

houses in Montmartre (Fig. 8.10). Perhaps we should ban the wholesale redevelopment of large city areas and only permit relatively piecemeal interventions. Will the massive and highly symbolic reconstruction of Potsdamer Platz in Berlin prove to be a noble exception to this rule? So far it rather looks as if not. There is a sameness of scale and purpose that speaks of large corporations more concerned with their international positions than the spaces of Potsdamerplatz. Curiously, the little temporary building erected to allow us to view the construction was the most alive building on the site when I visited it, but sadly that will probably have gone before this book is even published!

### **Invitational space**

The parking bays in our university car park were in a sense an invitation to behave in a particular way. Some architects have developed a very subtle ability to create rather more open-ended or even ambiguous invitations. In his Glasgow School of Art, Charles Rennie Mackintosh ran a corridor at a high level along the rear of the building. From this position there are spectacular views down from the relative heights of Sauchiehall Street, where the main façade is located, over the city centre. A series of small windows each set out into a bay invites the passer-by to sit and read or to meet with another colleague just off the main route for a chat. The function does not need to be specified, since the spatial invitation to sit on the windowsills is quite enough to trigger the behaviour.

Herman Hertzberger, perhaps the arch-exponent of such ideas, frequently developed such spatial invitations (Hertzberger 1971). In a housing scheme, he placed a small concrete block outside each dwelling. It carried the number and had a light that illuminated the area in front of the entrance at night, so it helped to generate some identity for each dwelling. However, it could also be used for a myriad of other purposes; residents could sit on it and chat, or even hold picnics around it, delivery boys and postmen could leave parcels by it and so on. I remember some few years ago visiting Hertzberger's office to discuss his work for another book I was writing on the design process. Since it was a rather pleasant autumnal day, he suggested we sat in the garden. What I took to be a prototype of these ingeniously designed concrete blocks was found out there, and he clearly intended us to sit around it. However, to his evident slight irritation and my amusement it had suggested yet another function to his staff, who had propped a mass of bicycles up against it!

Of course Hertzberger went much further than this in his theory of 'structuralism' in design. He advocated a way of thinking about designed objects and spaces as 'instruments' rather than 'tools'. His