Movement in Space
An architectural analysis of public space in Archaic to Hellenistic Greece

Akademisk avhandling som för avläggande av filosofie doktorsexamen
vid Göteborgs universitet offentliggör försvaras i sal T 307,
Olof Wijksgatan 6, lördagen den 8 februari 2003 kl. 13.15.

av
Henrik Boman
Fil. kand.

Abstract
The study of ancient Greek architecture has, with a few exceptions, been focused on the
different building types used by the Greeks: the stoa, the propylon and especially the temple,
the latter held in the highest esteem since the 18th century. Architecture as an expression of
the material culture of a civilisation is analysed frequently according to style and period, but
rarely in terms of interacting items creating a stage for social activity. In this study an
alternative perspective of public space is adopted through the use of four aspects of
architecture: the sequence (relative chronology), edges (material boundaries of space),
circulation paths (possibilities of moving in space), and the unfinished features observable in
public space; a distinctive approach to viewing and explaining architecture emerges. By
combining archaeological and architectural knowledge of the individual building and the
interaction between the buildings (the aspects emphasised in the study) at ten sites from
various parts of the Greek world, the architecture is explored in detail at each place and the
layout of public space in general is interpreted.

The results of the investigation are numerous reflections that can be applied to public space in
different areas and situations. In the sequence, the long use of buildings as elements in the
composition of space (termed endurance) can be noted, stressing the appearance of the older
buildings. Considering the use of dismantled or unfinished buildings in significant locations,
the effort of designing and erecting buildings can be identified as an important aspect of
construction. The investment in architecture included not only the material characteristics of
the structure but also the visible labour involved. The edges and the circulation pattern were
arranged to manipulate the three-dimensional quality of the environment, by positioning
terraces as well as buildings in such a way that the natural terrain had an eliminating or
emphasising effect, not least the contrast between built and unbuilt space. In regard to the
endurance of a majority of the buildings in the composition of space, minor elements like
statue bases and votive monuments served to articulate the circulation paths within the
environment. These monuments became important guides and transformers in the public
space in relation to the older framework of buildings which persisted through time.

Key words: Aegina, agora, Argive Heraion, Assos, Athens, Greek architecture, public space,
Kalydon, Kassope, Olympia, Priene, sanctuary.