

Future trips of the LPA:

Dawn, June 21st, 1993

at Callanais (Callanish), Isle of Lewis.

A more extensive trip to one of the more remote spots in the British Isles. This year there is a new moon on the Solstice. One of the most important complexes of standing stones in the world is to be found here.

A factsheet detailing public transport facilities and ferries will be available from us, to help people find their way there.

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planner, Peter Rees, that the Nat West Tower be replaced by "the world's tallest building". At the moment structural damage to tower is being assessed (it will take about 3 months). If repair costs are too high, the building will be demolished. In this event, Canary Wharf could be dwarfed by another monstrosity, recentring spectacular development back into the City itself.

Omphalos Battle No. 2

Meanwhile the struggle at Twyford Down continues. Twyford Down/St. Catherine's Hill has also been put forward as an Omphalos. (See our pamphlet *The Great Conjunction*, available from Unpopular Books for £2 +30p p&p). On November 27th, the date of the Great Conjunction, Twyford Down demonstrators attempted to block Marble Arch with banners marked with two runes. These were X , the Odal rune, meaning "land, property" and A , the Tir rune meaning "the vault of the heavens above the cosmic pillar" (*The Secret Lore of Runes and other Ancient Alphabets* by Nigel Pennick). The Cosmic Pillar is traditionally placed at the omphalos.

In our last issue we featured an account of government attacks on protesters at Twyford Down, entitled *Victory to the Dongas*. We have since discovered that they only constituted one group of the protesters and are noted for their fanatical royalist views.

We would wish to make it clear that while we oppose state violence against all the protesters, we see the political ideology of the Dongas as very negative. They are receiving support from a PaganLink National Facilitator.

The Royal family claims descent from both Wotan (through the Saxon monarchy) and Freya (through the William the Conqueror). There is evidence that the monarchy has survived precisely by blending Paganism with Christianity (particular found in the works of Margaret Murray). Many Pagans have been drawn to paganism as part of a rejection of the ignoble squalor of modern power structures. We would draw their attention to the fact that many ruling class groups have a foot in both camps.

Escape from the White City

The limits and possibilities of white towns and ghettos are explored by Black Britons every day. The physically and politically restrictive effects of racism are particularly apparent for the non-white residents of all white areas. From Dover to Dundee, Asian, Chinese and African Britons find themselves on the front line of the on-going struggle for the liberation of urban space from tedium and fear.

"The streets look different if you're black", explained one West Essex Asian youth to the LPA, "in a white town at any moment, anytime, you could get attacked, get abused, for no other reason than the fact that you look a bit different. White people have no idea how easy it is for them. They don't have to think. But I always have to be so aware, so alert."

Such testimonies provide invaluable psychogeographical information on the contemporary

experience of social oppression. Such data could be used to map the zones of racial hostility, as well as those of integration and anti-racist resistance, within our towns and cities. They could also be used to sensitise the established psychogeographical techniques of urban 'drifting' and 'diversion' to the pervasive effects of racism on people's mobility and environmental perceptions.

The most insightful researchers in this area would necessarily be Black Britons. However, no-one should be excluded from such explorations. Indeed, even the dismal testimonies of white racists could provide useful material on the racial myths and boundaries that thread their way through every street.

Further suggestions, and personal experiences, on this topic are encouraged from readers.

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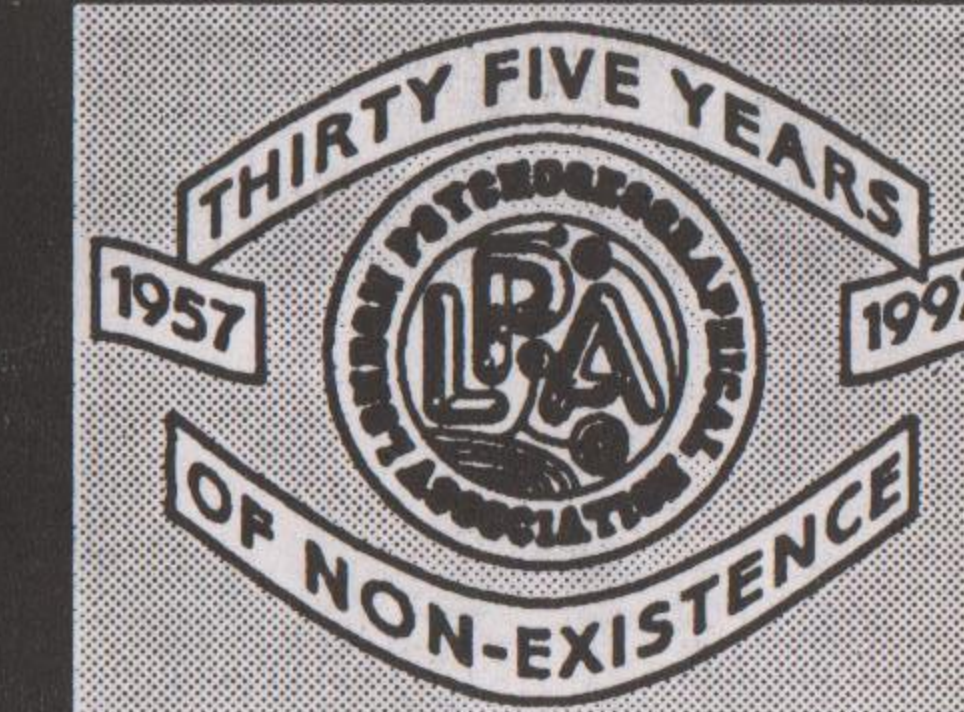


London Psychogeographical Association

Newsletter

Beltaine 1993

No.2



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BUS STOP Competition

The LPA is proud to announce that it is organising the *All Britain Bus Stop of the Year Competition*. Entrance is invited from all bus stops in the British Isles. Please send us an SAE for an entry form. All entries have to be in by November 1st, to ensure that it is possible to visit all entrants.

An LPA judge will be appointed for your local bus stop to carry out a proper assessment. Bus stops will be judged primarily according to the ambience, the quality of conversation and human interaction, although points will also be awarded for quality of shelter, the view, tidiness and regularity of bus service.

The winner will be announced at 3pm December 25th, by the Old Royal Observatory, Greenwich, London.

Omphalos under Fire!

On April 24th the IRA exploded a bomb in Bishopsgate, near the NatWest Tower. This is the tallest in the City of London. It is built on the site once occupied by Gresham College, the original home of the Royal Society. This site may be considered as an Omphalos of London.

Dating back to ancient Greece, the original word 'omphalos' meant 'navel' and was particularly applied to the Oracle at Delphi. This was the physical and psychic centre of Greek mythology. Since then it has come to mean the psychogeographical centre of any culture, myth structure or system of social dominance. It's political relevance will become more apparent when the Yugoslav war spills over into Kosovo, where the Serbian Omphalos is located in a predominantly Albanian area.

In modern Britain however, we are embedded in a web of interleaved cultures and competing value-systems. There is no clear omphalos, although in recent years the subject has gained more interest. Notably the battles around Stonehenge makes more sense when seen as a matter of control of the omphalos there. This was preceded by the suppression of the Windsor Free Festival in 1974. Windsor is another omphalic site.

But these omphalic sites are not simply of interest to hippies. The army has maintained a massive presence in the Stonehenge area for years, and royalty has controlled Windsor for centuries. They are of great importance to the ruling elite.

Several places, such as the London Stone, Charing Cross, Westminster Abbey or Old



Compton Street have been put forward as sites for the omphalos of London. Each has its merits. When we put forward the National Westminster/Gresham College site as an omphalos, we are suggesting it has a particular symbolic importance.

Sir Thomas Gresham was a leading member of the Mercer's guild. He founded the Royal Exchange, which then relocated the central money market of northern Europe to London. When he died, he left provision in his will for money accruing from the Royal Exchange to fund Gresham College, which would be set up in his former London house.

The College was to be administered jointly by the Mercer's guild and the Corporation of the City of London. Although no longer at its original site, the College still functions offering a range of lectures free to the public.

The City of London has responded to the bombing with the proposal by their chief

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The Oxford Trip, March 20/21st



Seven people met at dawn. First we visited Tom Quad, Christ Church College. The dawn's rosy light softened the colour of the stone. We wandered through the college but had to retrace our steps when we found our route to Christ Church Meadow barred by a locked gate. Eventually we were able to eat our sandwiches by the Cherwell.

In search of hot drinks, we made our way into the covered market. We could only drink standing up. It soon transpired that the only early morning place to sit and have a cup of tea was McDonalds. Yes, we went in! — despite the controversy over their prosecution of two members of London Greenpeace (for more information contact McLibel SC, London Greenpeace, 5 Caledonian Road, London N1 Tel: 081-837-7557). We couldn't find a proper cafe.

The rest of the morning was spent wandering around the town centre visiting colleges and St. Michael's church, which contained a very old Shiel-na-gig. At lunch time we went to the Bear, noted for its collection of old school and

club ties. Here an eighth person joined our party.

In the afternoon/evening the group split up exploring different sites in Oxford. Some of us took a punt out.

Sunday involved a substantial walk. We crossed Port meadow to Fiddler's Island, walking along where Alice had her adventure in Wonderland.

Leaving the river bank we headed for Church Farm, Binsey. Here there is St. Margaret's Well which was decorated with flowers, candles and corn offerings. The church pre-dates the Oxford colleges and is dedicated to St. Frideswide.

Inside the pulpit of the church there was an interesting modern carving of a woman holding a cross and standing in the mouth of a creature half frog half crocodile. The site used to be an Island covered with thorn thickets. The chapel is attached to the Cathedral in Christ Church College.

We walked up to the ruined nunnery at Godstow, where there were a large amount of geese. Then we caught the bus back from Wolvercote.

PICKWICK APPEAL

Some of our critics have compared us unfavourably with Dickens' fictional *Pickwick Club* — a nineteenth century parody of contemporary intellectual associations. We would have much preferred comparison with the London Corresponding Society. In response to our detractors, we invite you to participate in our *Pickwick Appeal*. This simply involves sending us a £10 note with a picture of the cricket match between Dingley Dell and All Muggleton on the reverse. Sorry, old style £10 notes cannot be accepted.

Oxford Triangulation by the Night Patrol

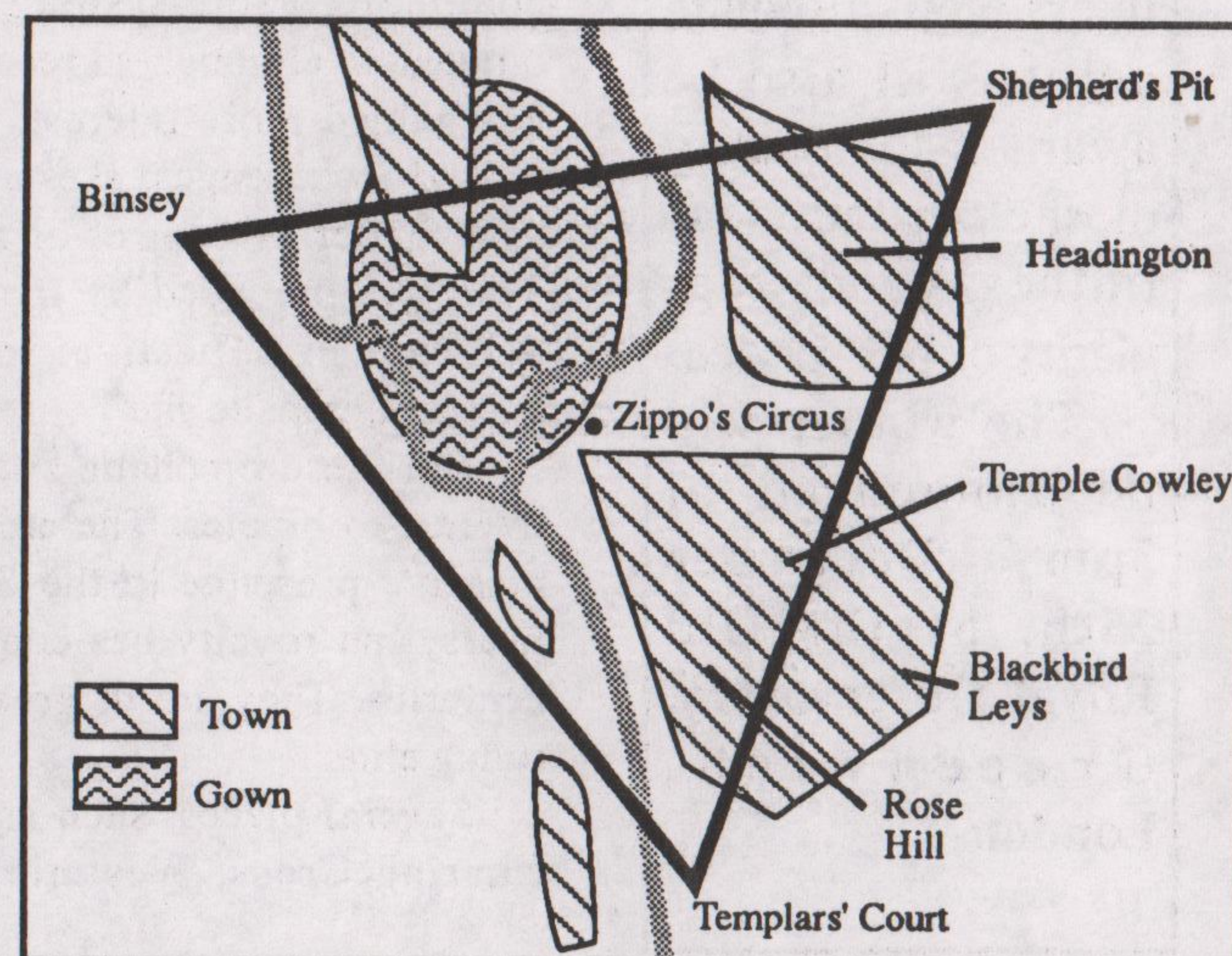
An interesting Triangulation was achieved by two members of the party who had brought a motor car with them. This device, little more than a box with wheels and an internal combustion engine, enabled them to roam around at high speed, often leaving the town itself for more rural areas. A chief factor in these nocturnal derives by the Night Patrol was to find a suitable place to sleep undisturbed by the police or other undesirable elements. The first night a field was found in the vicinity of Shepherd's Pit, a hamlet half a mile north of Bayswater Mill, close to Stanton St. John. The second night was spent in a gateway leading to the Templar's Court Country Club, premises owned by Magdalen College.

Imagine our surprise when it turned out that these two points were very close to forming an equilateral triangle with St. Margaret's Well! The error was between 30 and 80 metres in a total distance of 8 Kilometres. This is a level of accuracy that even Sony are hard put to match with their latest satellite technology.

"Now geographers and urban planners, as well as traffic engineers and developers, are enthralled by the imminent prospect of basing the management of complex urban systems — traffic flows, zoning, and so on — on LANDSAT satellites linked to GIS [Geographical Information Systems] software. Since the image resolution capabilities of commercial satellite systems are now approaching the threshold of distinguishing individual automobiles, and perhaps even people and their pets, it will be possible to monitor the movement of entire populations."

Mike Davis interviewed by Covert Action in *Clash* #7 (available from *Stichting Marinus vd Lubbe*, Postbus 11149, 1001 GL Amsterdam, Netherlands for £1.50)

We felt much relief when careful map work revealed that the centre of the equilateral triangulation we had carried out was located at Zippo's circus in the park by Headington Hill. Although one of the sides of this triangle went through the centre of Temple Cowley (which got its name from the land donated by Queen Matilda to the Knights Templar in 1135), we could find no link with outbreak of joy-riding and ensuing confrontation with the police which took place at Rose Hill on the Friday night.



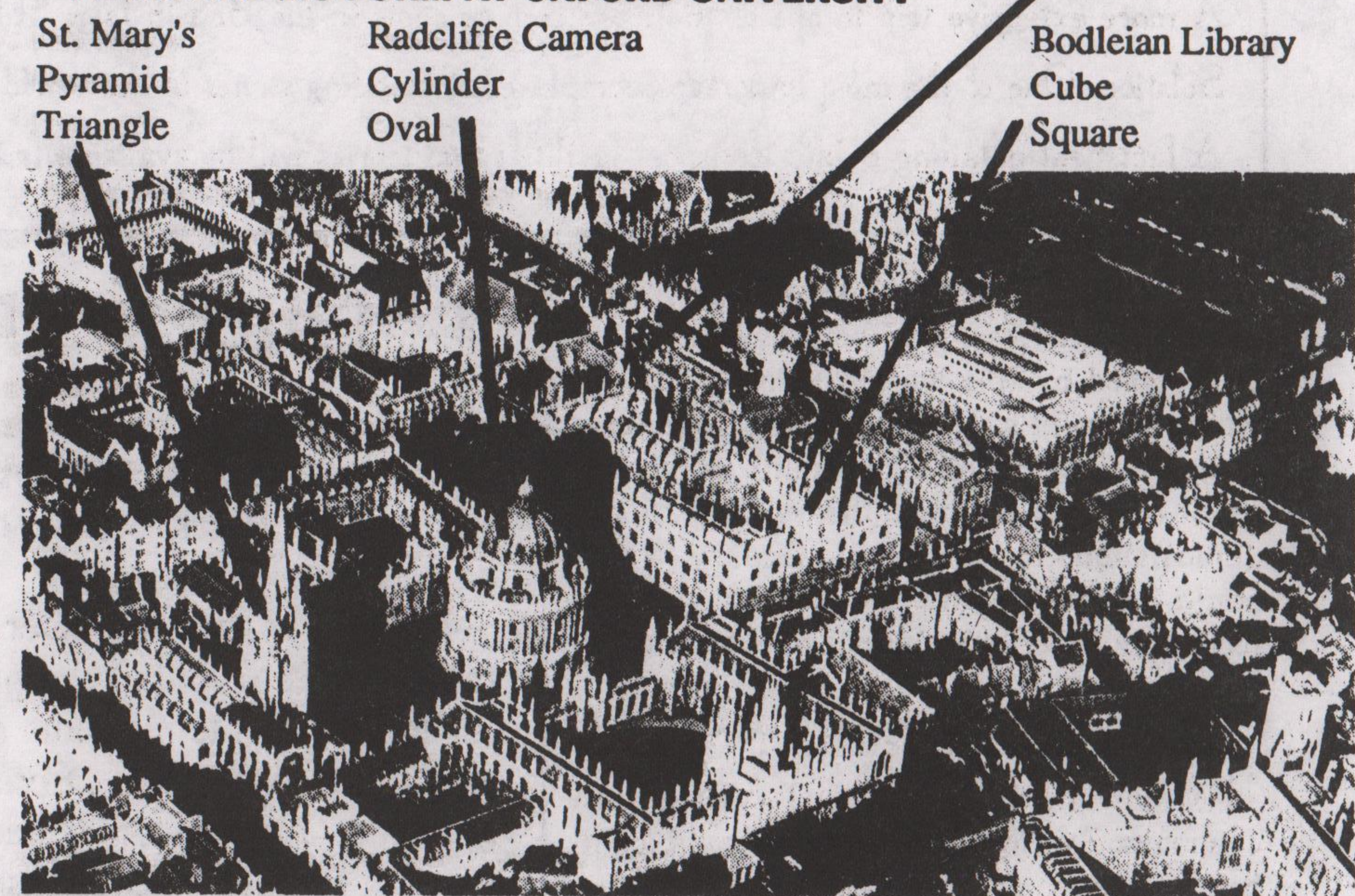
Speculation about Form and Element in the principle of No-Form

by Hans Richter

Are the Square and the circle elements of pictorial language? And if so, are there more elements than these two? For instance, as Cézanne meant in his three dimensional way, the pyramid (triangle), the cube (square), the cylinder (oval). What makes an element elementary? Answer: its non-reduceability into another form except by breaking it up. Like prime numbers, for instance. But what is the psychological significance of a form element? Is there an attitude to a form element different to that to a composed form and rare form that attracts our attention by being unusual? Do we look in the same way or is our attention attracted in the same way to elementary forms as to composed ones? Or, in the terminology of my own work, is an elementary form identical with no-form in contrast to a composite form which is, more or less, a natural, subjective, invented one that appears in nature? Is it not a fact that there are two different categories? Is it not a fact that we do behave differently both psychologically and emotionally in the two cases? We look at the square or the circle in one way and in another at special forms. Are square and circle not unspecial forms in comparison to all the others? If so, why? Is it because the elementary forms do not appear in nature?

The answer to this sense of difference might lie within ourselves. The square has a very direct relation to our body, inasmuch as it is a balance between our uprightness and the soil, the earth we are walking upon. This walking and standing is, by itself, a balancing act — one perceives this in children. In this way, the square may be conceived of as not only a surface or space but as the expression of a dynamical experience throughout our lives. But it is, of course, also a surface and a space, elementary housing: stone upon stone, wood upon wood, and on top a cover; a feeling of being at or in home — covered, limited, protected against the non-I. I think this kind of biological connotation including the esthetic one which might have grown

FORM AND NO-FORM AT OXFORD UNIVERSITY



Is the copy of John Dee's magic table kept here?

out of it, has something to do with our familiarity with the square and with it being somewhat outside what we call form. The circle may go back to similar roots. Here's the first, primitive housing—the cave—and even more, of course, the skies, the sun, the moon. Round is identical with the sun and moon as THE elementary-every-day experience. I experience these connotations as an artist; not just the geometrical differences between forms, but differences between natural forms and no-form. I experience two categories: One, elementary = no form, not forms created by man but elements. Two, natural forms, including the geometrical ones.

Our perception is regulated by our body and brain. We can neither see nor imagine forms other than those for which we are conditioned. Theoretically, there might be innumerable other forms, but they are outside human experience. The way we are constituted, the whole scale of our form perception and sensation is related to our world, and this world is all square and all round.

(Hans Richter by Hans Richter, New York 1971, p 164)

Temporal Dissonance

Two incidences of Temporal Dissonance occurred during the trip. One member saw some posters advertising an @narchist Bookfair up the Cowley Road. Two of the party set off to investigate, only to discover they were a month late. The bookfair had taken place on February 20th, not March 20th!

The other peice of temporal dissonance was a bit more complicated. One member of the party put forward the notion that British Summer Time was going to be introduced over Saturday night/Sunday morning, on account of it being the equinox. Thus it was proposed that we should meet at 12 o'clock the following day, which would be the same as eleven o'clock if the clock's hadn't changed.

Six of the party met at 12 noon (LPA time), but another member remained with British Consensual Time, arriving at 1 pm (LPA Time), 12 noon (BCT time). Thus they were unable to take part in the most interesting excursion that afternoon.