple times. Fontana's art can be regarded as an interrogation of the distinction between two and three-dimensionality. Here, his work defines a quasi-dimension, in which the two-dimensional surfaces of the canvas is cut and supplanted by existing space (Figure 63). The supplanting keeps the two-dimensional lines as

referent and transforms them into space. In order to make the statement visually and to correlate the display environment of the Erimtan Museum to Fontana's works, a conceptual horizontal section of relief work is drawn (Figure 64).

Figure 64. Section model of Fontana's relief work drawn by the author.

In this part, the definition of relief-space is illustrated with a series of existing artworks and architectural spaces. Each display environment is spatially redefined with the help of visual references in selected relief works. In the following parts, these conditions are also analyzed within other key concepts. These concepts involve the trans-positions of display elements; their physical positions and spatial combinations within the display environment, and the relationship of wall surface and display space.
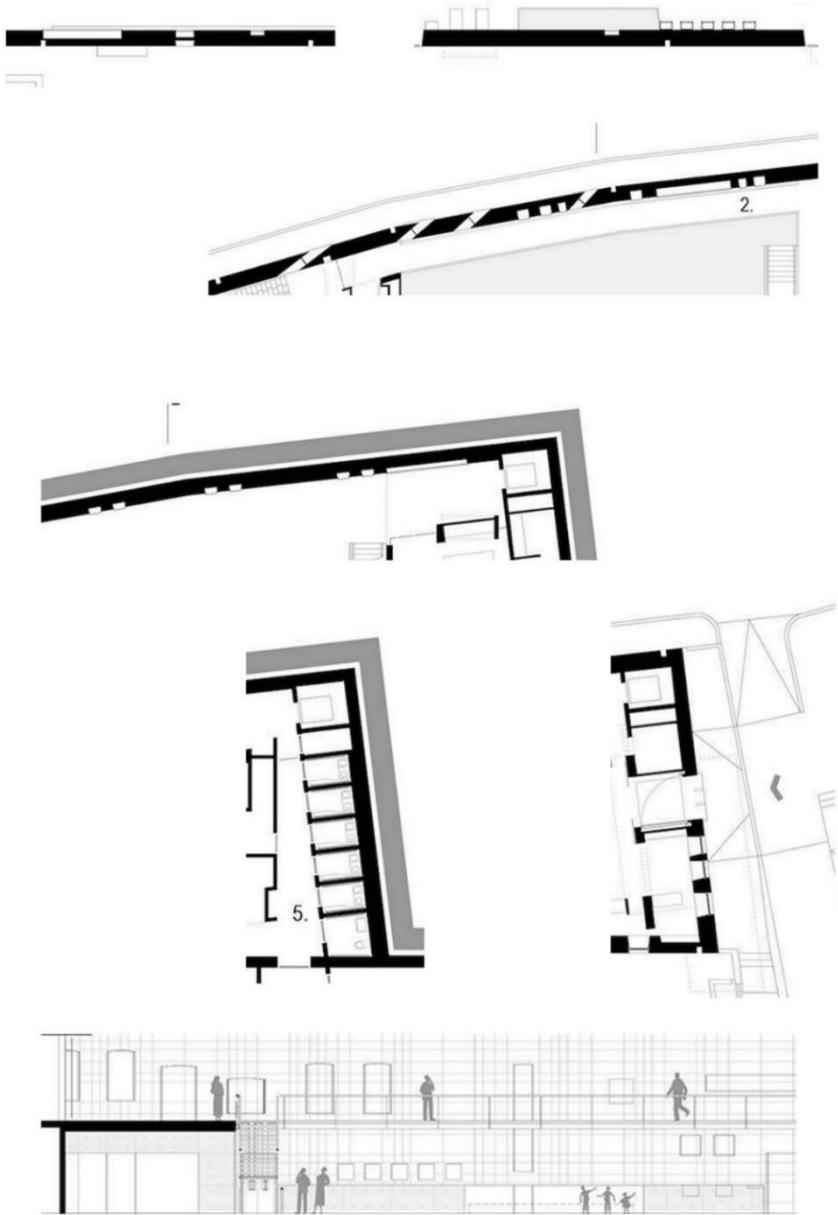
Figure 65. Spatial conditions –as relief-spaces-, from the drawings of Erimtan Archaeology and Arts Museum.

Source: https://www.onuryuncu.com/51-2011-erimtanarchaelogyartsmuseum

4.5. Surface and Space: Wall and Display

> "Aesthetic discourse as it developed in the nineteenth century organized itself increasingly around what could be called the space of the exhibition. Whether a public museum, official salon, world's fair, or a private showing, the space of exhibition was constituted in part by the continuous surface of the wall – a wall increasingly structured solely for the display of art… Given its function as the physical vehicle of the exhibition, the gallery wall became the signifier of inclusion and thus, can be seen as constituting in itself a representation of what could be called exhibitionality…"[189]

Relief-space presents the wall as an important element of the display. In this part, the surface and space relationship in relief scale, will be relocated in the architectural scale of "wall". First, the wall and display relationship will be discussed through three different definitions by Malraux, Krauss, and Celant. After, existing examples of relief-spaces are revisited in terms of their "wall surface" to "display space" relationships. Here, "wall" as an architectural element is considered with its presence/absence within the display environments. Although a lot of architects and scholars, from Alexander to Zumthor, discussed "wall" and its space under different definitions, in this part, these definitions are not referred. Instead, the intention is to specify absence and presence of "wall" within the act of display.

4.5.1. Malraux's Wall: Physical Absence of the Wall as a Conceptual Space

André Malraux's renowned book, "Musée Imaginaire" translated as "Museum without Walls", which was published in 1947, will be one of the key publications of this part. Although the book is rather an earlier publication, the content has an immersive insight that guides related discussions even today. Malraux discusses a conceptual space of "imaginary museum", through the physical presence/absence of "wall". Malraux states that the collection of major works of art outreaches the physical space of the museum, thus it reveals an "imaginary" space, which can be different for everyone. Although Malraux's discussion does not directly relate the physicality of wall and

---

[189] Rosalind Krauss. "Photography's Discursive Spaces" *The Originality of the Avant-garde and Other Modernist Myths*. MIT Press, 1986.

museum space, the main idea can be interpreted without its contextual reference. He dwells on how the museum space becomes a medium, in which the encounters between art and architectural history form an environment. According to Malraux, "[a]rt that was created for a specific place: an underground vault, a façade, a tomb can be on display next to a medieval façade. Murals, stuccos, painting and façades – become frames on naked walls of the galleries."[190] Malraux, like Benjamin, refers to photography and its potential for reproduction. He states that photography can compose a far more extended space, and different ways of seeing, without the necessity of the physical presence of a museum. Here, the main focus will not be the photography and its visual potentials, but Malraux's idea of "expanding" space of the museum. Malraux's "Museum without Walls" can be rediscovered in the physicality of display environments. The first images and sentences at the beginning of the book can guide this assertion. He starts with the sentence:

> "A Romanesque crucifix was not regarded by its contemporaries as a work of sculpture, nor Cimabue's Madonna as a picture. Even Phidias' Pallas Athene was not primarily, a statue."[191]

"Displacement" in this sense, has the potential to redefine – rename works of art and architecture. Malraux also states:

> "In the past, a Gothic statue was a component part of the Cathedral; similarly, a classical picture was tied up with the setting of its period, and not expected to consort with works of mood and outlook…. the modern art-gallery not only isolates the work of art from its context but makes it forgather with rival or even hostile works. It is a confrontation of metamorphoses."[192]

---

[190] André Malraux. *Museum without Walls*. Translated from the French by Stuart Gilbert and Francis Price. 1967.

[191] Ibid, 13.

[192] Ibid, 14.

Before these sentences, there are two images on the first page, which are the only ones showing an architectural context[193]:

Figure 66. Gallery of Archduke Leopold at Brussels, by David Teniers, 1651.

Source: Museum without Walls, André Malraux.

Figure 67. Interior view of National Gallery at Washington.

Source: Museum without Walls, André Malraux.

---

[193] Rosalind Krauss. "Postmodernism's Museum without Walls." *Thinking About Exhibitions* Routledge, (2005): 254-258.

One is the gallery of Archduke Leopold at Brussels, by David Teniers (Figure 66); the other is an interior view of the National Gallery at Washington (Figure 67). The visuals can be considered as representatives of how the surface and space relationships of the wall and the display can differ. Malraux sees these two visuals as "[t]he paradigm of a way that art had historically been conceived, or valued, or systematized, a specific way, in short, in which it was previously imagined."[194] According to Malraux, as Krauss comments, both suggest similar experiences, although different in density, both propose "an experience not architectural as museological".[195] On the other hand, the visuals also reveal that the inclusion of the existing architectural context, the wall, can transform the display environment. In this sense, "Malraux's wall" can be reinterpreted as a relief-space. Malraux uses the physical absence of "wall" in order to be able to define a conceptual museum space, in which different artworks from different periods can be collected. Malraux's method can explain relief-space. Although the "surface" is physically present, its relationship with the space and the construction of the display environment can posit another way of seeing, in which "wall" transforms in a quasi-condition that forms a conceptual absence. Thus, the wall and display are read as one environment.

4.5.2. Krauss' Wall: Locating "Museum without Walls" in an Architectural Frame

Krauss, in the article "Postmodernism's Museum without Walls", retraces Malraux's seminal book and develops a related understanding within contemporary display environments. She mentions two different "waves":

> "In the first wave works of art are ripped away from their sites of origin and, through their transplantation to the museum, cut loose from all referentiality to the use, representational or ritual, for which they might have been created. In the second wave they are, through their transplantation to the site of reproduction (through art books, postcards, posters), unmoored from their original scale, every work whether tiny or

---

[194] Ibid, 242.

[195] Ibid, 242.

colossal now to be magically equalized through the democratizing effects of camera and press."[196]

She states that Malraux discusses the second wave more elaborately. However, the first "wave", she explains, is more related to the physical relations of the act of display. Unlike Malraux, Krauss includes the physical architectural space into her discussion. She emphasizes the array of rooms *en filade* constructing the display environments. She refers to the linear temporal span of history, both in examples like Uffizi and Louvre or in relatively modern ones such as the Metropolitan Museum and National Gallery. She posits that:

> "Although the twentieth century saw many constructions of shiny, marble art palaces, with their rooms succeeding one another *en filade*, two new models had been elaborated by the time of Malraux's book, models which had far more in common with the rewriting of the terms of the museum within the era of modernism, with, that is, the forces that were shaping Malraux's musée imaginaire. These models were based, on the one hand, on the "universal space" of Mies van der Rohe, and on the other, on the spiral ramps of Le Corbusier and Frank Lloyd Wright."[197]

Krauss has an approach, which locates the "Museum without Walls" in an architectural frame. She retraces Malraux's conceptual perception and reinterprets it with the existing display environments. She gives examples such as Mies van der Rohe's "universal space"; which is "[a] massive, neutral enclosure, the space is a function of its structure—the universal space frame—No internal walls are needed to support this structure and so freestanding partitions can be positioned and repositioned at will. The spatial 'idea' of the plan is its combination of neutrality and immensity"[198]:

> "During the time that contemporary production in painting and sculpture has taken on this almost universal relation to pastiche, an extraordinary outpouring of new museum buildings has occurred. And it can be argued that among them are the beginnings of a new architectural type that is responsive to this reconfiguration of the museum without walls."[199]

---

[196] Ibid, 242.

[197] Ibid, 245.

[198] Ibid, 245.

[199] Ibid, 245.

Figure 68. Right: Hans Hollein's Municipal Museum. Left: Richard Meier's Museum of Decorative Arts.

Source: https://www.domusweb.it/en/from-the-archive.

She gives two examples: Hans Hollein's Municipal Museum in Mönchengladbach and Richard Meier's Museum of Decorative Arts in Frankfurt from the 1985 (Figure 68). Although the examples constitute different architectural approaches, Krauss emphasizes their aim to "transcend the obstacle of wall or floor." She continues:

> "For the reigning idea in both museums is the vista: the sudden opening in the wall of a given gallery to allow a glimpse of a far-away object, and thereby to interject within the collection of these objects a reference to the order of another. The pierced partition, the open balcony, the interior window— circulation in these museums is as much visual as physical, and that visual movement is a constant decentering through the continual pull of something else, another exhibit, another relationship, another formal order…"[200]

In both cases the architectural "surface", the wall, physically enables the different layers of visual information. The surface to space relationship, the wall, and display relationship, defines relief-space, which is based on the conceptual absence of wall. Krauss' reinterpretation of "Museum without Walls" and her conceptual framing of the existing examples are significant. The assertion of this study is based on the same

---

[200] Ibid, 246.

126

conversion: re-framing the concept of relief, its surface and space relationships, in the applied works of architects.

4.5.3. Celant's Wall: Wall as a Spatial Entity at the Intersection of Art and Architecture

Germano Celant's essay "A Visual Machine: Art Installation and Its Modern Archetypes" in the book "Thinking about Exhibitions" has a significant impact on the final assertion of this research. Celant focuses on the renowned discussion of the interaction between art and architecture. Celant interrogates the potentials of architecture as is, and emphasizes the role of inversion in the visibility of architecture. He says:

> "Over the past decade, art and architecture have been transformed from producers of illusions into receptacles for illusions. They have ceased contemplating and representing the experienced and visible world, preferring to become themselves objects of admiration and portrayal. There has been a role inversion, and instead of revealing and clarifying spaces and images, thereby acting as tools of mediation with reality, art and architecture now seek to be depicted and thus 'seen'." [201]

Celant also adds: "[n]o longer concerned with the portrayal of illusions and visual and environmental artifice, art and architecture have become illusion and artifice, the unreal and the representational replacing the substantial."[202] He posits that this transformation defined art and architecture as only "a backdrop and façade", which does not constitute any spatial property. Celant criticizes the transformation being only within "appearance". However, it is true and relevant that the art and architecture, more specifically space of display and space on display, and their interaction have become more than representation.

Celant locates the wall as an important physical element, which can be conceptualized to understand the spatial qualities of the act of display. He defines the totality of the

---

[201] Germano Celant. "A Visual Machine: Art Installation and Its Modern Archetypes." *Thinking about Exhibitions* (1996): 371-386.

[202] Ibid, 371.

wall surface and display space as "installation". It is necessary to point out that the specificity of the term "installation" does not allow to understand the "double negative" space of wall in any display environment. However, Celant defines the double negative condition of wall surface:

> "…the intervals of wall or space between artworks (the "territory" of the individual painting) automatically establish a linguistic connection, in the sense that their regularity or overall plan creates the visual and volumetric terms of the exhibition…"[203]

The intervals of the wall stand for the overall relationship of the wall and the display. The interval defines the level of absence/presence of the surface of "wall" in the display environment. Once we read the space within the concept of relief, however, the interval gains a quasi-ness, being neither two nor three dimensional; neither surface nor space. It defines a totality. Ironically though, Celant refers to this totality under the definition of "installation": "[t]his interval between artworks has in time devoured the frame, the wall, the environment, and the architecture, establishing the world of the installation."[204] In this study, the "devouring" Celant refers, does not stand for an installation. Expansion of the said interval, to "the frame, the wall, the environment and the architecture" defines display environment as a totality, as a relief-space. Celant defines "installation" as "frame extending to the architectural dimension", and as "an illusionistic dimension of the painted surface"; "overflowing onto the walls".[205] He continues:

> "The edge of the frame is liberated, extending to the architectural system, and the illusionistic dimension of the painted surface overflows onto the walls. The installation is therefore specular; the environment is the reflection of the art, and vice-versa."[206]

---

[203] Ibid, 373.

[204] Ibid.

[205] Ibid, 374.

[206] Ibid.

Celant's definition of installation does actually refer to a broader discussion. Extension to an architectural system or surface overflows onto the walls, and environment being a reflection of what is on display; all of these expansions are very relevant to the definition of relief-space. For instance, Celant emphasizes the "totality" in the act of display. He gives the example of El Lissitzky's Dresden environment. He explains:

> "…the artifacts, which here and there enter into the larger designed context, become united into one "piece." Removed from their cultural environment they are reduced to a "system" and merged into a single identity; this is achieved according to the intentions of the artist and the installer…"[207]

Celant, while discussing Lissitzky's Dresden environment, emphasizes the significance of a wall as an architectural element. The volumetric presence of the display space referent to "wall" is emphasized:

> "The Dresden environment already presupposes an exhibition theory that is a study and an analysis of the nature, the function, and the limits of the installation issue, distinct from issues of creativity. The realization of this "ideal gallery," meant to determine and to define the function of the art object, suffers, however, from an architectural conception, which interprets the internal space as an external shell and ignores its volumetric transparency… In later developments, a refutation of the anchored wall frees art installation from its static bonds, (a freedom already apparent in industrial architecture). What follows is a new spatial conception, based on forms and arrangements freed from impediments. The decline of the masonry enclosure opens a world of exhibition possibilities: paintings, like sculpture, begin to move about in space. Freed from two-dimensional representations of foreground/ background, vertical/horizontal, they begin to rotate in the space."[208]

Celant's explanation includes the transformation in Lissitzky's Dresden environment. Referring to Celant's explanation, it is significant to underline that the surface of the wall that becomes invisible, is defined as "volumetric transparency".

The relationship between the wall surface and display space opens up the discussion related to the presence and absence of the wall. Celant defines two situations proposing two different relationships between wall and display(ed); one is based on

---

[207] Ibid, 375.

[208] Ibid, 376.

the conceptual absence of the wall and the other is based on the presence and emphasis of the wall:

> "The consequences of an installation "abstracted" from the architectural context emphasizes the autonomous significance of the wall. And so if Balla, Puni, and El Lissitzky sought to spread the wall surface to the artwork, the complementary attitude would be one which declares the wall incompatible with any artistic use, exalting the wall's own aesthetic properties."[209]

Both cases, correspond to the architectural conceptualization of relief space. Surface and space relationship of "double negative" space of relief has the potential of defining both of an invisible surface and an emphasized surface, as background. Celant also explains the two different cases by referring to Kiesler's environment:

> "Kiesler's "thousand installations in one" signals a further step in the convergence between art and installation, a relationship which, since the 1950s, has been channeled into two routes—dysfunction and function. In the first case, the plurality of spatial and structural expressions tends to mask distinctions between art and architecture. The heterogeneity of materials, forms, colors, surfaces, visual vocabularies… The other route proposes an impalpable and invisible architecture, dematerialized environments that, with their naked walls, seek to not interfere with the exhibited fetish. These are projection schemata whose function, from Gropius to Kandinsky, is based on absence."[210]

4.5.4. Wall Surface to Display Space

In the previous part, the definitions of the wall as a display element at the intersection of architecture and art, are revisited. In the following part, existing conditions of relief-spaces will be reconsidered in terms of their "wall surface" to "display space" relationships.

---

[209] Ibid.

[210] Ibid, 378.

## 4.5.4.1. Wall as a Surface: Layered Relief-Space
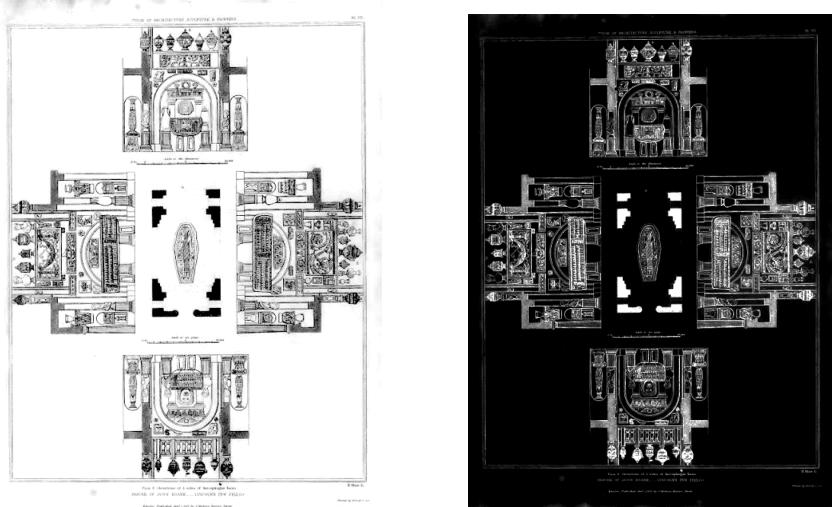
Figure 69. Figure and ground trans-positions of plans and sections documenting interior space of Sir John Soane Museum.

Source: The Union of Architecture, Sculpture, Painting, John Britton.

As stated before, partial conditions within the Sir John Soane Museum illustrate wall surface as a layer of display space. The Sarcophagus Room in the Soane Museum has a symmetrical organization regarding the structural system. The existing architecture presents a reference volume that allows defining visible and invisible layers within the space (Figure 69).

The existing surfaces, walls, are expanded with various objects on display. Decontextualized fragments become a layer recontextualized as an expansion of the wall. The invisible layers become visible through the act of display (Figure 70). Once we understand the layers in the Proun Environment as scaleless, the totality of the display environment can be reconstructed and diagrammatized in the same operation

in the case of Sarcophagus Room. Here, they literally "[d]etached the two-dimensional surface from the wall and installed it, as surface, in front of the wall"[211] (Figure 73).
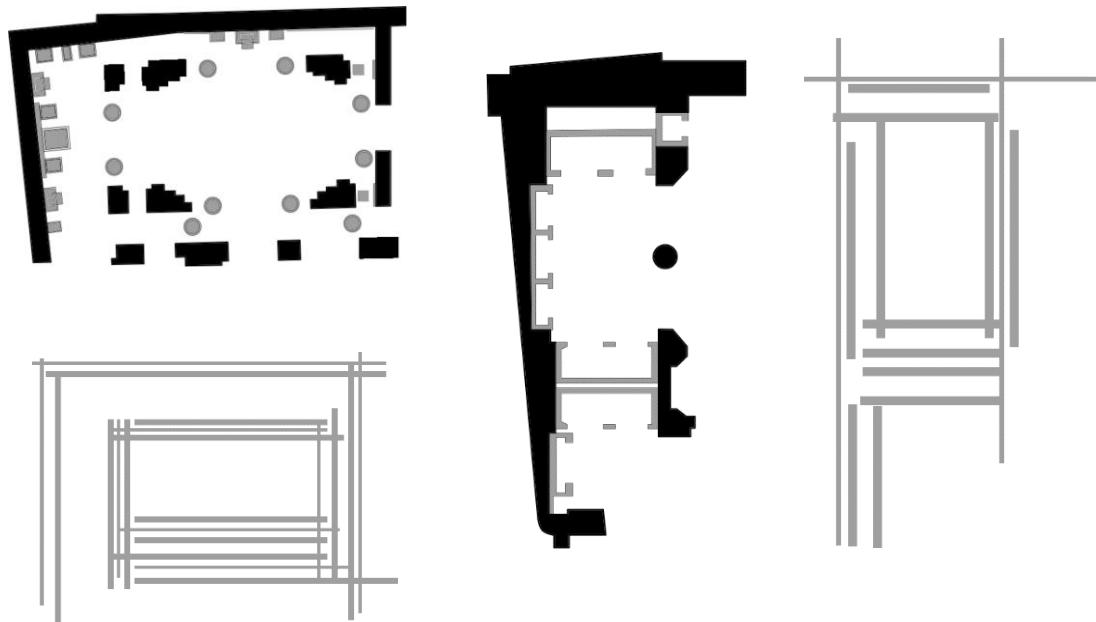

Figure 70. Spatial conditions and layered diagrams of Sarcophagus room, Soane Museum, drawn and created by the author, over an original drawing.

The other spatial condition, the Picture Room, is one of the spaces in the museum that has the most complex wall surface to display space relationship (Figure 71). Here, although the "secondary planes" are two-dimensional paintings, they define an expansion of the wall layer. The surfaces have the power of "space displacing" and "space enclosing"[212], which defines a layered integrity in the display environment (Figure 72). Referring to the Prouns and Proun Environment, the surface to space relationship "[d]iffers according to the viewer's activity: flat to the wall, projecting

---

[211] Ibid, 9.

[212] Op. cit. Struppeck.

toward him, guiding him according to vertical, diagonal, horizontal axes." [213] Reading the images of the Proun section and plan diagrams makes this argument visible (Figure 73).
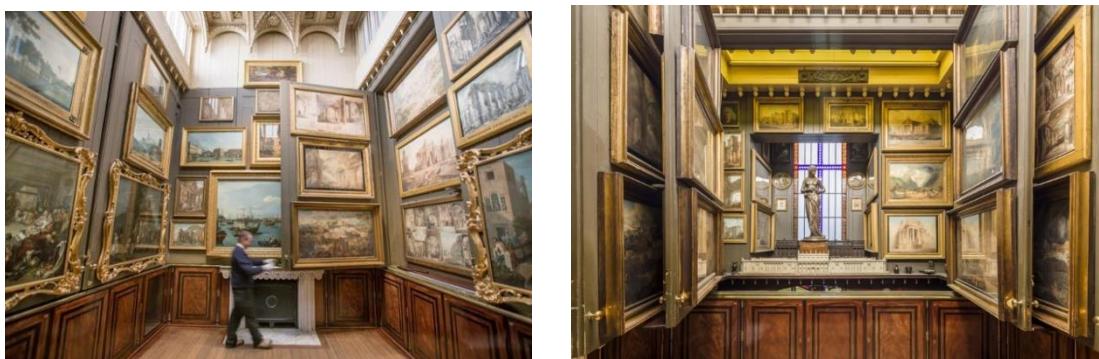
*Figure 71. Views from the interior,*
The Picture room.

Source: https://www.soane.org
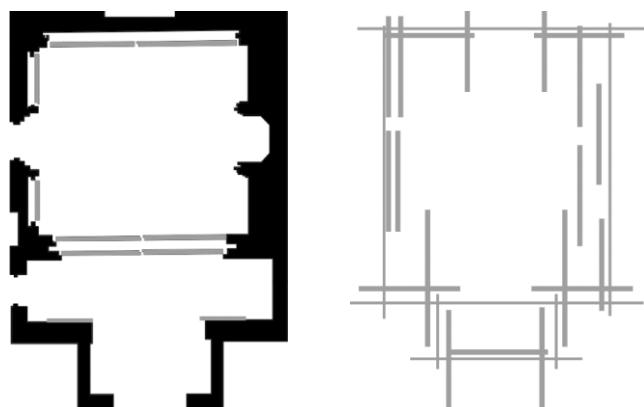
Figure 72. Picture room plan and layer diagram drawn by the author, over an original drawing.

---

[213] Op. cit. Rowell.
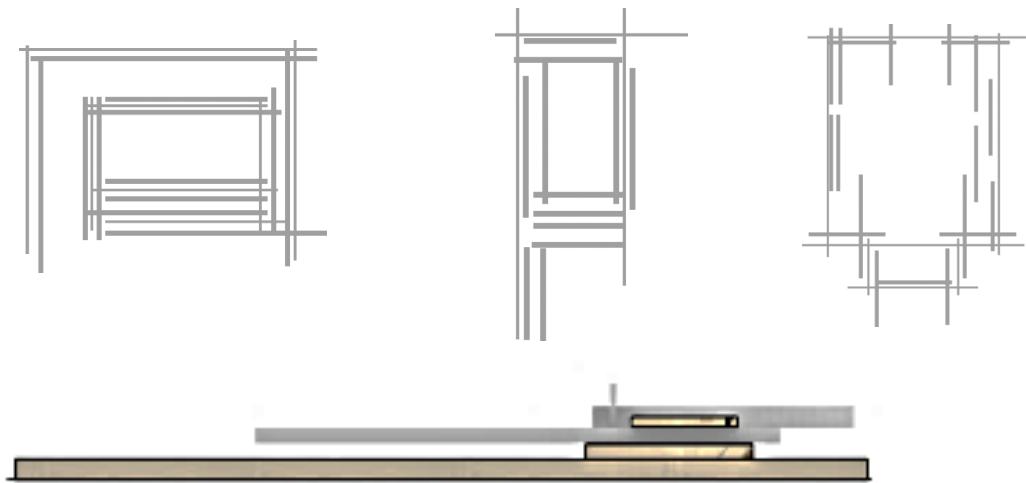
Figure 73. Top: Diagrams showing the layered composition of the display environment in the Soane Museum, drawn by the author. Bottom: Section model from El Lissitky's Proun environment, drawn by the author.

The Sir John Soane Museum constitutes a "layered" relief-space. Within the overall spatial composition, the surface to space relationships reveal a complexity that creates a surface to space formation in every scale (Figure 74). In other words, layers of surfaces including the museum wall, painting frames, cornice fragments, column capitals define a totality, as a display environment.

1/100		museum wall surface – container
		objects on display - content
1/50		museum wall surface – container
		objects on display – content
1/20		museum wall surface – container
		objects on display – content
1/5		layered relief-space
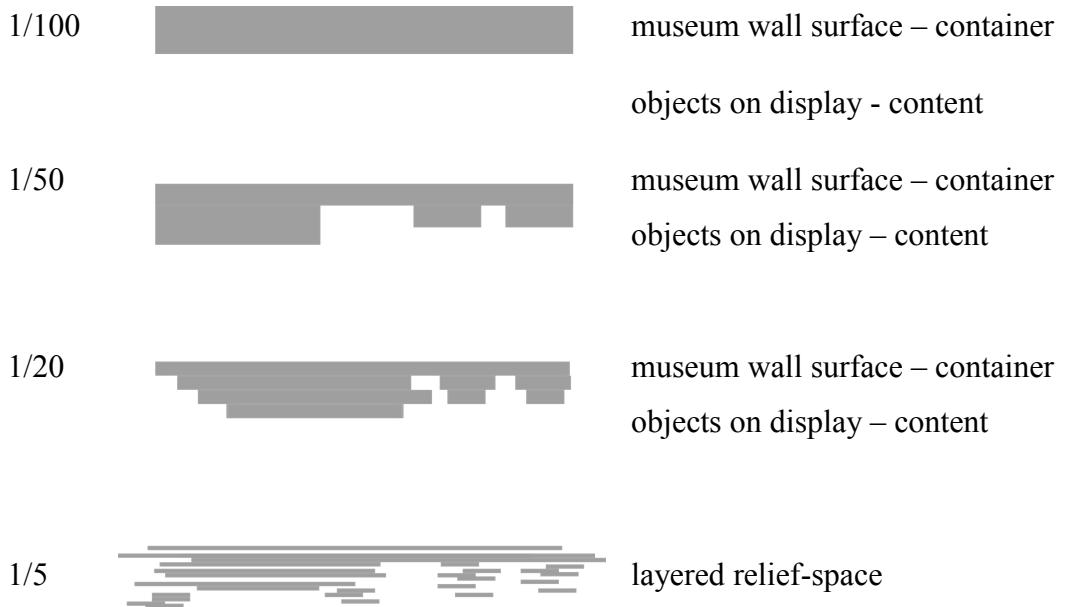
Figure 74. From surface to space, drawn by the author.

4.5.4.2. Wall as an Absence: Embedded Relief-Space

Figure 75. Pergamon Room interior view.

*Source: https://www.smb.museum/museen-und-einrichtungen*

135
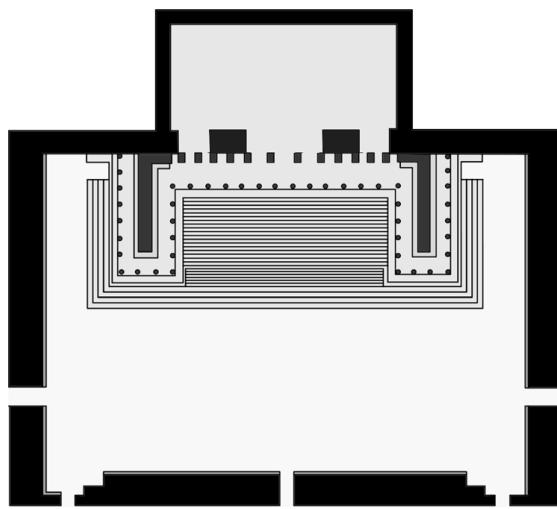
Figure 76. Pergamon Room plan drawing, created by the author, over an original drawing.

The first spatial condition illustrating wall as an absence is the Pergamon Room. The existing surface of the Pergamon Room is expanded with a fragmented monument (Figure 75- Figure 76). The architecture of the Pergamon Altar is recontextualized within the museum walls, defining a space that is embedded between the existing surfaces. The embedded relationship of the architectural surfaces converts the total visual field to an integrated display space, which plays with the positions of inside and outside. Can Bilsel, in his book "Antiquity on Display", mentions the relationship between the surfaces, especially in the case of Pergamon Room and Telephos Room. Bilsel explains the trans-position as:

> "The gallery, which runs parallel to the reconstructed façade, provides the visitor with a view of the Pergamon Room from above and through the columns of the peristyle. The impression is certainly that of looking at the Pergamon Room from inside the monument: a view from inside out."[214]

Here the boundary in between, the existing wall, is transposed and expanded with an architectural space that is an exhibit itself:

---

[214] Can Bilsel. "Space and Relief in the Pergamon Room." *Antiquity on Display: Regimes of the Authentic in Berlin's Pergamon Museum*. Oxford University Press, (2012): 5.

136

"…The architectural boundary between the Pergamon Room and the Telephos Room is perceived as the threshold between the outside and the inside. Even though the observer physically left one exhibition hall and enters another, a masterful treatment of enclosures gives the visitor the impression of entering a free-standing Hellenistic building. Hence the modern Pergamon Room is translated into an impression of the ancient Pergamon Altar, as seen from outside and inside."[215]

Bilsel explains that the "façade" as an object on display, content, and "neutral" surface of museum, as a container, can define different contrasts, by effacing their regarded visual positions:

"In order to give the Pergamon Altar its discernible "façade", the eye erases the modern partition wall in the background, as if it is simply the sky. This effect that brings the Pergamon Altar to the foreground, while effacing the architectural frame, is the result of a simple contrast between the highly articulated façade, attributed to ancient Pergamon, and the "neutral" surface of the modern museum. Yet the aesthetic aspect of this contrast is nevertheless remarkable: the Pergamon Altar is read as a work of art against the background of a non-ground."[216]

Bilsel defines the experience of the viewers as "[c]rossing boundary between outside and inside"[217] and he states that the display gives "[a] sense of both enclosure and exposure in an imaginary landscape."[218] Bilsel's explanation can refer to Struppeck's "space enclosing" and "space displacing" formations within the relief making process. Surfaces of and on display in the environment of Pergamon Room can be read both as "space-enclosing" and "space-displacing".[219] Both the façade and the museum wall defines spaces within each other and displace their default orientations with respect to each other. As a relief space defines an "illusion of depth"[220], this illusion can be read in the display environment of the Pergamon Room (Figure 77). Bilsel states the illusion in the following terms:

"The vision proceeds from the general to the particular and constitutes a visual field that restores an architectural continuum. Even though the wall of the gallery cuts

[215] Ibid, 5.

[216] Ibid, 6.

[217] Ibid, 8.

[218] Ibid, 8.

[219] Op. cit. Struppeck.

[220] Ibid.

through the altar as a picture plane, the impressions of a moving eye restore the third dimension beyond this plane."[221]

In Pergamon Room, the recontextualized architectural space, the entrance, acts as a spatial reference. Referential lines of the column spans of the reconstructed façade define a display space expanded from the architectural surface. Thus, this architectural artifact is not only on display but also embeds itself within the spatial composition of the existing environment. Thus, the surface and space relationship between the recontextualized architectural space and museum space, defines an embedded relief-space (Figure 77).
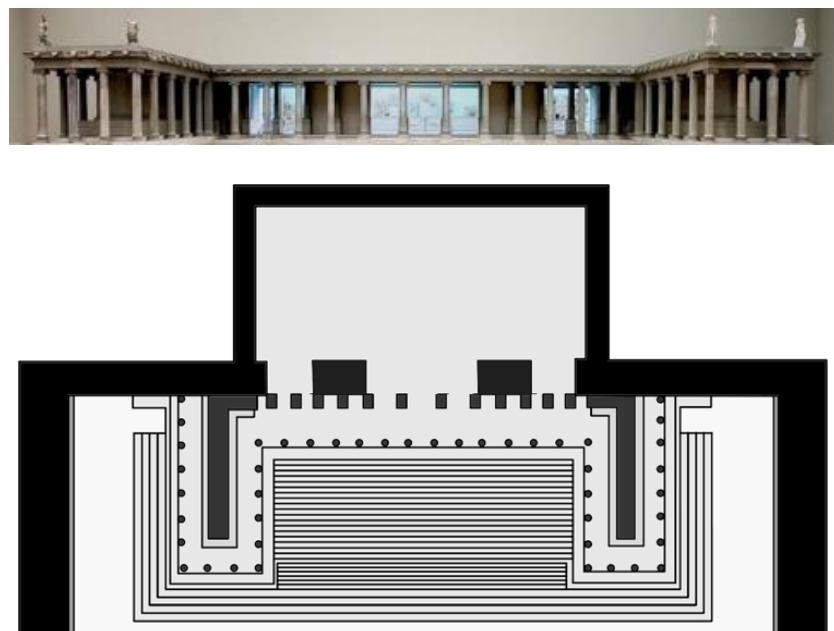

Figure 77. View from the Pergamon room, looking towards the Telephos Room and partial plan drawn by the author, over an original drawing.

---

[221] Op. cit. Bilsel, 7.

The second condition is the Miletus Room, which includes reconstruction of the Market Gate from Miletus, the Orpheus Mosaic, fragments from Trajaneum in Pergamon. The west wall of the room embeds the Market Gate, and the east wall expands as a display space with Carinia Tomb from Falerii, Trajaneum Hall from Pergamon and various architectural fragments (Figure 78- Figure 79).[222]

*Figure 78. Views from the Miletus Room, captured by the author.*
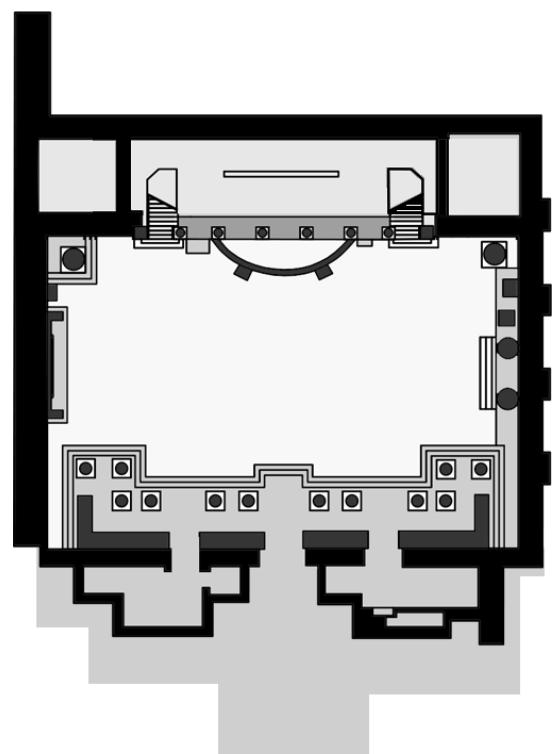
Figure 79. Partial plan drawing of Miletus Room, drawn by the author.

---

[222] Op. cit. Pergamon Museum Guide, 14.
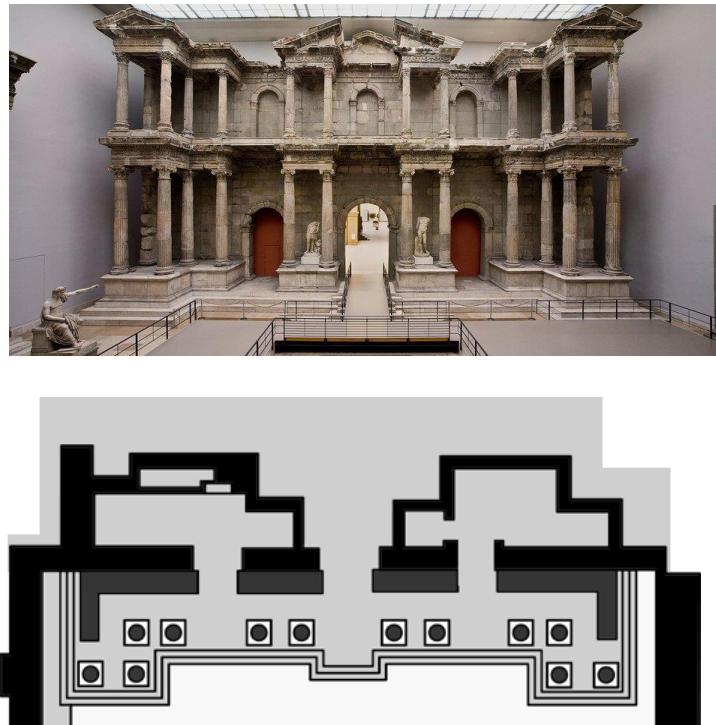
Figure 80. The Market Gate in Miletus Room and partial plan drawing of Miletus room, drawn by the author, over an original drawing.

The west wall surface becomes almost three dimensional, the architectural references of the Market Gate project as a volumetric expansion of the existing surface (Figure 80). As a recontextualized architectural space, the Market Gate is embedded within the museum space, effacing the neutral surface of the museum wall, and defines the museum wall as an "absence". The referential lines of column intervals and openings affect the spatial pattern of the existing environment. The spatial condition here unveils a certain kind of ambiguity, in which the container and content cannot be positioned without referring to each other and the museum wall becomes absent.

Figure 81. Trajaneum Façade and views from different sides, captured by the author.
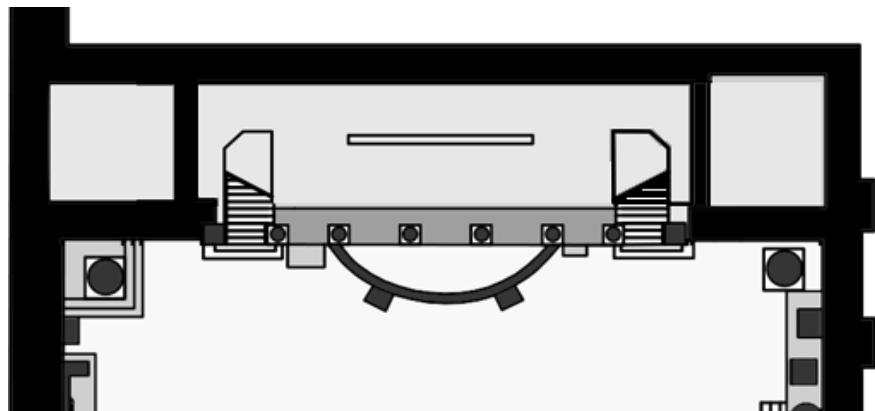
Figure 82. Partial plan drawing of Trajaneum Room, drawn by the author, over an original drawing.

The East wall defines a smaller space, with smaller fragments on display. The Portico of Trajaneum transforms the East wall surface into space (Figure 81). Similar to the condition of Market Gate, the trans-position between the container and content defines a space within the display environment. In addition to that, the reconstructed architectural surface becomes a reference for a complete spatial expansion, defining an exhibition room. The trans-position in between, makes the virtual lines visible and the "spatial construction" unveils the possibility of experience an illusion with respect to the actual space of the display environment (Figure 82).

Figure 83. Interior view of Mshatta Hall.
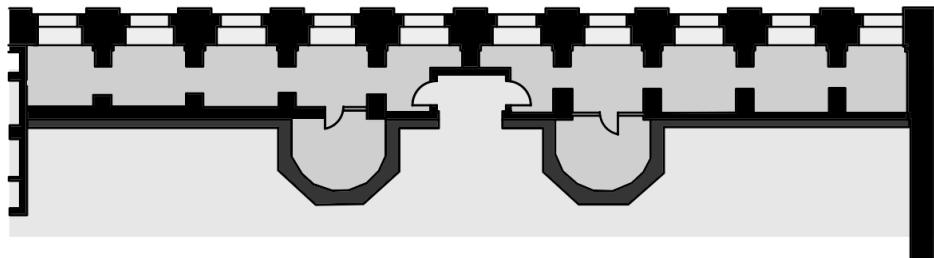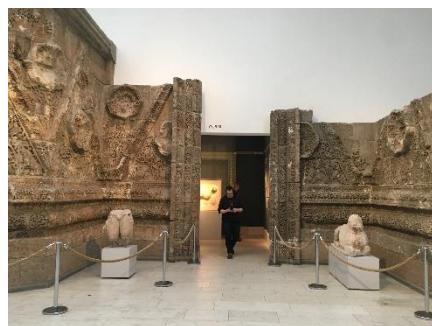
Figure 84. View towards Mshatta Façade and a partial plan drawn by the author, over an original drawing.

The last spatial condition in Pergamonmuseum is the hall with the Mshatta Palace Façade. The façade occupies a continuous surface in the south wing of the Pergamonmuseum (Figure 83). The façade surface of Mshatta Palace defines an expansion. A space composed of exhibition rooms is defined between two surfaces of the existing façade of the museum and the reconstructed fragmented monument of

Mshatta Palace (Figure 84). The façade has its own three-dimensional composition within itself in different scales. As its surface and space relationship is already complex, Mshatta Façade defines a relief-space, in which referent architectural surfaces are defined as actual spaces, in order to be able to be on display and to display (Figure 85). The embedded relief-space of the conditions in Pergamonmuseum can be interpreted as the relief space of Schweres relief. Correlating these images can make the argument visible (Figure 85).
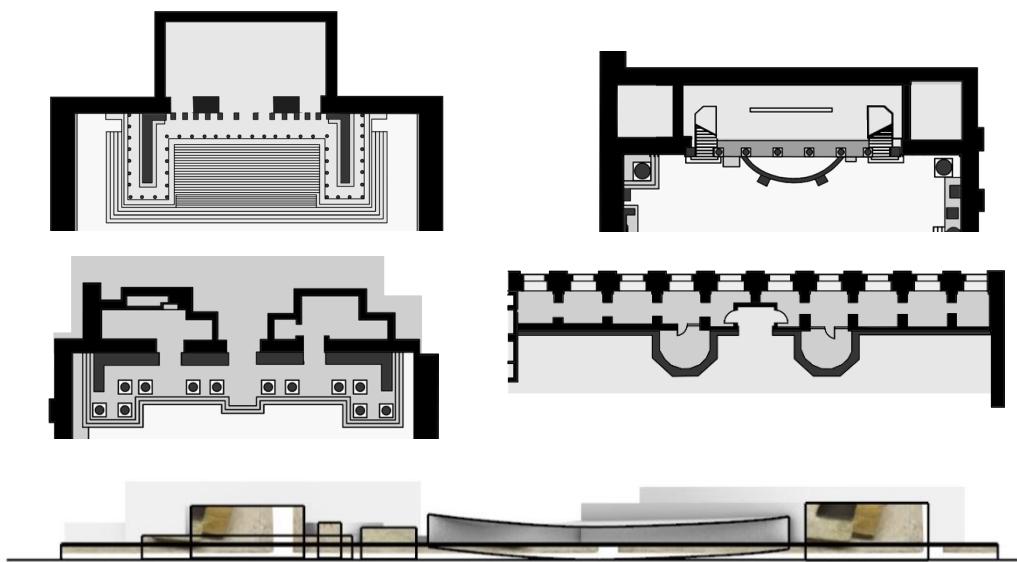
Figure 85. Top: Diagrams showing the embedded composition of a display environment in Pergamonmuseum, drawn by the author. Bottom: Section model of Schwitters' Schweres Relief, drawn by the author.

Pergamonmuseum posits an "embedded" relief-space. The relationship between the container and the content cannot be positioned without referring to each other. The recontextualized architectural fragments, façades, and entrances provide referent guidelines that construct spaces in the display environment. In other words, the quasi-condition created within the display environment effaces the museum wall. Thus, embedded relief-space of Pergamonmuseum can be regarded as a spatial construction in which the whole display environment is read and represented as a totality (Figure 86).
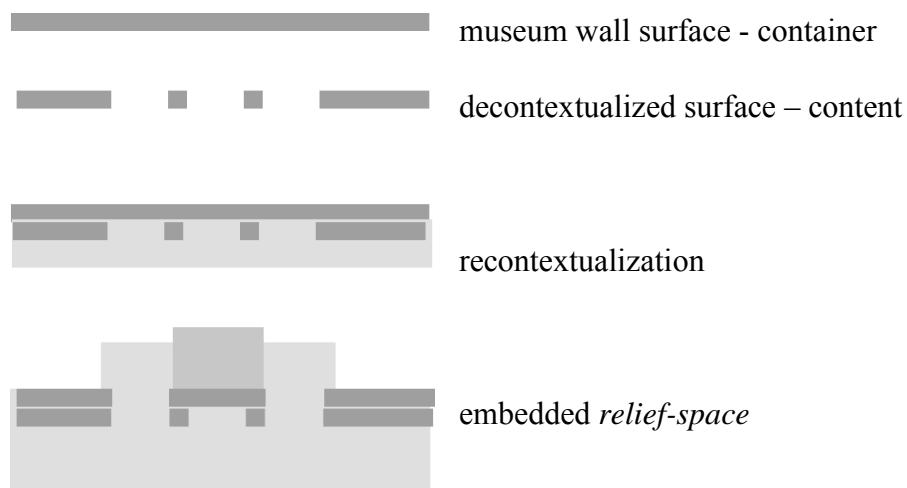
Figure 86. From surface to space, drawn by the author.

4.5.4.3. Wall as Space: Supplanted Relief-Space

Erimtan Archaeology and Arts museum includes conditions that can illustrate the wall as space. In Erimtan Museum, the walls are expanded to define and inhabit programs. Here the northeast and southwest walls are considered as relief-spaces. The expanded walls are partially subtracted to define display niches, which are inhabited by various archaeological and art objects (Figure 87). The supplanting between wall space and art objects transforms the space of expanded walls both in exterior and interior (Figure 89 – Figure 90).

Figure 87. View from the interior, Erimtan Museum.
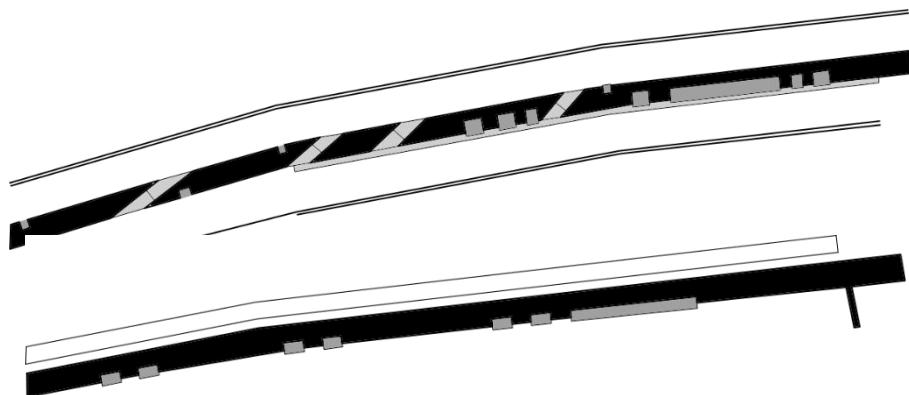
Figure 88. Partial plan drawings of the Northeast wall space of the Museum, drawn by the author.
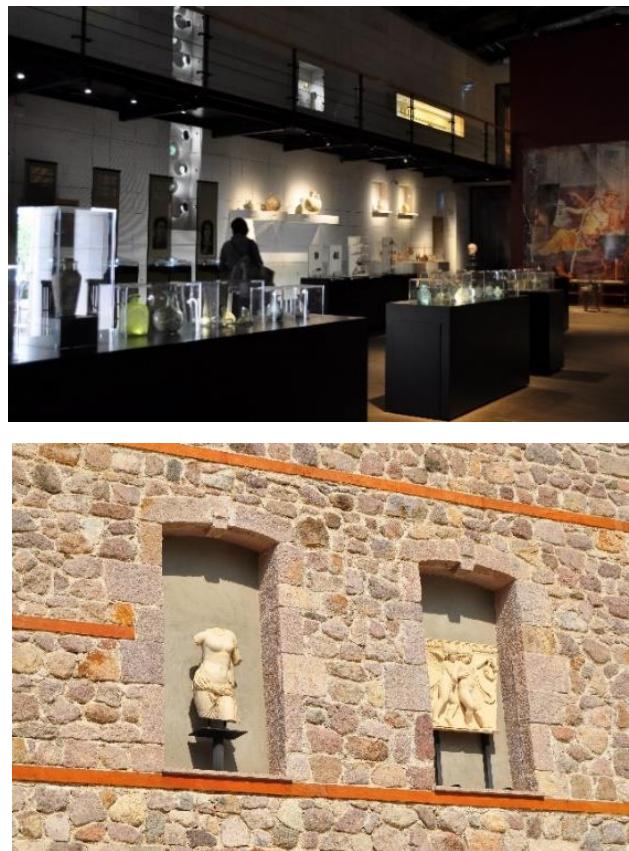
Figure 89. Wall space from interior and exterior.

Source: Photographs captured by F. Serra İnan.

Figure 90. Partial plan drawing of Southeast wall space of the museum.

The display environment of Erimtan Museum is designed together with the existing architectural decisions. The wall element positions itself as a quasi-design element, converting the conventional figure and ground pattern of wall and space into a more complex relationship (Figure 88). The walls of the museum are expanded and transform into spaces to accommodate various functions within the museum program.
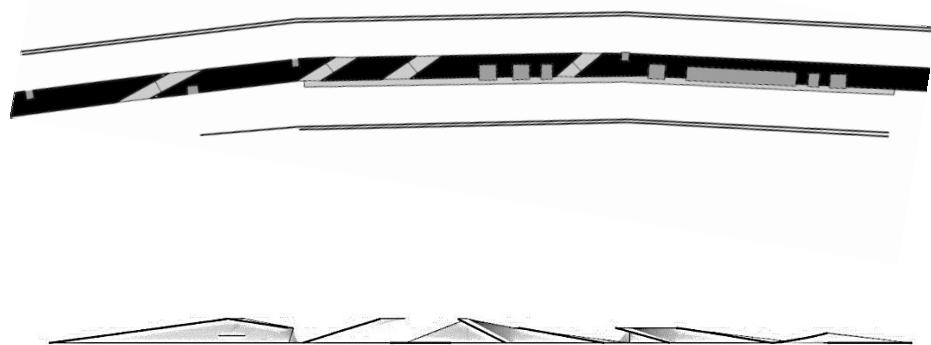
Figure 91. Top: Diagrams showing the supplanted composition of a display environment in Erimtan Museum, drawn by the author. Bottom: Section model of Lucio Fontana's Relief, drawn by the author.

The expanded walls are not only interpreted as the display space within themselves but also they include the services and necessary technical infrastructure. The thickness of the walls proposes architectural integrity that forms a totality of space of display and space on display. Thus, the wall space is a supplanted relief-space, in which quasi-dimensional "figure and ground" represent diverse spatial compositions (Figure 92). Wall space is supplanted with the space of the object on display. When read together, the images of a plan drawing of the wall space and section model of Fontana's relief, can make the argument visible (Figure 91).

147

wall - surface

expanded wall - space

supplanted relief-space

Figure 92. From surface to space, drawn by the author.

Following these analyses, the "pretext" of this study should be remembered. The ruins of the Temple Erechtheion illustrate different physical positions and spatial combinations of architectural elements that refer to intricate relationships (Figure 93). These intricate relationships define "relief-space". In this study, the definition of relief-space as an architectural condition, refers to the quasi-ness of relief and its trans-positional surface and space relations. Here, the different trans-positional relations that become visible in the ruins of Temple Erectheion, are traced in the existing conditions of different display environments.

Existing conditions in different display environments of Sir John Soane Museum, Pergamonmuseum, and Erimtan Archaeology and Arts Museum are defined as relief-spaces. In order to be able to read the surface-space relationship of these conditions, existing relief examples such as El Lissitzky's Proun Environment, Schwitter's Hannover Merzbau, and Schweres Relief, and another work from Fontana's Concetto Spaziale Attesa series, are analyzed together with the architecture of display environments.

148
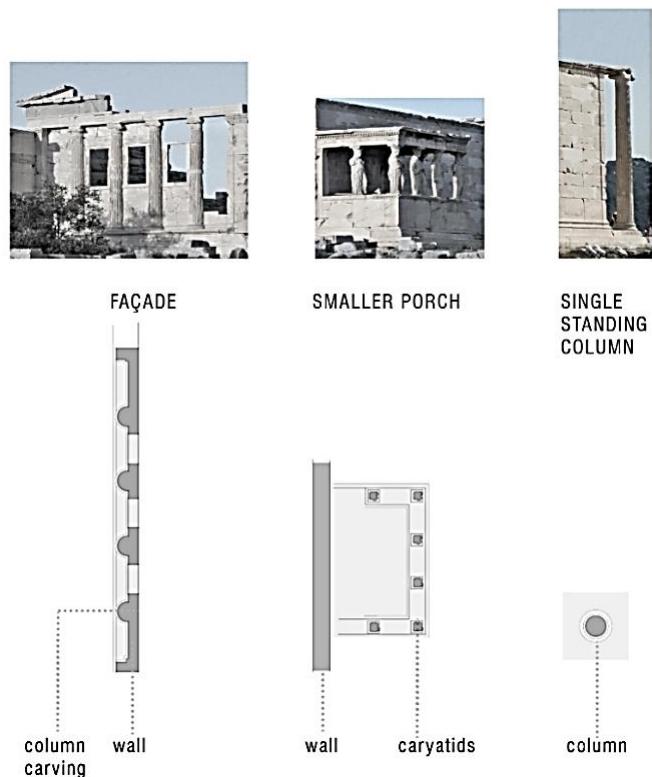
Figure 93. Diagrams created from Erechtheion plan, with different surface and space relationships, drawn by the author.
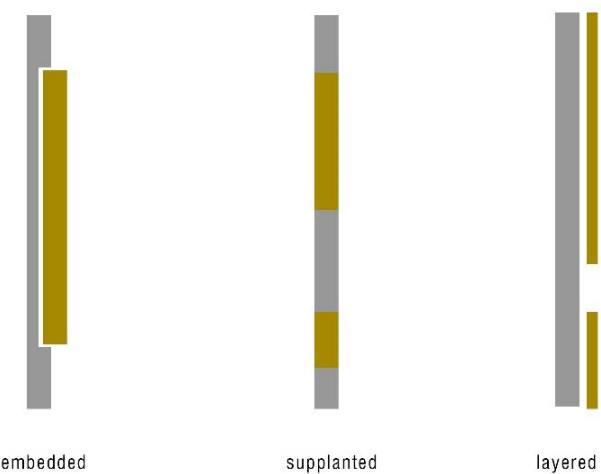
Figure 94. Diagram illustrating different surface and space relationships of display environments, drawn by the author.

149

The illustration of the fragments of Temple Erectheion (Figure 93) can be represented in a more abstract diagram, which refers to the relationships in a display environment (Figure 94). As illustrated in previous parts, the physical positions of the container, exhibition space, and content, the object on display, can be defined with the adjectives: "embedded", "supplanted" and "layered" (Figure 95).

environment	physical position	spatial combination	relief
SOANE MUSEUM	layered	fragment(s) of a monument(s)	El Lissitzky Prouns Proun environment
PERGAMON MUSEUM	embedded	fragmented monument(s)	Kurt Schwitters -Schweres Relief -Hannover Merzbau
ERIMTAN MUSEUM	supplanted	fragment(s) in a monument	Lucio Fontana -Concetto Spaziale Attesa

Figure 95. The matrix representing the relief-spaces regarding the physical positions and spatial combinations of content and container and the names of the relief work examples.

In Figure 96, the matrix can graphically summarize the overall analysis. It represents the list of physical positions of container and content and spatial compositions of fragment and monument in different conditions from different environments. Moreover, existing relief works that are reread with each condition are listed within the matrix. Completing the previous matrix, this matrix represents the conditions of the wall surface and display space in architectural drawings and diagrams that are referred to in the previous parts. In addition, the relief works and their section models that are illustrated in spatial analyses are visually available in the matrix.
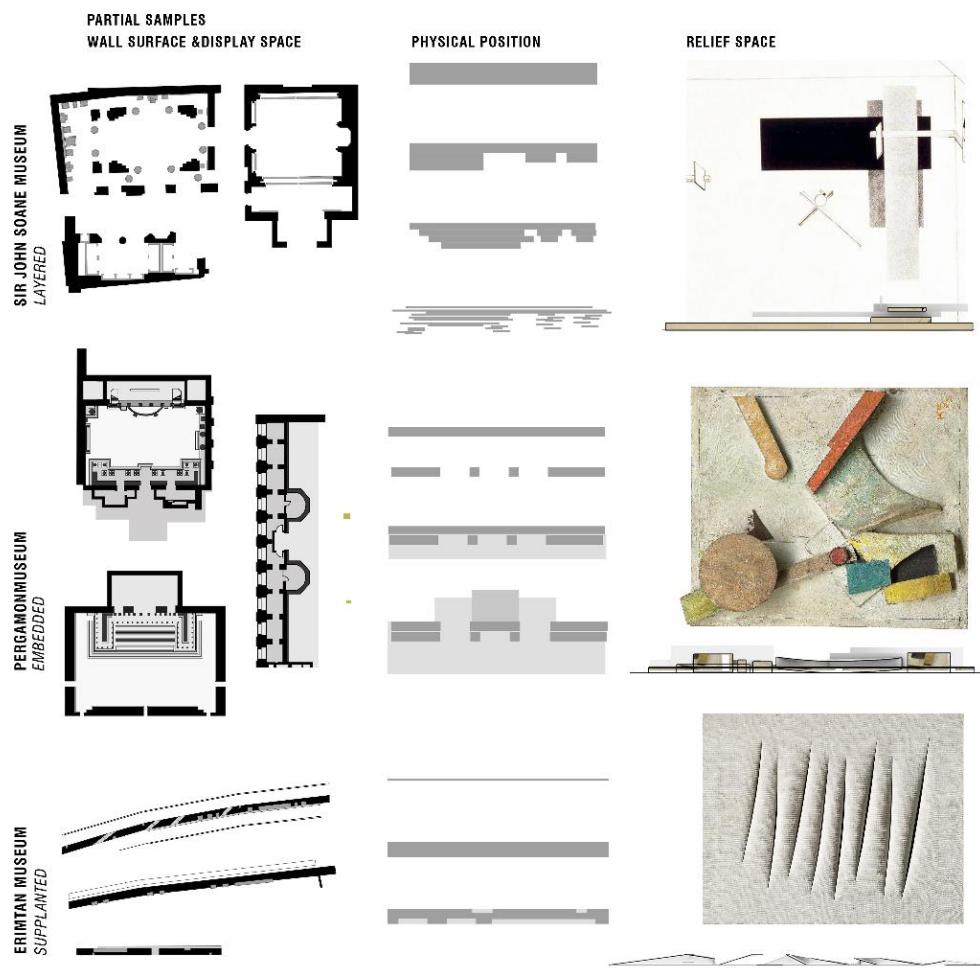

Figure 96. Diagrams of the surface to space relationships within display environments and examples of relief work with their sections, drawn by the author.

151

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

> "The field of vision has always seemed to me comparable to the ground of an archaeological excavation."[223]

The tangled relationship between architecture and art is a controversial and yet a renowned subject. Most of the discussions focus on the "intersection" of these fields, which limits the content of the relationship between architecture and art. Both architecture and art are complex visual fields and define display environments in different scales. Thus, in this study, not the intersection, but the correlation between architectural and artistic production has been the focus. The research aims to redefine the relationship between the exhibition space and the object on display. In this assertion, the visual field of relief is used as a decoder, in order to be able to define a new "way of seeing" the visual field of exhibition space. Referring to Virilio, the field of vision is "excavated" to redefine the existing spatial conditions.

This study introduces "relief-space" as an architectural condition, which is conceptualized through a collocated textual ground of both architecture and art. Definition of relief-space as an architectural condition requires an understanding of relief as an artistic production and exhibition space as an architectural production. With the recognition of these requirements, this research aims to make a "double reading". The first reading is a reproductive reading, in which relief as an expanded surface, and exhibition space as an expanded space, are understood with their

---

[223] Crary quotes Virilio as an introduction to his book. Jonathan Crary. *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century*. MIT Press (1992): 1.

determinate meanings. The second reading is a critical and productive reading, which includes an active interpretation that disseminates the meanings that the first reading has already constructed. The second reading proposes an interpretative illustration of existing definitions. Defining relief as a new way of seeing, requires a series of hermeneutic illustrations[224] to support this main assertion.

As an initial resolution, locating relief within the relations of the tryptic, painting, sculpture and architecture, is necessary since the argument of the study is not set in relation to the intersection of the fields but the expansion in between these fields. Learning from Moholy-Nagy, Gabo, Le Corbusier and De Stijl group as well as Krauss, Foster and Serra, a broad content in artistic and architectural production has been unfolded. Unfolding this tryptic revealed the space in between, which is the space of relief. Relief is defined as both surface and space. The plurality of definitions and operations to create space out of a surface has been surveyed within different artistic movements. Not dwelling on the historical context of relief art but understanding the common qualities and formal aspects of relief have unveiled an analytical basis for the rest of the research.

In order to be able to define the common properties, a common glossary is formed to make a "second reading". The terminology composed of different operations of the surface to space creation used in Classical, Constructivist and Spatialist reliefs, created a glossary under the title of "Text of Relief: Expanded Vocabulary".[225] This expanded vocabulary enables the correlation of the visual fields of relief and exhibition space. In addition to the expanded vocabulary, the definition of quasi-ness as an expanded scale is crucial to make a "second reading". Quasi- stands for a unique aspect of relief that is being in between fields, scales, and dimensions. The quasi-ness intrinsically

---

[224] Statement based on discussions with Prof. Dr. Ayşen Savaş throughout this study.

[225] Please see Chapter 2, p. 45: Expanded Vocabulary: Text of Relief.

defines an expansion. Thus, defining relief as "an expanded surface" should be referred to as an exploration of the content of the "expansion".

In this study, the term "exhibition space", as an architectural production has been referred to with s a different phrase, which is "display environment". The reason behind using "display environment" as a critique of "exhibition space" is based on the "correlation" theory of Frederick Kiesler and meaning(s) of the term "(to/the) display". Moreover, the term "environment" has an immersive meaning that can include a variety of physical positions and spatial combinations of architectural objects; monuments and fragments. Surface and space relationships of architectural objects and the environment can be reconstructed and change the visibility of both.

The trans-positional relationship between art, architectural objects, and architecture forms various compositions within environments. These compositions refer to different relationships within display environments, which can be conceptualized with the definition of relief-space. In this study, the definition of relief-space as an architectural condition refers to the quasi-ness of relief and its trans-positional surface to space relationship. Here, Vidler's phrase, "the superimposition of spatial arts and their expanded fields" should be underlined since a relief suggests not only trans-position but also a superimposition. Once we assert relief-space as a scaleless surface and space formation, it becomes a seeing/space-reading tool that can magnify the environments superimposed in one immersive medium. Thus, what Di Carlo, Arrhenius, and Vidler stated becomes correspondent to the main focus of this research. They refer to concepts of "exhibition as an expansive space", "architecture as exhibition and exhibition as architecture", "interrogation of the border of the exhibition" and "architecture in the expanded field", which can be framed under the definition of relief-space.

Relief, as a way of seeing, requires a conversion between artistic production and architectural production. The conversion, as a "second reading", necessitates conceptual, theoretical and visual framework, which enables the conceptualization of

155

relief "as a" way of seeing the display environments. The conversion defines the wall and display relationship as surface and space, and the trans-positions as they zoom in on the analysis of surface and space in the display environment. In this research, examples of these display environments from different contexts should not be regarded as "case studies" but "conditions". Existing conditions in different display environments of Sir John Soane Museum, Pergamonmuseum, and Erimtan Archaeology and Arts Museum are defined as relief-spaces. In order to be able to read the surface-space relationship of these conditions, existing relief examples such as El Lissitzky's Proun Environment, Schwitter's Hannover Merzbau, and Schweres Relief, and another work from Fontana's Concetto Spaziale Attesa series, are analyzed together with the architecture of display environments. Section drawings of these artworks are provided to understand the spatial correspondence between the relief and display environment. The correlation between existing architectural production and artistic production revealed the said "hermeneutic illustration" process, which is also a part of the "second reading".

This inquiry re-introduces relief as a scaleless concept that includes various relationships between surface and space. Relief has the capacity to be a scaleless surface and space formation. Therefore, it becomes a seeing/reading tool that can magnify the environments superimposed in one immersive medium. Space and the surface are read together as a display environment. The term and condition "expansion" that surface defines while creating a relief-space, is an architectural production of the display. Relief-space as an architectural condition denies the conventional singularity of museum and galleries as "the" exhibition space and the conventional stability of architecture, which has been accepted only as the "container". To conclude, although not emphasized as a specific discussion, this study acknowledges that architecture, having an intrinsic complex surface to space relationship, can be relief-space itself. In other words, without any trans-positions between container and content, a building, as an architectural production, has the capability of defining a relief-space. Relief-space can illustrate architectural processes

156

and production in every scale. With the recognition of that, the discussion in this study dwells only on the trans-positional spatial conditions of display environments, which seeks for a dual engagement in between container and content. However, within the framework of this study, another question can be raised: In addition to being a new way of seeing, does relief-space, as an architectural condition, have the capability to define a new way of creating architectural space?

REFERENCES

Arrhenius, Thordis, Mari Lending, Wallis Miller, and Jérémie Michael McGowan, eds. *Place and Displacement: Exhibiting Architecture*. Lars Müller, 2014.

Beck, Martin. "The Exhibition and the Display." *Exhibition.* ed. Lucy Steed. London: Whitechapel Gallery 27 (2014).

Berger, John. *Ways of Seeing*. Vol. 1. Penguin UK, 2008.

Bilsel, Can. *Antiquity on Display: Regimes of the Authentic in Berlin's Pergamon Museum*. Oxford University Press, 2012.

Blau, Eve. "Curating Architecture with Architecture." Log 20 (2010): 18-28.

Botar, Oliver AI. "Constructed Reliefs in the Art of the Hungarian Avant-Garde: Kassák, Bortnyik, Uitz and Moholy-Nagy 1921-1926." The Structurist 25-26, 1985.

Britton, John. *The Union of Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting*. 1827.

Bryson, Norman. "The Gaze and the Glance" *Vision and Painting: The Logic of the Gaze*. Springer, 1983.

Buren, Daniel. "Exhibition of an Exhibition." *Exhibition.* ed. Lucy Steed. London: Whitechapel Gallery 27, 2014.

Cambridge English Dictionary.

   https://dictionary.cambridge.org/.

Celant, Germano. "A Visual Machine: Art Installation and Its Modern Archetypes." *Thinking about Exhibitions* (1996): 371-386.

Colomina, Beatriz. "Responses" *Retracing the Expanded Field: Encounters Between Art and Architecture*. Cambridge, Papapetros, Spyros, and Julian Rose, eds. MA: MIT Press, 2014.

Cooper, Donal. *Depth of Field: Relief Sculpture in Renaissance Italy*. Peter Lang, 2007.

Crary, Jonathan. *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century*. MIT Press, 1992.

Damisch, Hubert. "A Very Special Museum" *Skyline: The Narcissistic City*. Stanford University Press, 2001.

Di Carlo, Tina. "Exhibitionism." Log 20 (2010): 151-158.

Elliott, Cecil D. "The Variety of Scale." Journal of Architectural Education 18, no. 3 (1963): 35-37.

Encyclopedia Brittanica

https://www.britannica.com/

Falser, Michael. "From Gaillon to Sanchi, from Vézelay to Angkor Wat. The Musée Indo-chinois in Paris: A Transcultural Perspective on Architectural Museums." RIHA Journal 71, no. 19 (2013): 528-32.

Foster, Hal. *The Art-Architecture Complex*. Verso Books, 2013.

Gabo, Naum. "The Constructive Idea in Art" *Circle; International Survey of Constructive Art,* J.L. Martin, Ben Nicholson, N. Gabo, eds. Praeger Publishers, (1971): 1-11.

Gabo, Naum. "Sculpture- Carving and Construction in Space" *Circle: International Survey of Constructive Art* J.L. Martin, Ben Nicholson, N. Gabo, eds. Praeger Publishers, (1971): 103-113.

Gideon, Siegfried. "Construction and Aesthetics" *Circle: International Survey of Constructive Art* J.L. Martin, Ben Nicholson, N. Gabo, eds. Praeger Publishers, (1971): 220-238.

Goldwater, Robert John. *What is Modern Sculpture?* Museum of Modern Art, 1969.

Greenberg, Clement. *Modernist Painting*. Voice of America, 1959.

Grieve, Alastair. "Charles Biederman and the English Constructionists I: Biederman and Victor Pasmore." The Burlington Magazine 124, no. 954 (1982): 540-551.

Grieve, Alastair. "Charles Biederman and the English Constructionists II: An Exchange of Theories about Abstract Art during the 1950s." The Burlington Magazine 126, no. 971 (1984): 67-77.

Griffin, Tim, James Meyer, Francesco Bonami, Catherine David, Okwui Enwezor, Hans-Ulrich Obrist, Martha Rosler, and Yinka Shonibare. "Global tendencies: Globalism and the Large-scale Exhibition." Artforum 42, no. 3 (2003): 152-163.

Hein, Hilde. *Public art: Thinking Museums Differently*. Rowman Altamira, 2006.

Hooper-Greenhill, Eileen. *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge*. Routledge, 1992.

Kakoliris, Gerasimos. "Jacques Derrida's Double Deconstructive Reading: A Contradiction in Terms?" Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology 35, No. 3 (2004): 283-292.

Kiesler, Frederick. "Second Manifesto of Correalism," Art International, 1965.

Kostyniuk, Ron. "Polychrome Relief Constructions from Acrylic Sheet." Leonardo 19, no. 4 (1986): 297-300.

Krauss Rosalind, Architects' Drawings / Artists' Buildings" *Drawings: The Pluralist Decade.* Institute of Contemporary Art, 1980.

Krauss, Rosalind. "Postmodernism's Museum without Walls." In *Thinking About Exhibitions*, pp. 254-258. Routledge, 2005.

Krauss, Rosalind. "Photography's Discursive Spaces" in *The Originality of the Avant-garde and Other Modernist Myths.* MIT Press, 1986.

Krauss, Rosalind. "Notes on the Index: Seventies Art in America." October (1977): 68-81.

Krauss, Rosalind. "Sculpture in the Expanded Field." October 8 (1979): 31-44.

Krauss, Rosalind. "The Double Negative: a New Syntax for Sculpture." *Passages in Modern Sculpture* (1981): 243-88.

Krauss, Rosalind. "Analytic Space: Futurism and Constructivism" *Passages in Modern Sculpture*. MIT Press, (1981): 39-69.

Le Corbusier. "The Quarrel with Realism" *Circle: International Survey of Constructive Art,* J.L. Martin, Ben Nicholson, N. Gabo, eds. Praeger Publishers, (1971): 67-75.

Lending, Mari. "Negotiating Absence: Bernard Tschumi's New Acropolis Museum in Athens." The Journal of Architecture 23, no. 5 (2018): 567-589.

Lending, Mari. "Out of Place: Circulating Monuments" *Exhibiting Architecture: A Paradox?* Pelkonen, Eeva-Liisa, Carson Chan, and David Andrew Tasman, eds. Yale School of Architecture, (2015): 19-27.

.

Malraux, André. "Museum without Walls. Translated From the French by Stuart Gilbert and Francis Price, 1967.

Marshall, Christopher R. "The Contemporary Museum as Art Gallery." *Reshaping Museum Space*. Ed. Susanne MacLeod. (2005): 170-93.

Martin, John L. Ben Nicholson, and Naum Gabo eds. *Circle; International Survey of Constructive Art*. Praeger Publishers, 1971.

Martinez, Rosa. "Curating Biennials" Manifesta Journal, No.2, Winter 2003/Spring 2004.

Mattsson, Helena. "Life as a Full-Scale Demonstration: Konsument i oändligheten: 1971." *Exhibiting Architecture: Place and Displacement*, Arrhenius, Thordis, Mari Lending, Wallis Miller, and Jérémie Michael McGowan, eds. Lars Müller, 2014.

Meyer, Ulf. "Spolia on the Wall", 20 June 2019.

https://www.world-architects.com/en/architecture-news/reviews/spolia-in-the-wall

Moholy-Nagy, László. *The New Vision*, 1928: and, *Abstract of an Artist*. No. 3. Wittenborn, 1947.

Morris, Robert. "Notes on Sculpture." Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology (1966): 222-235.

Obrist, Hans Ulrich. "Biennial Manifesto." Log 20 (2010): 45-48.

Olson, Ruth. *Gabo - Pevsner*. Museum of Modern Art, 1948.

Oxford Dictionary

https://www.lexico.com/en.

Papapetros, Spyros, and Julian Rose, eds. *Retracing the Expanded Field: Encounters Between Art and Architecture*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2014.

Pelkonen, Eeva-Liisa, Carson Chan, and David Andrew Tasman, eds. *Exhibiting Architecture: A Paradox?* Yale School of Architecture, 2015.

Pergamon Museum: Collection of Classical Antiquities, Museum of the Ancient Near East, Museum of Islamic Art - Museum Guide, Prestel, 2011.

Phillips, Lisa, and Dieter Bogner. *Frederick Kiesler*. Whitney Museum of American Art, 1989.

Rendell, Jane. *Art and Architecture: A Place Between*. London: IB Tauris, 2006.

Ridgway, Brunilde S. "Review of Relief Sculpture, by L.R. Rogers.", 1976.

Rose, Julian. "Architecture as a Sculpture, Landscape and Method" *Retracing the Expanded Field: Encounters Between Art and Architecture*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2014.

Rowell, Margit. *The Planar Dimension: From Surface to Space Europe, 1912-1932*. Vol. 71. Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, 1979.

Savaş, Ayşen. "Between Document and Monument: Architectural Artifact in an Age of Specialized Institutions." PhD Dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1994.

Savaş, Ayşen. "Erimtan Museum: A Research on Architectural Integrity", Casabella, (in the process of publication).

Savaş, Ayşen. "Installation as a Tool for the Transformation of Architectural Space", *Rethinking Art and Architecture. A Challenging Interdisciplinary Ground*, ed. by Z.Uludağ and G. Güleç, Ankara: Nobel, 2016.

Struppeck, Jules. *The Creation of Sculpture*. Holt, 1952.

Summers, David. *Real Spaces: World Art History and the Rise of Western Modernism*. London: Phaidon, 2003.

Tolles, Thayer. "American Relief Sculpture." *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000. *http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/amrs/hd_amrs.htm (October 2006)*

Türkay Coşkun, Seray. "Part and Whole: A Mereological Framework for Architectural Form" PhD Dissertation, METU, 2017.

Vidler, Anthony. "Responses" *Retracing the Expanded Field: Encounters between Art and Architecture*. Cambridge, Papapetros, Spyros, and Julian Rose, eds. MA: MIT Press (2014): 228.

Yoncacı Arslan, Pelin. "Christianizing the Skyline: The Appropriation of the Pagan Honorary Column in Early Constantinople." PhD Dissertation, UCLA, 2015.

White, Anthony. "Lucio Fontana: Between Utopia and Kitsch." Grey Room (2001): 54-77.

https://www.hangarbicocca.org/en/9-things-you-may-not-know-about-lucio-fontana/3-he-founded-the-spatialist-movement/

https://www.theartstory.org/movement-constructivism.htm

https://www.smb.museum/en/museums-institutions/pergamonmuseum/home.html