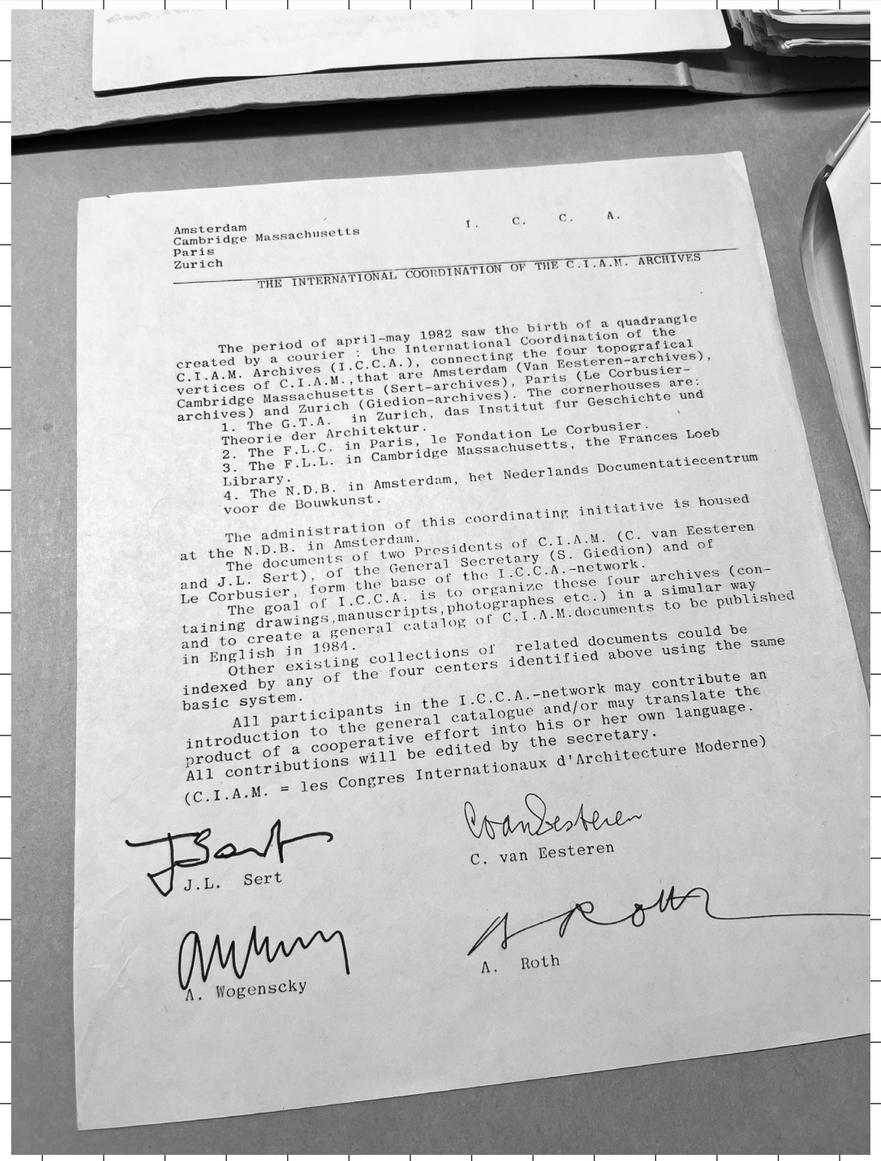
Jaap Bakema Study Centre

NETWORKS OF (EX)CHANGE
Global Disseminations of Architectural Knowledge

Twelfth Annual Conference
November 2025

Networks of (Ex)Change, Global Disseminations of Architectural Knowledge



Amsterdam
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I. C. C. A.

THE INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION OF THE C.I.A.M. ARCHIVES

The period of april-may 1982 saw the birth of a quadrangle created by a courier : the International Coordination of the C.I.A.M. Archives (I.C.C.A.), connecting the four topografical vertices of C.I.A.M.,that are Amsterdam (Van Eesteren-archives), Cambridge Massachusetts (Sert-archives), Paris (Le Corbusier-archives) and Zurich (Giedion-archives). The cornerhouses are:

1. The G.T.A. in Zurich, das Institut fur Geschichte und Theorie der Architektur.
2. The F.L.C. in Paris, le Fondation Le Corbusier.
3. The F.L.L. in Cambridge Massachusetts, the Frances Loeb Library.
4. The N.D.B. in Amsterdam, het Nederlands Documentatiecentrum voor de Bouwkunst.

The administration of this coordinating initiative is housed at the N.D.B. in Amsterdam.

The documents of two Presidents of C.I.A.M. (C. van Eesteren and J.L. Sert), of the General Secretary (S. Giedion) and of Le Corbusier, form the base of the I.C.C.A.-network.

The goal of I.C.C.A. is to organize these four archives (containing drawings,manuscripts,photographes etc.) in a simular way and to create a general catalog of C.I.A.M.documents to be published in English in 1984.

Other existing collections of related documents could be indexed by any of the four centers identified above using the same basic system.

All participants in the I.C.C.A.-network may contribute an introduction to the general catalogue and/or may translate the product of a cooperative effort into his or her own language.
All contributions will be edited by the secretary.
(C.I.A.M. = les Congres Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne)

J.L. Sert

C. van Eesteren

A. Wogenscky

A. Roth

‘The International Coordination of the C.I.A.M. Archives’, Statement of intent for the establishment of a CIAM archival platform by J.L. Sert, C. van Eesteren, A. Wogenscky and A. Roth, 1982. Courtesy of gta Archive.

Dirk van den Heuvel (Nieuwe Instituut) and Irina Davidovici (gta Archive)

Actant Archives, Networking Knowledge

What are architecture archives today? Digital technologies are causing a commotion. In entirely new and unexpected ways, they open the proverbial vaults of the collections, where drawings and models collect dust. The virtual archive goes outside and becomes mobile, even nomadic, it connects with other places and new actors. With a few clicks, the archive can be accessed and downloaded, on your phone, your laptop. Scholars can compare and analyse sources from their home offices, or while travelling. Still a patchwork, the contours of a new sort of meta-archive are becoming visible, by connecting and networking between institutions. Such is the motivational drive behind this twelfth annual conference of the Jaap Bakema Study Centre devoted to the topic of ‘Networks of (Ex)change, Global Disseminations of Architectural Knowledge’, organised in partnership with the ETH Zurich and gta Archives.

CONNECTING ARCHIVE INSTITUTIONS

This collaboration has been prompted by a collective archival project related to the archives of the *Congrès Internationaux d’Architecture Moderne* (CIAM), held at the gta Archives and at the Nieuwe Instituut in Rotterdam. These archives belong to the core of both institutions’ collection as some of the most consulted holdings. As a network of exchange CIAM can be considered the most important association of architects during the twentieth century, and its archives a major entry point to studying the international debates on the modernisation and urbanisation of our societies. It’s hard to overestimate CIAM’s global impact on avant-garde architecture and urban planning, influencing post-war reconstruction in Europe and new urban developments around the world, including the post-colonial realities.

In view of the forthcoming centenary of the founding of CIAM in June 2028, the two institutions have teamed up as main project partners for a digital archive and research platform, tentatively called CIAM Collections Online (CCO). To be launched in the centenary year, the CCO will make accessible online CIAM-related materials from archives worldwide. The intention is to build a wider network with other important collections on the history of CIAM that are scattered around the world, including at the Frances Loeb Library at Harvard University, the CIAM Belgium archive at the Getty Research Institute, the Fondation Le Corbusier in Paris, and the Bauhaus Archive in Berlin.

The project does not intend to neutrally spread the modernist gospel and amplify canonical historiography. On the contrary, new digital technologies enable us to reflect on and reconceptualise the history of CIAM. Thus we start

with the proposition of CIAM as a network, not so much a coming together of individual geniuses, but rather a collective thinking together producing and disseminating new architectural knowledge. Such revisions will bring out overlooked voices and marginalised positions. Intersectional feminist and ecological perspectives are key to our aim of bringing to light female actors and (post)colonial histories previously sidelined and often untold.

Furthermore, this inter-institutional and inter-archival project wants to question the nature of the archive itself, as an institution which produces and validates knowledge, cultural values and identities. In reference to Bruno Latour we'd like to rethink the archive as a so-called *actant*, the non-human actor with its own kind of agency in a web of interrelations that enables research and historiography. Selections, classifications and metadata are just a few examples of the powerful ordering agency of archives, producing historical facts that render some actors visible, yet leave many others unnoticed.

To better understand its agency, its positive and negative impacts, to navigate the pitfalls of history research and writing, we advocate reading against or along the grain by once again re-rereading the multiple archival sources as stored and classified — which together form quite another collection of actants themselves, the actual letters, drawings, manifestoes and so forth and so on, weaving another net of interrelations. It is up to the researcher to engage to remap those interrelations, and identify the biases that often exist in archive formation. Most of all we aim to throw light on those in-between spaces — a very different, yet crucial category of institutional knowledge — the interstices, the gaps and dark spots, where the archive remains silent.

CONFERENCE QUESTIONS

In the 21st century, globalisation seems like an almost natural condition, inescapable in everything from planetary communication technologies and energy infrastructures to the threat of pandemics and climate crises. The transformation of architectural discourse and exchange has followed suit. Current geopolitical upheavals are a stark reminder of the importance of such networks of collaboration and knowledge exchange.

CIAM played a central role in facilitating a transnational shift in architectural discourse and practice following World War I and the multiple crises that followed. Crucially, design issues were seen as inextricably linked to pressing social and environmental concerns, with mass housing and universal health care at the forefront. CIAM became a place for the exchange of design strategies to both accommodate and counter the relentless modernisation of cities, countries and even entire continents.

Albeit arguably the best known, CIAM was neither the first nor the only international platform for architects to network and share knowledge.

From the early international congresses on housing and urban planning, to a host of avant-garde groups, professional organisations such as the UIA, and international agencies such as UN Habitat, multiple networks facilitated international exchanges and professional alignments across ideological and political boundaries. Whatever their scope, agendas or lifespans, these networks were and are almost invariably transdisciplinary, recognizing the benefits of including expertise and voices from outside architecture, especially from government representatives, societal stakeholders, and benefactors.

When we put out our call for papers, we asked for exploratory contributions that map and identify the formative moments and multiple actors within these global networks and their modes of operation. The conference aims the following:

To define and investigate which kinds of conditions prompted network exchanges;

To reflect on the actual means by which these networks are enacted, from architectural competitions to knowledge exchanges, government policies and industry programmes;

To critically probe the role of institution building–from archives to schools of architecture – in the development and maintenance of such networks of exchange;

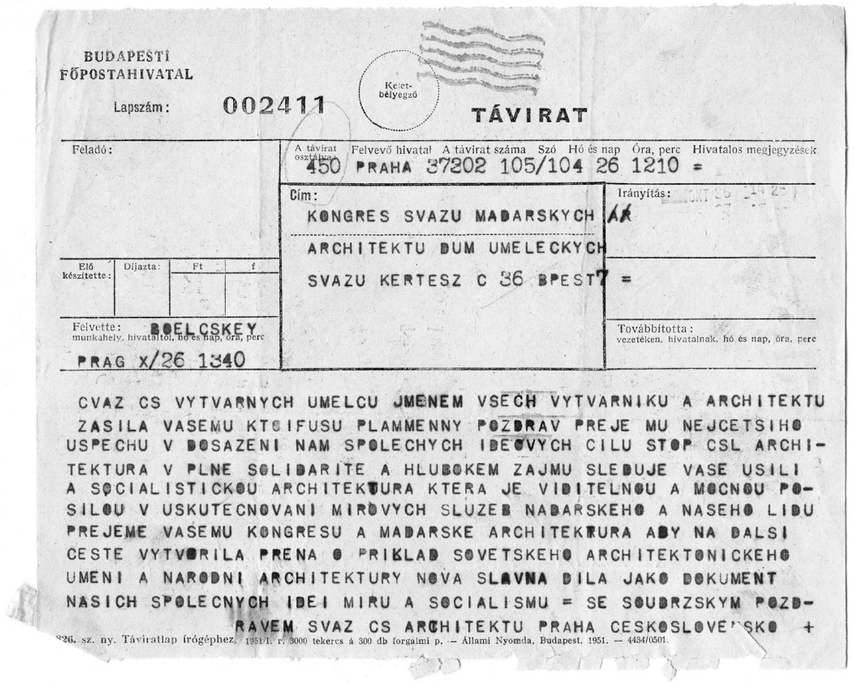
To question the role of architectural media in these exchanges and how they themselves were transformed by such exchanges;

To reveal how industrial and economic interests, as well as local political and professional organisations, intersect with these networks of exchange.

The response to the call presents a broad and rich range of ongoing research work from all around the world, bringing new perspectives and a reversed gazes onto the canonical histories of the twentieth century. Together, the papers collected in this volume are proof that work on this wider topic has only just begun. They illuminate the emergence of global exchanges and their networks – not just as historical phenomena, but also touching on pressing questions of today, from a socio-ecological point of view to the need to pluralise histories, as demonstration these are collectively produced by a multitude of actors.

To make this all possible, a special thank you goes out to the Van Eesteren & Fluck-Van Lohuizen foundation, which generously supported the travels of some of our conference participants.

Networks and Conferences



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826. sz. ny. Táviratlap írógéphez. 1951/1. r. 3000 tekercs á 300 db forgalmi p. — Állami Nyomda, Budapest. 1951. — 4484/0501.

Telegram from the Union of Czechoslovak Artists to the First National Congress of Hungarian Architects, October 26, 1951. Courtesy of the Hungarian Museum of Architecture, Budapest.

Richard Anderson (University of Edinburgh)

Against CIAM: Socialist Architectural Networks in Europe, ca. 1951

After a short flight from Warsaw, Jan Minorski landed in Budapest on October 26, 1951 to take part in the First National Congress of Hungarian Architects. In an account published in *Architektura*, the journal Minorski edited, he described entering the National Museum to the sound of speeches booming through loudspeakers. An ovation greeted him and the rest of the Polish delegation upon arrival. Taking his seat on the presidium, Minorski scanned the crowd, noting that 'everybody seemed somehow familiar, but the language was completely incomprehensible'.[1] He was nevertheless able to identify a few keywords resounding in the hall: 'formalism', 'constructivism', 'modernism', '*neue Sachlichkeit*', and 'socialist realism'. These he called the 'common terms of architectural polemics in countries building socialism'.[2] Minorski found himself seated among architects from Hungary, the Soviet Union, Romania, Bulgaria, and the German Democratic Republic [GDR]. This multinational assembly witnessed the three-day congress and its culmination in the founding of the Hungarian Union of Architects — a body formed to advance the cause for a socialist-realist architecture against the 'imperialist' and 'cosmopolitan' modern tendencies of the 'bourgeois West'.[3]

But there was more to the congress than the formal proceedings alone. Minorski described the multi-day tour of Budapest and surrounding cities that he and other foreign delegates enjoyed in the days following the event. They visited the new socialist city Dunapentele, which would soon be renamed Sztalinváros [Stalin City] and is known as Dunaújváros today. During festive gatherings and study tours, congress participants gossiped, talked shop, and made connections. Minorski proudly reported to his Polish audience that the Hungarian architect, planner, and lecturer Imre Perényi had incorporated lessons on the design of Warsaw into his courses at the Technical University in Budapest. During a reception on October 29, Petur Tashev, director of planning for the new socialist city of Dmitrovgrad in Bulgaria, challenged Tibor Weiner's team of planners developing Dunapentele to a socialist competition.[4] Kurt Liebknecht, a delegate from the GDR, noted that the value of the Hungarian congress lay in its assembly, for the first

This research has been supported by the British Academy and the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton. I thank Ágnes Anna Sebestyén and Pál Ritoók at the Hungarian Museum of Architecture for facilitating access to the museum's archives. I am grateful to András Ferkai and the conference organisers for their helpful comments. All errors and translations are my own.

1 Jan Minorski, "Pierwszy kongres architektów węgierskich," *Architektura*, no. 2 (1952): 52.
2 Minorski, "Pierwszy kongres," 52.
3 See the resolutions in *A magyar építőművészek első országos kongresszusa* (Építőipari Könyv- és Lapkiadó Vállalat, 1952), 161–164.
4 Minorski, "Pierwszy kongres," 56.

time, of architects from the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies to share experiences and discuss common challenges.[5] Conceived as a ceremony to mark the authority of Stalinist cultural policy in architecture, the congress registered this transformation by connecting Hungarian architects to a network of socialist peers.[6]

The escalation of geopolitical tensions at the start of the Cold War precipitated a coercive process of Sovietisation in most aspects of life in the People's Democracies. In Hungary, the merger of the Social Democratic Party with the Communist Party in mid-1948 handed political authority to the newly formed Hungarian Workers' Party, which reinforced its hold on power in uncontested elections the following year. Accounts of this process in architecture have primarily focused on bilateral relationships between the USSR and European countries in Moscow's sphere of influence, but events like the Hungarian congress demonstrate that multilateral exchanges played a significant role in the constitution of an international world of socialist architecture in the era of High Stalinism.[7] These connections contributed to the integration of the Eastern Block by rendering shared architectural concerns intelligible.[8]

In Hungary, the construction of new architectural alliances came at the expense of earlier relationships. After the country's liberation in 1945, its leading architects re-established the close links they had maintained with CIAM [Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne] between the wars.[9] József Fischer played a key role in this effort: he had been an active member of the Hungarian CIAM group in the 1920s and '30s, and in 1945 he was named director of the Budapest Board of Public Works. The Board took over the publication of the journal *Tér és forma* [Space and Form], which had been published since 1928 and was previously edited by Virgil Bierbauer. Fischer became editor-in-chief, and he ensured that the journal regularly promoted the work of architects associated with CIAM.[10] The editorial team included Máté Major, a member of the interwar CIAM group, and Pál Granasztói, a participant in post-war CIAM activities. Fischer and Granasztói attended the CIAM meeting in Zurich in May 1947, and they represented Hungary at CIAM 6 in Bridgewater, England.[11] Under Fischer, the Board of Public Works implemented broad measures for Budapest's reconstruction, including the rebuilding of bridges across the Danube that German forces had destroyed. The most prominent public building of the second half of the 1940s in Hungary was undoubtedly the headquarters of the National Union of Construction Workers. Designed and built between 1947 and 1950, its authors included Gábor Preisich, an active member of the CIAM group between the wars. The building's clear tectonic expression, flexible, functional disposition of volumes, and demonstrative freedom from historical forms manifested the principles of the 'new architecture' – *új építészet*, as it was called in Hungary.

Fischer planned on attending the seventh CIAM conference in Bergamo but had to cancel due to passport difficulties.[12] The restriction on Fischer's mobility was symptomatic of a broader shift: he had been removed from his post at the Board of Public Works in early 1948 because his support for the Social Democratic Party was no longer acceptable to the Communist Party, which was steadily seizing control of Hungarian institutions using Mátyás Rákosi's infamous 'salami tactics'. *Tér és forma* was closed down, and other publications increasingly focused on the USSR, publishing translations and digests of Soviet architecture in an effort to draw Hungarian architects into Moscow's orbit. In the end, no Hungarian representatives attended the Bergamo CIAM meeting to witness Helena Syrkus accuse CIAM of 'formalism' and argue for the relevance of socialist realism.[13] For the next two and a half years, former CIAM members – Máté Major above all – would lead a losing campaign in support of the principles of the new architecture.

In an essay of August 1948, Major challenged received ideas about Soviet architectural theory by arguing that the new architecture in fact manifested the true principles of socialist realism.[14] This set off an extended exchange with Imre Perényi, who had been educated in Moscow and would soon become a voice of Stalinist orthodoxy in Hungarian architectural affairs. In his response to Major's essay, Perényi invoked the authority of Andrei Zhdanov – Bolshevik Party secretary and cultural advisor to Joseph Stalin – to argue that Major's views amounted to support for 'formalist' and 'cosmopolitan' positions that had been denounced in the Soviet Union.[15] The dispute between Major and Perényi culminated in a highly orchestrated debate in April 1951. In addition to their extended speeches (Major's ran to sixty-nine manuscript pages), the event included wide-ranging discussions with selected architects and theorists, including György Lukács.[16] In his lecture 'Western Decadence in Contemporary Architecture', Perényi criticized the work of CIAM-affiliated architects – though without mentioning CIAM by name – and argued that modern architecture was but a 'cosmopolitan' trend that should be superseded by Soviet models based on historical and

5 Liebknecht paraphrased in Richard Linneke, "Ungarischer Architektenkongress," *Planen und Bauen* 5, no. 24 (1951): 579.
6 The international aspect of the congress has been generally overlooked. See, for example, Endre Prakfalvi and György Szücs, *A szocreál Magyarországon* (Corvina, 2010), 74–81.
7 A key account of these processes through a bilateral lens is found in Anders Åman, *Architecture and Ideology in Eastern Europe during the Stalin Era: An Aspect of Cold War history* (Architectural History Foundation, 1992).
8 For an analogous argument in relation to state security, see Molly Pucci, *Security Empire: The Secret Police in Communist Eastern Europe* (Yale University Press, 2020).
9 See Eszter Gábor, *A CIAM magyar csoportja (1928–1938)* (Akadémiai kiadó, 1972).
10 József Fischer, "Dokumentum," *Tér és forma* 20, no. 6 (1947): 119–121.
11 László Málnai, "A modern építészek világkongresszusa és a modern építészek feladatai," *Új Építészet* 2, no. 11 (1947): 296–298.
12 See Fischer's telegram to Sigfried Giedion cited in Ákos Moravánszky, "Re-Humanizing Architecture: The Search for a Common Ground in the Postwar Years, 1950–1970," in *Re-Humanizing Architecture: New Forms of Community, 1950–1970*, ed. Ákos Moravánszky and Judith Hopfengärtner (Birkhäuser, 2017), 37.
13 On Helena Syrkus and CIAM, see Marcela Hanáčková, "CIAM and the Cold War: Helena Syrkus between Modernism and Socialist Realism" (ETH Zurich, 2019). A belated commentary on the Bergamo congress eventually appeared in the Hungarian press when the journal *Építés–Építészet* published two letters by Gabriele Mucchi, who had participated in the event. See Gabriele Mucchi, "Két levél Mucchitól," *Építés–Építészet* 2, no. 9–10 (1950): 680.
14 Máté Major, "Az új építészet elméleti kérdései (szocialista realizmus az építészetben)," *Magyar Technika* 3, no. 8 (1948): 120–124.
15 Imre Perényi, "Építészetünk útja," *Szabad nép*, November 13, 1949, 10.
16 See, most recently, Ákos Moravánszky, "The Specificity of Architecture: Architectural Debates and Critical Theory in Hungary, 1945–1989," *Architectural Histories* 7, no. 1 (2019): 2–4.

national forms.[17] During the discussion, Perényi admitted his own error in contributing to the design of the headquarters of the National Union of Construction Workers, which he now rejected as a manifestation of the new architecture.[18] Major defended modern architectural principles throughout the debate, but he never had a chance of winning over his audience. József Révai, the Hungarian Minister of Culture, closed the debate with remarks that made it clear that the Communist Party demanded the study and adoption of Soviet models, not the principles of international modernism.[19] Following the debate, Major was removed from his position as dean of the Faculty of Architectural Engineering at the Technical University and stripped of his role as editor-in-chief of Hungary's main architectural journal *Építés–Építészet* [Construction–Architecture].[20]

The First Congress of Hungarian Architects was organised as a direct result of the great debate of April 1951. A plan of work from August of that year communicated the ambitions of the event: there were to be at least three hundred attendees, and an exhibition of Hungarian and Soviet architecture would accompany it. The organisers noted that 'the congress must have an international character'.[21] They meant that representatives from the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies should attend. For technical reasons, the organisers focused on nearby countries, sending invitations to Poland, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Romania, and the GDR. All but Czechoslovakia sent delegates to the congress. A conference of the Union of Czechoslovak Artists fell on the same day as the Hungarian event, so the Czechoslovak Union greeted the congress in Budapest by telegram instead.[22] The Soviet delegates included Sergei Chernyshev, vice president of the Soviet Academy of Architecture, and Mikhailo Tsapenko, director of the Institute of the History and Theory of Architecture of the Ukrainian Academy of Architecture. Major offered a self-critical speech, partially recanting the position he had defended in April.[23]

A special issue of the journal *Építés–Építészet* prepared for the congress registered the specific international relationships that the event was intended to foster. A group of young authors rehearsed denunciations of the alleged 'cosmopolitan' architecture of the West by contrasting it with Soviet examples.[24]

17 See Imre Perényi, "Nyugati dekadens áramlat a mai építészetben," in *Vita építészetünk helyzetéről* (MDP KV Agit. és Prop. Oszt., 1951), 7–25.
18 *Vita építészetünk helyzetéről: A Központi Előadói Iroda Kultúrpolitikai Munkaközössége ülésének rövidített jegyzőkönyve* (Budapest: MDP KV Agit. és Prop. Oszt., 1951), 69.
19 Révai's summation would be widely published, in Hungarian and many other languages. See József Révai, "Az új magyar építészet kérdései," *Építés–Építészet*, no. 9–10 (1951): 467–474.
20 János Bonta's description of these events downplays the ruthless political calculation behind them. See János Bonta, *A magyar építé*szet egy kortárs szemével 1945–*1960* (Terc, 2008), 138–139.
21 "Munkaprogramm az I. Magyar Építőművész Kongresszus megszervesésével kapcsolatosan," August 18, 1951, Hungarian Museum of Architecture (HMA), Gábor Petróczy Collection, 2002/835/36, 2.
22 Svaz československých výtvarných umělců to Kongres svazu maďarských architektů, telegram, October 26, 1951, HMA, Gábor Petróczy Collection, 2002/835/36.
23 Despite the role Major played in the debate and the congress, he remained an active and critical voice in Hungarian architectural culture for the rest of his life. Other architects affiliated with CIAM had different fates. Fischer, for example, largely withdrew from architecture after the events of the late-1940s and early-1950s.
24 János Bonta, Péter Dániel, and Tamás Érdi, "Modernista építészet – szovjet építészet," *Építés–Építészet* 3, no. 9–10 (1951): 487–501.

The United Nations Headquarters and one of Le Corbusier's skyscrapers for Algiers opposed new hydroelectric stations in the USSR; the headquarters of the National Union of Construction Workers served as the primary Hungarian example in this anti-cosmopolitan manifesto. The issue also included a feature article on recent developments in Polish architecture. Its author, László Paulovits, explained that Hungarians should direct their attention to the work of their Polish colleagues, for they had already achieved what the congress was intended to produce – the creation of a socialist-realist style of architecture.[25] Paulovits drew his material from the First All-Polish Exhibition of Architecture, which had taken place in Warsaw in early 1951.[26] All of the images published in *Építés–Építészet* had been reproduced from the May-June issue of *Architektura*. The extent to which this presentation of Polish work was coordinated personally remains unclear, but Minorski, who was editor-in-chief of *Architektura*, welcomed the exposure in his report on the Hungarian congress. He called it a clear demonstration of Hungarian interest in Polish achievements, noting that he had heard it said several times that the Poles were outstripping the Hungarians in architectural affairs.[27]

The international significance of the congress was evident before, during, and after the event. News of the congress travelled through the communications networks and personal relationships that bound European communist parties together. Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky – a member of CIAM Austria herself – lectured members of the Austrian Communist Party on the importance of the congress for the development of architecture in the People's Democracies.[28] Kurt Liebknecht recognised the value of the networking opportunities at the Hungarian congress, and he used his speech to issue an invitation to the Congress of German Architects, which would mark the ceremonial opening of the Deutsche Bauakademie, in Berlin in December 1951.[29] In the days following the Hungarian congress in Budapest, foreign visitors joined seminars with the Soviet delegates Chernyshev and Tsapenko. Minorski gave lectures about the state of Polish architecture and the reconstruction of Warsaw.[30] Tsapenko reported that the excursions took visitors to a range of historic cities, including Veszprém and Székesfehérvár, as well as the new city of Dunapentele.[31] Nicolae Bădescu, the Romanian delegate, described the significance of these days, writing that they enabled an international discussion of architectural issues facing socialist countries. Delegates compared the organisation of architectural institutions, educational programmes, and the relationship among the profession, the state, and the building industry in their respective countries.[32] The Hungarian congress created, for the first time,

25 László Paulovits, "A lengyel építészet útja," *Építés–Építészet*, no. 9–10 (1951): 537.
26 On this exhibition see Marek Czapelski, *Architektura polskiego socrealizmu v Zachęcie* (Zachęta, 2016).
27 Minorski, "Pierwszy kongres," 52–53.
28 See Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky, "Vortrag für Genossen und Genossinen," 1951, Universität für angewandte Kunst Wien, Nachlass Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky, Text 404.
29 For Liebknecht's invitation, see *A magyar építőművészek első országos kongresszusa*, 97.
30 See Ágost Benkhard, "Vázlatos jelentés az Építészeti Kongresszusról," November 6, 1951, HMA, Gábor Petróczy Collection, 2002/835/36.
31 M. P. Tsapenko, "Arkhitektura narodnoi Vengrii," *Sovetskoe iskusstvo*, November 17, 1951, 4.
32 N. Bădescu, "Primul congres al arhitecţilor maghiari," *Arhitectura şi urbanism* 2, no. 12 (1951): 5–10.

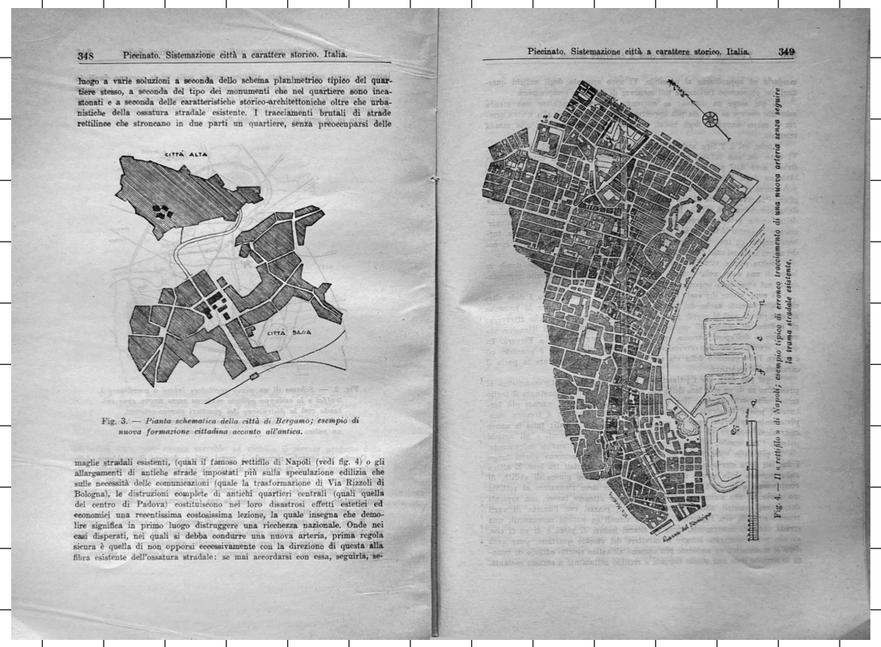
conditions for the emergence of a professional network of architects from socialist states.

The connections formed in Budapest were reinforced in subsequent months and years. The Congress of German Architects that Liebknecht had announced in his address to the Hungarian congress brought Soviet, Polish, and Czechoslovak participants to Berlin in late 1951.[33] In July 1952, the ceremonial opening of the first section of the Marszałkowska Residential District [Marszałkowska Dzielnica Mieszkaniowa, MDM] in Warsaw was accompanied by an international gathering of architects from the People's Democracies and elsewhere. Among many others, delegates included Jaap Bakema from the Netherlands, Schütte-Lihotzky from Austria, and João Batista Vilanova Artigas from Brazil. The Hungarian attendees, Tibor Weiner and Zoltán Farkasdy, highlighted the importance of the trip in a report on their experiences, writing that Polish architecture is 'both technically and artistically far more advanced', and it can thus, 'alongside the architecture of the Soviet Union, serve as a guide for us'.[34]

By the time Weiner and Farkasdy shared their impressions of Poland with the Hungarian Union of Architects, it had become clear that the USSR was not the only model suitable for emulation in the multinational world of socialist architecture. The network that constituted this world was born in opposition to CIAM during the final years of Stalinism, and it would continue to operate for decades. As architects from socialist countries reconnected to CIAM in the second half of the 1950s, the links among socialist architectural organisations continued to develop as well. The traces of this socialist architectural network are widespread and abundant, but the challenge of its reconstruction remains. A map of this network would undoubtedly reveal a neglected yet vital web of architectural activity. The unforgetting of these relationships would in turn contribute to the decentring of the Soviet Union in architectural histories of the socialist world.

33 Jiří Kroha, who attended as the Czechoslovak delegate, noted that Albanian, Bulgarian, and Hungarian delegates were invited but could only send written greetings to the congress. See Jiří Kroha, "Založení německé stavební akademie v Berlíně," *Architektura ČSR* 11, no. 1–2 (1952): 61.

34 Tibor Weiner and Zoltán Farkasdy, "Jelentés Weiner Tibor és Farkasdy Zoltán lengyelországi kiküldetéséről," undated [second half of 1952], HMA, Tibor Weiner Collection, 1972/278/3, 2.


348 Piccinato. Sistemazione città a carattere storico. Italia.

luogo a varie soluzioni a seconda dello schema planimetrico tipico del quartiere stesso, a seconda del tipo dei monumenti che nel quartiere sono incastonati e a seconda delle caratteristiche storico-architettoniche oltre che urbanistiche della ossatura stradale esistente. I tracciamenti brutali di strade rettilinee che stroncano in due parti un quartiere, senza preoccuparsi delle

CITTÀ ALTA

CITTÀ BASSA

Fig. 3. — *Pianta schematica della città di Bergamo; esempio di nuova formazione cittadina accanto all'antica.*

maglie stradali esistenti, (quali il famoso rettifilo di Napoli (vedi fig. 4) o gli allargamenti di antiche strade impostati più sulla speculazione edilizia che sulle necessità delle comunicazioni (quale la trasformazione di Via Rizzoli di Bologna), le distruzioni complete di antichi quartieri centrali (quali quello del centro di Padova) costituiscono nei loro disastrosi effetti estetici ed economici una recentissima costosissima lezione, la quale insegna che demolire significa in primo luogo distruggere una ricchezza nazionale. Onde nei casi disperati, nei quali si debba condurre una nuova arteria, prima regola sicura è quella di non opporsi eccessivamente con la direzione di questa alla fibra esistente dell'ossatura stradale: se mai accordarsi con essa, seguirla, se-

Piccinato. Sistemazione città a carattere storico. Italia. 349

Fig. 4. — *Il « rettifilo » di Napoli, esempio tipico di un nuovo tracciamento di una nuova arteria senza seguire la trama stradale esistente.*

Photograph of the IFHTP 1929 congress publication, featuring a spread from Luigi Piccinato's paper on the replanning of historic cities in Italy. International Federation for Housing and Town Planning, XII International Housing and Town Planning Congress, Part I: Papers (London, 1929): 348–349.

Ella Müller (European University Institute)

Modern Planning Meets the Historic Town: Contradictions and Frictions in the 1929 IFHTP Congress in Rome

INTRODUCTION

In September 1929, around 1200 representatives of public bodies and specialist associations from sixty countries gathered in Rome, to take part in the 12th International Housing and Town Planning Congress.[1] The twelve-day programme – put together by the International Federation for Housing and Town Planning (IFHTP) and the Italian Organising Committee – was founded on a series of discussions based on papers written by national delegates on preassigned topics. Of the five topics, two dealt with the replanning and expansion of old and historic towns. Contrary to the radical departure from the existing urban conditions as envisioned by the avant-garde of modernist town planning, a majority of the papers presented in Rome expressed a more conservative stance: 'historic towns should not be destroyed to make place for a modern town.'[2]

This paper examines the contradictions and frictions that arose when the 1929 Congress extended the modernist town planning discourse to include historic towns. Applied to diverse European urban contexts, the ideals of a functional city faced a set of new concerns that complicated the planning discourse. It became increasingly difficult to maintain a conception of planning as a technoscientific endeavour, and devise generic solutions for urban reform. Nevertheless, the activities of IFHTP were motivated by the pursuit of improving planning not only in Europe, but in the whole world.[3] Through the Congress sessions on replanning and expansion of old and historic towns, this paper explores the ways in which specific professional and regional interests articulated the tension between universalist ambitions and local circumstances.

1 International Federation for Housing and Town Planning, *XII International Housing and Town Planning Congress, Part III: Report* (London, 1929): 8.

2 Marcel Poëte in International Federation for Housing and Town Planning, *XII International Housing and Town Planning Congress, Part I: Papers* (London, 1929): 426.

3 This objective comes through in the opening and closing speeches of the conference published in: IFHTP 1929, *Report*.

THE IFHTP AND THE URBAN INTERNATIONALE

The IFHTP was a Britain-based international society rooted in the Garden Cities movement, focussing on the global improvement of housing and town planning. Founded by Ebenezer Howard in 1913, it was among the growing number of international associations, institutions, and foundations concerned with issues related to cities in the first decades of the twentieth century.[4] IFHTP's principal mode of operation was organising International Housing and Town Planning Congresses, which offered architects, town planners, administrators, and social reformers a forum to exhibit recent developments in housing and town planning in their countries of operation. In the early 1920s, the Federation began widening its initial agenda of propagating 'garden city principles as offering the best solution of the problems which have to be faced in all countries', eventually dropping 'Garden Cities' from its name in 1926.[5] Simultaneously, the organisation grew in size and national representation, becoming a significant arena for the development and distribution of modern town planning ideas, especially in Europe and North America.

Rather than a unified network, the late 1920s IFHTP could more accurately be described as an assemblage of networks, fostering connections between national member organisations and other associations in the 'Urban Internationale'. Besides groups with official representation in the Congresses, such as the International Labour Organization (ILO), congress participants and officials included members of other networks, such as Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM) and Union International des Villes (UIV).[6] The multidisciplinary character of IFHTP formulated town planning as a complex field distinguished from formalistic approaches.[7] As IFHTP grew and professionalised, its structure and diversity made it virtually impossible to settle on universal planning ideals to be spread through charters or declarations.[8] Instead, its conferences became a forum for sharing experiences and often conflicting ideas of planning drawn from different contexts. This did not make the IFHTP politically neutral however. According to historian Phillip Wagner, the organisation's non-political status – which was underlined in the late 1920s due to ideological differences between liberal and social housing reformers – actually meant the marginalisation of socialist voices.[9]

4 Pierre-Yves Saunier, "Sketches from the Urban Internationale, 1910–50: Voluntary Associations, International Institutions and US Philanthropic Foundations," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 25, no. 2 (June 2001): 380–403.
5 International Garden Cities and Town Planning Association, "Officers Membership Invitation" in Graham Allan, *A Hundred Years at the Global Spearhead: A Century of IFHP 1913–2013* (Odder: IFHP, 2013): 25.
6 On overlap with CIAM, see: Andreas Kalpakci, "Making CIAM: The Organizational Techniques of the Moderns, 1928–1959." Dissertation no. 24230, ETH Zurich, 2017: 472–474. On connections between IFHTP and UIV, see: Saunier, "Sketches from the Urban Internationale"; Allan, *A Century of IFHP.*
7 Renzo Riboldazzi, "The IFHTP Congresses between the Wars: A Source for Studies on Modern Town Planning," *The Town Planning Review* 84, no. 2 (2013): 160–61.
8 Michel Geertse, "The International Garden City Campaign: Transnational Negotiations on Town Planning Methods 1913–1926," *Journal of Urban History* 42, no. 4 (July 2016): 733–52.
9 Phillip Wagner, "Urban Planning and the Politics of Expert Internationalism, 1920s–1940s," *Journal of World History* 31, no. 1 (March 2020): 79–110. According to Wagner, this provided an opportunity for German National Socialists to seize control of the group in the late 1930s.

THE 1929 ROME CONGRESS

The 1929 Congress in Rome is particularly illustrative of the difficulty of detaching international planning discourse from political concerns. It was the first IFHTP congress in Italy, and the first that approached urban development in relation to 'old and historic' towns.[10] The theme was well-suited to both the historic setting of the Eternal City, and the emerging fascist planning politics that would mix conservatism with remorseless urban renewal.[11] Architecture and town planning were no secondary concerns for the fascist regime, as Mussolini himself took interest especially in the development of Rome into a capital worthy of Fascist Italy.[12] The country's most influential town planning experts took part in the 1929 Congress. Architect, engineer, and architectural historian Gustavo Giovannoni opened the Congress in Rome on 12 September with a lecture on the historical development of Rome and its significance for modern town planning. Engineer Cesare Albertini closed it on 21 September in Milan by discussing the development of Milan, where he served as head of the municipal town planning office. Neither Giovannoni nor Albertini failed to recognise the transformative effect of the fascist regime on the country's planning culture.[13]

In addition to controversy over the politics of the host country, the Rome Congress occurred in the aftermath of the 'housing split' within the IFHTP which led to the forming of a separate International Housing Association (IHA).[14] The names of IHA founders Florentinus Wibaut, Emile Vinck, Henri Sellier, and Hans Kampffmeyer are not included in the list of participants of the Rome Congress, and previous research has connected their absence to conflicts with both fascist and liberal fractions of IFHTP.[15] Housing did however remain a central theme in the Congress' sessions. Discussions on housing for lower-income groups and planning urban housing schemes continued on issues raised in the Paris Congress organised the previous year, and were supported by a programme of excursions to recent housing developments in Rome, Naples, and Milan.[16] Additionally, the international guests were introduced to new achievements in Italian planning by the Congress exhibition, which displayed a selection of the country's finest housing projects and town planning schemes.[17]

10 On the significance of the 1929 Congress and the Italian contribution to interwar planning debates within the IFHTP, see: Renzo Riboldazzi, "Historical Heritage, Landscape and Modernity: Aspects of the Italian Contribution to the IFHTP Congresses between the Two Wars," *Planning Perspectives* 28, no. 3 (July 2013).
11 Carmen M. Enss and Luigi Monzo (eds), *Townscapes in Transition: Transformation and Reorganization of Italian Cities and Their Architecture in the Interwar Period*, (transcript Verlag, 2019).
12 Aristotle Kallis, "The 'Third Rome' of Fascism: Demolitions and the Search for a New Urban Syntax," *The Journal of Modern History* 84, no. 1 (March 2012): 40–79.
13 Gustavo Giovannoni and Cesare Albertini in: IFHTP 1929, *Papers*.
14 Wagner, "Politics of Expert Internationalism"; Allan, *A Century of IFHP*, 99–115.
15 List of delegates in: IFHTP 1929, *Report*, 186–97. Previous research in: Wagner, "Politics of Expert Internationalism," 99; Allan, *A Century of IFHP*, 120–122.
16 Aristotle Kallis, "'Minimum Dwelling' All'italiana: From the Case Popolari to the 1929 'Model Houses' of Garbatella," *Journal of Urban History* 46, no. 3 (May 2020): 603–21.
17 Riboldazzi, "Historical Heritage, Landscape and Modernity," 399.

THE REPLANNING AND EXPANSION OF OLD AND HISTORIC TOWNS

The sessions on housing and town planning were scheduled simultaneously, forcing delegates to choose between the theme that better corresponded to their professional interests. This paper will focus on the two sessions on town planning, that took place on the 13 and 14 September, 1929.[18] The contents of the contributions to the sections on 'Replanning old and historic towns to meet modern conditions' (nine papers) and 'Methods of planning for the expansion of towns with special reference to old and historic towns' (thirteen papers) were largely overlapping, and authors had taken liberties in specifying the focus of their paper according to their professional backgrounds and interests.[19] Despite the variety of nationalities present in the Congress, the contributors of the session were European, apart from landscape designer Aubrey Tealdi from the United States. Papers were circulated, and discussions were carried out, in the organisation's three official languages – French, German, and English – as well as Italian, due to the extensive Italian participation.[20] The section on 'replanning' focused on the redevelopment of the oldest urban quarters, balancing between historic preservation and modernisation. The section on 'expansion' dealt more with regional planning, particularly the direction and ways of accommodating urban growth. Authors concentrated either on the general problematics, or specific cases in their national contexts discussing local principles, practices, legislation, and financial methods of modernisation and urban expansion.

Although the liberal attitude prevalent in European cities in the nineteenth century had been replaced by a more studied approach to urban development – including a growing appreciation of historically and artistically valuable groups of buildings, such as walled towns – contributions had diverging positions on the preferred balance between the old and the new. Jobst Siedler, architect and professor from Berlin, was among the keenest advocates of modernisation, stating that the replanning of old and historic towns 'has to serve in the first place the modern development of the town and in the second place to give consideration to what is old.'[21] According to Siedler, valuable historic quarters should be protected and isolated from the transport network, but if residential quarters could not be adapted according to modern sanitary and health requirements, they should be demolished. Demolished areas should either be left as open space or rebuilt according to a modern plan. Improving transportation rose as a key concern related to both the replanning and expansion of old and historic towns. Most authors positioned transportation against preservation, especially when it came to directing transportation to old quarters by opening new 'arteries' or widening existing streets. Contributions by Nordic delegates such as Albert Lilienberg, the Town Planning Directors of Stockholm, made an exception by focusing solely on transportation, with barely any mention of preservation.[22] This choice of focus could imply that preservation had not yet entered Nordic town planning discourses or that Nordic planners, like delegates from Austria, Netherlands, and Germany, considered it secondary to transportation.

A majority of the papers devoted significant consideration to preservation however. Italian and English authors represented the most conservative attitude, and their ideas – along with those of the Germans – got the most space in the Congress' discussions.[23] Architect and urban planner Luigi Piccinato advocated a limited approach to historic quarters of Italian cities, stating that 'only partial replanning for the improvement of local traffic, health and general conditions – often in connection with making new arteries – is advisable.'[24] He emphasised the importance of research of the existing context, stating that 'each place requires particular study which should lead to a special solution.'[25] Architect Henry Philip Cart de Lafontaine devoted considerable thought to present practices and legislation of architectural and historic preservation in England, including the Civic Survey; a study of the history and existing conditions of an area conducted as a prerequisite of replanning. Besides preservation, Italian and English planners had similar ideas regarding the expansion of towns. Both were in favour of directing urban growth outside the historic centre. Italian ideas of extending the old city by a separate, new, modern city or 'self-contained units', were related to the model of 'satellite towns' proposed by Patrick Abercrombie.[26] These modes of urban expansion continued the decentralising ideas of the Garden City movement, which were still dominant within the IFHTP.

Like-mindedness in matters regarding town planning was only one of the aspects of fruitful collaboration between the Italian hosts and English delegates, generally associated with the British Town Planning Institute (TPI). In a report of the Congress in the TPI journal, George Pepler condemns Italian models of urban housing as unsuitable for England, but is sympathetic to the local planners' approach to historic cities, especially decentralisation and the treatment of monuments.[27] In addition to shared features between the planning cultures of the two countries, the delegates were probably brought together by a common interest in steering the organisation away from socialist tendencies. Recent disputes among IFHTP housing reformers were not directly evident in the town planning sessions, but they could have influenced French urban theorist and historian Marcel Poëte's absence from the Congress, despite submitting a paper on expanding historic towns

18 Additionally, the programme contained a session on 'The Need for Research in Town Planning' included in: IFHTP 1929, *Report*.
19 IFHTP 1929, *Papers*.
20 On the language politics of the IFHTP, see: Wagner, Phillip, "Facilitating Planning Communication across Borders: The International Federation for Housing and Town Planning in the Interwar Period," *Planning Perspectives* 31, no. 2 (April 2016): 299–311.
21 IFHTP 1929, *Papers*, 311.
22 Four of the papers in the two sessions where by Norwegian, Swedish and Danish delegates.
23 The sessions are reported and the main points summarised in: IFHTP 1929, *Report*.
24 IFHTP 1929, *Papers*, 356. Renzo Riboldazzi writes that the 'limited' approach to historic quarters propagated by Piacentini and his colleagues contradicted actual planning practices in the interwar Italy, especially the plan of Milan presented by Cesare Alberini in the same congress: Riboldazzi, "Historical Heritage, Landscape and Modernity."
25 IFHTP 1929, *Papers*, 417.
26 Luigi Piccinato, Cesare Chiodi, and Patrick Abercrombie in: IFHTP 1929, *Papers*.
27 G. L. Pepler, "Twelfth Conference of the International Federation for Housing and Town Planning,"*Journal of the Town Planning Institute* 15 (October, 1929): 319–28.

echoing the views of the Italian and English delegates.[28] The Congress papers show that planning ideas did not neccessarily align with political dispositions, as certain solutions were accepted across ideological and national divisions. Although opinions on widening streets and 'cutting' main arteries through the existing urban structure varied, ring roads were widely supported as a way to simultaneously accommodate traffic and protect historic quarters by separating them from the modern city. Some authors proposed green belts as a way to isolate old towns, although their creation usually meant that old quarters surrounding the historic town had to be cleared. The practice of isolating historic areas or monuments from their surroundings required a stark distinction between what was deemed 'heritage' and what was not. It became widely practised in Fascist Italy, despite the supposedly subtle approach to historic towns.[29]

Standard solutions to the development of existing urban areas conceived in Europe and North America appeared the most problematic when transported to contexts outside this sphere. The programme included a paper by London-based architect Henry Vaughan Lanchester, co-founder and former president (1922–1923) of TPI, on replanning old and historic towns in colonial India. He wrote that although the objectives of replanning were similar to Europe, the methods must be more varied due to the divergent nature and challenges of Indian cities, starting from the multiplicity of ownership models to sociocultural aspects such as the caste system and large family groups that affect zoning of residential areas and designing accommodation. Such aspects had not been recognised in previous clearance of 'plague ridden areas' that had left inhabitants homeless and been destructive to the character of towns.[30]

CONCLUSIONS

Above, a broad overview of topics that were discussed and networks that assembled in the 1929 Congress sessions on the replanning and expansion of old and historic towns is laid out, revealing some of the difficulties that arose when the emerging modernist urban planning culture encountered historic towns. This reading challenges the view of the political neutrality of IFHTP, particularly by revealing the dominance Italian and English networks had over congress discussions in the Fascist capital. Additionally, it shows how notions of historic preservation were defined in tandem with principles of town and regional planning, which simultaneously modernised the city and curated its past. Conflicting ideas gave an appearance of plurality, despite the small number of nationalities represented in the discussion, considering IFHTP's globalising agenda. Besides a scale of operation, 'international' should be interpreted as a political category present both in the organisation and the planning ideas developed within and distributed through its functions.

28 List of delegates in: IFHTP 1929, *Report*, 186–97.
29 Kallis, "The 'Third Rome' of Fascism."
30 IFHTP 1929, *Papers*, 336.

1948 IFLA Conference in Cambridge. Marjory Allen front centre, Brenda Colvin front row, second to the right, Sylvia Crowe back row far right. Courtesy of the Museum for English Rural Life (MERL) Archive SR LI AD 9/14/1.

Luca Csepely-Knorr and Joy Burgess (University of Liverpool)

‘To Keep Abreast of World Ideas’: Gender, Networks and Landscape Architecture as a Transnational Project

The International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA) was established in 1948 as both a transnational professional network and a post-war peace initiative. Founded at Jesus College in Cambridge, its formation grew out of an awareness of the need for international collaboration in establishing the profession of landscape architecture, and the potential such a network could have in addressing global environmental issues. The inaugural meeting took place in the United Kingdom and combined an exhibition in London with a conference at Jesus College in Cambridge. A photograph that captured this moment, shows six men and five women on the podium, that in the context of post-war professional contexts in Britain was an unusual gender balance.

IFLA’s formation grew out of an awareness of the need for international collaboration in establishing the profession of landscape architecture, and the potential such a network could have in addressing global environmental issues. Its instigation reflected a desire to rebuild not just the built environment but also shared values across national borders in the immediate post-war period. As IFLA founding members and prominent British landscape architects Brenda Colvin, Sylvia Crowe and Geoffrey Jellicoe later described the Federation’s ambition as:

> ‘first, to promote understanding and knowledge throughout a war-shattered world through the common language of landscape; second, to raise universally the prestige of landscape in the public mind; and third, to enable member countries to keep abreast of world ideas’.[1]

IFLA played a crucial role in developing ideas and sharing experiences across countries with very different socio-political regimes, therefore creating a unique platform for collaboration. The development of the Federation relied on the informal networks and support of women, some of whom were spouses of male delegates and contributed in unofficial but significant ways. The list of attendees at the 1948 conference in Cambridge, that led to the establishment of the Federation, records a striking number of female attendees. Women’s access to advocacy work through editing, diplomacy, and exhibition curation was facilitated by the transnational nature of the organisation, which was arguably more inclusive of those excluded from

1 Trish Gibson, *Brenda Colvin. A Career in Landscape* (Frances Lincoln Limited, 2011), 124.

formal professional roles. As such, it created opportunities for women to take on essential, yet frequently unacknowledged roles in sustaining and advancing the development of landscape architecture in the context of post-war reconstruction.

In this paper, the early years of IFLA and the ways in which its creation was influenced by women – who are not centred in the official histories of the Federation – will be focussed on. This includes the landscape architects Marjory Allen, Brenda Colvin and Sylvia Crowe along with the British Institute of Landscape Architects' (ILA) secretary Gwendoline Browne.

Marjory Allen, one of the founders of the ILA, had become a prominent landscape architect by the interwar period and led much of the work promoting the profession during this time. This included her role as a member of the Housing Centre, which was an organisation set up by reformers in the UK, who used exhibitions as a way of raising awareness of the need to address slum housing in London and beyond.[2] Allen was involved in their 1934 New Homes for Old Exhibition which was developed in collaboration with the Modern Architectural Research Group (MARS) which was the British branch of the Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM). They produced a 'socio-spatial blueprint for the dwelling as it should be'.[3] The housing consultant and leader of the exhibition Elizabeth Denby designed a section addressing requirements for a model flat, Jocelyn Abram, a town planner, highlighted the dangers of poorly planned developments, and Allen presented a section on public open spaces, exploring allotments, roof gardens, and window boxes. This was arguably one of the earliest times a landscape architect was included on a multidisciplinary design team, raising the issue of the need for designed landscapes in social housing and positioning landscape architecture as an allied profession alongside architecture and town planning.

Through this campaign work and her professional association with the St Pancras House Improvement Society, Allen also became involved with the Nursery School Association (NSA). In 1941, she staged an exhibition at Charing Cross Underground Station, later shown at the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), using photographs, repurposed toys, and posters, accompanied by a conference on day-time nurseries where she argued that 'If women [are] to go into industry – and the need [is] paramount – they must be at peace about their children.'[4] In September 1945 she was invited to attend a conference in Switzerland on the needs of children affected by war.[5] Here she met a series of figures from across Europe with whom she went on to establish the World Council for Early Childhood Education which came to be known as Organisation Mondiale pour l'Éducation Préscolaire (OMEP) in 1947.[6] Soon after returning from Switzerland, momentum began to build within the ILA towards the process that culminated in the inauguration of IFLA, a development in which she was closely involved.[7] In 1946, a meeting of the ILA committee recorded the proposal to discuss the 'desirability for an international conference of landscape architects' with the potential to create a transnational alliance. Geoffrey Jellicoe recalled that 'Allen had popped up and said "let's call an international meeting, and possibly have an international federation arising from it." We all agreed – it sounded awfully easy – and the motion was passed'.[8] The ILA set a date in 1948 for an international event comprising an exhibition in London and a conference in Cambridge. They sent letters to contacts in sixteen countries to gauge interest in attending, with the expressed intention of discussing the potential establishment of a federation.[9] An organising committee was established, and upon returning from active military service, the landscape architect Sylvia Crowe was appointed Chair of the International Conference Committee.[10] Beyond Crowe, the committee comprised Marjory Allen, Maria Shepherd, Judith Ledeboer, and Jaqueline Tyrwhitt, alongside Frank Clark, Alec Mawson and Peter Youngman.[11]

The conference in Cambridge was widely celebrated both nationally and internationally. It culminated in the agreement to establish IFLA with 15 states from Europe and North America joining the alliance, for which Geoffrey Jellicoe was made the first President. Allen and Colvin's contribution in a national and transnational context as key thinkers in the facilitations of international knowledge transfer is a still overlooked but highly relevant parts of the profession's history. As has been shown, at, Allen's work with the Housing Centre positioned landscape architecture as a relevant profession, creating a new kind of professional praxis that strengthened the ILA's position amongst the allied professions and brought important figures into the Institute. From an international perspective, her position on the organising committee will have been influenced by her experience of establishing a comparable organisation with OMEP. There were very few ILA members at this time who had transnational experience and as such her insights and global perspective would have been extremely valuable.

Much as Allen's work during the interwar period paved the way for the instigation of the IFLA, one of her ILA co-founder colleagues, Brenda Colvin, had been involved with comparable international networks with a similar agenda. Colvin was born into a prominent family in Colonial India, and through her family's networks she was very well connected and understood the importance of maintaining and creating networks. She was involved with her alma mater, Swanley Horticultural College for many years after leaving

2 Elizabeth Darling, *Re-forming Britain: Narratives of Modernity before Reconstruction* (Routledge, 2007).
3 Ibid, 109.
4 The Times Educational Supplement (1941) "Wartime Nurseries for the Under-Fives: London Conference Demands Stronger Action", *The Times Educational Supplement*, 1 Nov, no. 1383, 522. *Education Magazine Archive*.
5 Museum of English Rural Life (MERL) SR LI AD2_2_1_6 and Marjory Allen's Papers at the University of Warwick Archive MSS 121/CH/3/7/6
6 Ibid.
7 Sheila Harvey (ed), *Reflections on Landscape. The Lives and Work of Six British Landscape Architects* (Gower, 1987), 11.
8 Ibid.
9 MERL SR LI AD1/11/1
10 Mike Downing, 'International and Professional' in: Collens, G. & Powell, W. 'Sylvia Crowe' LDT Monographs no 2, 109–119; 109.
11 MERL SR LI AD1/11/1 and MERL SR LI AD 9/14/3

the institution and was an active life-long member of the Women's Farm and Garden Association as well, building both national and international networks through both.

Colvin's work throughout the interwar period can be seen in her involvement with the first *Congrès International des Architectes de Jardins*, held in Paris in 1937 as part of the *Exposition Internationale des Arts et Techniques dans la Vie Moderne*. Alongside her ILA colleagues Christopher Tunnard, himself a MARS group member, and Frank Clark, they represented Britain at the congress. In its aftermath, Tunnard and Colvin began to independently pursue ideas around how an international network might be organised. In 1939 Colvin was in talks with a small group of landscape architects, notably from France and Belgium, discussing the possibility of an International Federation.[12] One year earlier, Tunnard and the Belgian delegate Jean Canneel-Claes co-founded the *Association Internationale des Architectes de Jardins Modernistes* (AIAJM), which can be understood as being a precursor to the IFLA.[13] Colvin's plans with the French and Belgian delegates were interrupted by the outbreak of the War, and the AIAJM did not survive beyond its conclusion. In its place, the establishment of the IFLA emerged as the preeminent international organisation for landscape architecture. Where AIAJM had been an organisation that centred around modernism and its design ideals, Allen's work at the Housing Centre had been more concerned with establishing professional status, coupled with ideas of designing for social justice. This focus on establishing a professional identity rather than advancing aesthetic agendas was the model that IFLA went on to adopt.

Much of the work involved in organising the first IFLA congress was undertaken through emerging networks within Britain. The ILA had just a decade of institutional development before the outbreak of the Second World War. Although many of its members had maintained contact during the war, these connections remained relatively new. The ILA was a small institution lacking in funds and was comprised of a cohort of committed individuals. As such, the success of the congress depended upon the often invisible and sustained labour of each member which archives show through the organisational work required to ensure its success. Crowe later reflected:

> 'This was a very courageous thing to do, because we were a minute institute with no money and we sent out invitations to most of the European countries to come – this was absolutely splendid. Everyone thought it sheer effrontery, that such a small hard-up institute should stage an international conference at that particular time.'[14]

By 1946, when Allen proposed the idea of the international conference, the ILA had begun to resume informal international relationships, for which the ILA's secretary, Mrs Gwendoline Browne, played an important diplomatic role. Browne was a notable figure within the ILA who, although not a professional designer, played a significant role in fostering international networks. The same year that Allen proposed the conference, Browne was received by the Vice President of the *Société Française d'Architecture de Jardins* during a private visit to France where she was presented with a copy of *Jardins d'Aujourd'hui* for the ILA. The British responded by appointing a French Honorary Fellow to their Institute.[15] Around this time Browne also developed a long-standing professional correspondence with René Pechère of Belgium, which spanned several years.[16] This began in 1946 when Pechère, a landscape architect and Professor, wrote to Browne seeking support in facilitating opportunities for young people to travel from Belgium to Britain to study landscape architecture and horticulture. Browne sought out several contacts and arranged for one young Belgian to work with the British landscape architect Peter Youngman.[17] In 1947, Browne met Pechère and his wife while travelling for the ILA and later wrote to him on behalf of the Institute, inviting him to become the first Honorary Corresponding Member. During this visit, she held an informal meeting with Pechère's wife in which they discussed issues relating to the profession, including the upcoming 1948 IFLA event. During these conversations, the question of whether German landscape architects should be included in the immediate aftermath of the War was raised. Browne subsequently corresponded with Pechère on the issue and raised it with the relevant ILA committee. She also canvassed opinions from Dutch and Norwegian landscape architects visiting the Institute.[18] All agreed that German affiliates should not be invited, which then became the policy which was adopted. This decision represented a delicate and politically complex moment in the planning of the first IFLA event. Only three years after the end of the war, Browne's use of soft-power diplomacy was crucial in navigating sensitive post-war dynamics across Europe. Her work demonstrates not only the skill required to mediate international relationships, but also the breadth of professional activity within the ILA needed to establish and sustain such networks. Browne's correspondence with Pechère continued for many years and when IFLA made her an honorary member in 1951, she wrote to him saying:

> 'I appreciate this honour very much indeed and I thank you very sincerely for your share in promoting it. I always like to think that it was you and I, who first started exchanging letters in March 1946, who really started the Federation; I have for IFLA, as you know, the very warmest regard, and I am sure it is going to be a most valuable organisation.'[19]

The correspondence between Browne and Pechère shows how sustained personal and professional exchanges conducted through letters and mediated

12 Trish Gibson, *Brenda Colvin*, 124.
13 D. Imbert (2007), "Landscape Architects of the World, Unite!", *Journal of Landscape Architecture*, 2, no. 1 (2007), 6–19.
14 Sheila Harvey, *Reflections on Landscape*, 48–49.
15 MERL SR LI AD1/11/1 – they did the same for a representative in Sweden and the USA at the same time
16 MERL SR LI AD2/2/1/53
17 SR LI AD2/2/1/53
18 MERL SR LI AD2/2/1/53
19 MERL SR LI AD1/11/1 – letter June 1951

networks, shaped the formation of professional structures and through these structures the landscapes of post-war reconstruction in general.

By looking beyond traditional histories of Institutions that focus on presidents and leaders, the success of the Cambridge meeting and the establishment of IFLA can be understood not as the result of a single event, but as the culmination of a series of diplomatic gestures and networking activities, where women played a central role. This includes Allen's instigation of the development of such a network, Colvin's early efforts and work through several organisations, Browne's unofficial engagement with the Vice President of the *Société Française d'Architecture de Jardins* and René Pechère in Belgium and Crowe's chairmanship of the event's committee. Together, these efforts reflect the layered and often overlooked modes through which post-war professional networks were built. that sustained it. Yet this experiment was not without its contradictions. Local hosts were sometimes overruled, regional ambitions sidelined, and the reliance on Euro–American 'regulars' made the promise of diversity uneven. The dependence on star power and the domination of its 'top' people over local voices, revealed the vulnerabilities of the corporation's model of global exchange. Still, Anyone's polyvocal, multidisciplinary exchanges without fixed headquarters anticipated how theory might be mediated in today's global networks, where diversity, equity, and the need to foreground non-Euro–American voices demand new types of infrastructures for architectural discourse.

These custom-designed t-shirts were created as part of the Anyone Project's media strategy, serving as visual tools that expressed its itinerant identity and connected a dynamic network of events through design. Anyone Corporation fonds Canadian Centre for Architecture © Anyone Corporation.

Cathelijne Nuijsink (ETH Zurich)

The Anyone Project as a Mediatised Network of Knowledge Exchange (1990–2001)

In December 1990, amid a widespread feeling that architectural theory had exhausted itself, editor Cynthia Davidson and architects Peter Eisenman, Arata Isozaki and Ignasi de Solà-Morales founded the Anyone Corporation in New York. Conceived as an experiment in 'rethinking the conditions of architectural debate at the turn of the millennium', its centrepiece was a series of ten international conferences, each titled with a variation on the prefix *any* — Anyone, Anywhere, Anyway, and so on.[1] 'Any' signalled ambiguity, echoing Derrida's idea of *différance*, where meaning is never fixed but always open to change. To sustain this openness, Anyone was deliberately multidisciplinary, drawing philosophers, literary critics, cultural theorists and other intellectuals into frictional dialogue with architects.

Equally importantly, it was nomadic. Rather than anchoring debate in a single city — as with Eisenman's earlier Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies in New York — the organisers staged ten conferences across continents, in Seoul, Buenos Aires, Rotterdam, Ankara, and beyond. Each two-and-a-half-day forum set out as an experiment in situ, where a rotating cast of international and local participants collectively probed the conceptual limits of architecture. This 'global wandering' was crucial, ensuring that architectural discourse was tested against 'the widest possible variety of institutional, geopolitical, and intellectual contexts'.[2] Each conference unfolded in five or six panel sessions, with pre-written presentations tied to a theme delivered first, followed by semi-improvised roundtable discussions.

While the Anyone Project characterised itself through its itinerant and multidisciplinary ambition, what is foreground in this paper, is its equally distinctive insistence on media; books, magazines, symposia, posters, even T-shirts. Every aspect of the project was carefully documented, leaving behind some two-hundred recordings, four-thousand photographs and dozens of archival boxes with correspondence and printed material.[3] To understand the Anyone Project, then, is to attend to the infrastructures of publication, circulation, and archiving that transformed the ephemeral conversations into a lasting record of 1990s architectural discourse.[4]

1 "Philosophical Umbrella," Anyone Corporation fonds AP116, CCA Archives, Montréal. n.d.
2 "Philosophical Umbrella."
3 Canadian Centre for Architecture, "Archival Description, CCA Archives, Anyone Corporation fonds AP116," accessed July 24, 2025, https://www.cca.qc.ca/en/archives/288977/anyone-corporation-fonds.
4 Scholarship on the Anyone Corporation remains limited. Existing studies have tended to focus on the philosophical dimension, drawing mainly on the published conference books and *ANY* magazine, while leaving the wider interdisciplinary character of the series, as well as its archival and oral sources, largely unexplored. Lefebvre, Pauline. "Past The Post: Nous n'avons Jamais Été Critiques, Pouvons-Nous Enfin Être Critiques?"

CALLING ON CONNECTIONS

The Anyone Project was not a standalone project but built on pre-existing editorial and professional networks. Eisenman carried with him the legacy of the Institute of Architecture and Urban Studies (IAUS) and *Oppositions* magazine, Solà-Morales brought the editorial platforms of *Arquitectura Viva* and *Arquitectura Plus*, while Isozaki maintained longstanding ties to *A+U*. Davidson, who prior to her marriage to Eisenman and involvement with Anyone had edited *Inland Architect* in Chicago, added the editorial expertise to run the entire project as organiser, editor and conference convener. Together, the four laid the groundwork for what would become the Anyone Corporation (founded in 1990).

The idea could not advance without financial backing, however, which arrived in Tokyo in late 1990 when Isozaki arranged a dinner for Davidson and Eisenman with executives from his client, Shimizu Corporation. At that meeting, Shimizu – one of Japan's largest construction firms – pledged a million dollars, instantly transforming the project from a speculative initiative into a practicable series of events. Thereafter, the company became Anyone's principal sponsor, underwriting one hundred thousand dollars at each conference site. Excited about getting 'the making of ideas' funded, Eisenman recalled: 'We called on our connections, and immediately with Cynthia, we got to work'.[5]

From that point on, the task was to turn the seed money into a functioning network. Local hosts were crucial to this effort. They were responsible for raising the other half of the necessary funds to cover travel and accommodation for all participants, as well as for securing institutional support for the conference venue. In Rotterdam, for example, the Netherlands Architecture Institute (NAi) provided the venue and institutional backing for the 1997 *Anyhow* conference. The local hosts also secured a major grant from the Netherlands Architecture Fund [*Stimuleringsfonds voor Architectuur*]: a state-funded cultural foundation whose sponsorship was instrumental to the event.

Parallel to these financial arrangements, the Anyone board also called on its intellectual connections, assembling a dynamic international group of thinkers and activists. These 'top people,' soon known as the 'Any regulars,' included figures such as architect Rem Koolhaas, philosopher John Rajchman, sociologist Saskia Sassen, and architectural theorist Sanford Kwinter, who returned multiple times to provide continuity in the debate. The Anyone project, therefore, developed through a layered structure of support based on existing networks in which corporate sponsors supplied seed capital, local hosts raised matching funds, institutions contributed venues and legitimacy, and intellectual circles sustained the debates.

ARCHITECTURE DISCOURSE AS EVENT

While finance underwrote the network, it was visibility that animated its presence, projected through press conferences, interviews and celebrity lectures alongside the scheduled panels. Yet this mediation often involved negotiation with local hosts and sponsors. In the run-up to Anyway in Barcelona (1993), for example, local organiser Josep Ramoneda faxed Davidson, insisting that Eisenman and Isozaki arrive early for a press conference with Solà-Morales, making clear that media exposure was central to the staging of the event.[6] For Anyplace in Montréal (1994), Davidson not only promised Jacques Derrida a first-class ticket but also negotiated an additional public lecture at the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA), balancing his contribution to the closed sessions with the demands of a wider audience eager to encounter the philosopher in person.[7] In Seoul, where Anywise convened in 1995, local organiser Kim Seok Chul proposed mounting a series of exhibitions of the international participants' work to introduce them to the Korean public.[8] Davidson, however, did not feel such an exhibition would enhance the conference and instead suggested presenting a show on the state of the art of Korean architecture and planning.[9] In Buenos Aires, where Anybody (1996) faced financial collapse, Davidson proposed inviting 'a highly respected and well-known individual', the Nobel Prize-winning poet and diplomat Octavio Paz, to give a 'keynote' address in a large hall where they could 'charge admission', thereby both attracting a wider audience and helping to cover costs.[10]

AMBITIONS UNDER SCRUTINY

If the Anyone project distinguished itself by how it used media, it also meant that its ambitions were subject to public scrutiny. From the start, Davidson was determined that each conference would be built around a rotating cast of 'Any regulars,' gradually replaced over the years to 'ensure a respect for diversity and difference', and locally proposed participants.[11] Yet the composition of these line-ups was quickly contested. Journals such as *Architectural Record* in the United States, *Arch+* in Germany, *Casabella* in Italy, *Archis* in the Netherlands and *AMC* in France all published reviews that alternated between fascination and scepticism. Early reports lampooned *Anyone* as a mystical cabal of 'genealogists',[12]

Encore l'Architecture – Encore La Philosophie. Eds. Chris Younès and Céline Bodart. Hermann, 2016. pp. 149–59. Lefebvre, Pauline. "Tracing Pragmatism in Architecture (1990–2010). Thinking Architects' Engagement Within the Real." *Footprint Delft Architecture Theory Journal*, vol. 11, no. 1, 2016: pp. 23–36. Guarino, Alexandre Dias. "Anyone Corporation: Debates e Produção Teórica nas Conferências 'Any' (de 1991 a 2000)." Diss., Universidade Presbiteriana Mackenzie, São Paulo, 2020. Lausch, Frederike. *Gilles Deleuze und die Anyone Corporation: Übersetzungsprozesse zwischen Philosophie und Architektur*. Transcript Verlag, 2021.

5 Peter Eisenman, interview with the author, New York, June 26, 2023.

6 Josep Ramoneda, fax to Cynthia Davidson, March 25, 1992, Anyone Corporation fonds, CCA Archives, Montréal.

7 Cynthia Davidson, fax to Phyllis Lambert, October 20, 1993, Anyone Corporation fonds.

8 Kim Seok Chul, fax to Cynthia Davidson, November 30, 1994; Cynthia Davidson, fax to Kim Seok Chul, December 5, 1994, Anyone Corporation fonds.

9 Cynthia Davidson, fax to Phyllis Lambert, October 20, 1993, Anyone Corporation fonds.

10 Cynthia Davidson, fax to local Anybody organisers, October 1, 1995, Anyone Corporation fonds.

11 "Philosophical Umbrella."

12 G. K. Picorbo, "The Chicago Architecture Philosophy Police," *Inland Architecture*, May/June 1992, 12.

or marvelled at the ‘hit parade’ of Eisenman, Koolhaas, Libeskind, Moneo and Isozaki, while doubting what such an illustrious line-up could accomplish in two days.[13] A critic writing in the *Journal of Architectural Education* praised the ‘generally high level’ of contributions but highlighted the ‘surprisingly wide gulfs between the speakers’ and the ‘predominantly white male’ roster, a point, as he recognised, ‘brought up forcefully by Silvia Kolbowski in her *Anyway* presentation’.[14] By the mid-1990s, reviews in *Arch+* and *AMC* warned of a ‘self-referential clique’, ‘a club of riches’ reliant on Euro–American stars and uneven in their renewal.[15]

Importantly, these reviews not only questioned the *content* of the debates, but interrogated the *medium* of the architectural conference itself. Could two days of pre-written papers and improvised roundtable discussion generate real exchange, or did the format merely juxtapose voices without synthesis? Was the rotating, but still star-heavy cast an effective vehicle for diversity, or did it reproduce existing hierarchies?

In the reviews, Anyone was cast as a test of whether a cross-cultural, multidisciplinary conference could result in disciplinary transformation or merely reduce debate to voices talking over each other. These concerns intensified toward the end of the decade. *Werk, Bauen + Wohnen* quoted Bernard Tschumi in describing Anyway as an ‘autopsy on the body of architecture’, yet warned that without greater synthesis the series risked becoming ‘a demanding yet only additively composed kaleidoscope of positions’.[16] Ole Bouman’s critique of *Anyhow* (Rotterdam, 1997) in *Archis* charged the Anyone Project with detachment from architectural practice.[17] A year later, Hans van Dijk’s review of *Anytime* (Ankara, 1998), again in *Archis*, diagnosed a deeper malaise: the original provocation of ‘undecidability’ had hardened into an empty formula.[18]

Such critiques confirmed that the Any debates not only unfolded in conference venues but were also deliberately continued in the pages of architectural journals. Even the participants themselves were part of this ecology of critique, as Davidson always solicited a ‘Letter to Any’ after each conference. These responses, ranging from enthusiastic praise to pointed criticism, were printed at the back of the conference books, positioning self-critique as an integral layer of Anyone’s media infrastructure.

13 Johannes Kaiser Wortmann, “Anyway,” *Bauwelt* 84, no. 27 (1993): 1452.
14 Libero Andreotti, “The Anyway Conference. Barcelona, June 4–7, 1993,” *Journal of Architectural Education* 47, no. 3 (February 1994): 184.
15 Philipp Oswalt, “Anyhow,” *Arch +*, no. 138 (1997): 17; Emmanuel Doutriaux, “Anyhow à Rotterdam. A propos de la 7e rencontre de la revue Any,” *AMC*, no. 83 (October 1997): 21.
16 Ullrich Schwarz, “Any – Architektur nach dem Ende der Gewissheiten,” *Werk, Bauen + Wohnen*, no. 80 (1993): 41.
17 Ole Bouman, “Rethinking the Hows,” *Archis*, no. 7 (July 1997): 4.
18 Hans van Dijk, “Vertraging. De Grenzen van de ‘Anyficatie,’” *Archis*, no. 8 (1998): 61.

DESIGNING A LEGACY

From the outset, the Anyone Project also devoted considerable attention to the design and circulation of its materials. Initially, the conference books and *ANY* magazine were prepared by the well-known graphic designer Massimo Vignelli, whose work echoed the graphic identity of *Oppositions*. Yet Davidson soon turned to the younger New York studio 2x4 in order to give the Anyone project a distinct visual language. As 2x4 designers Michael Rock and Susan Sellers explained retrospectively, their role in shaping *ANY* treated design itself as a critical practice: typography, sequencing and layout became ‘practice spaces’ for theory no less than the texts themselves.[19] Conference posters and programme pamphlets were designed as collectible guides. Even ephemera, like t-shirts, are emblematic of these efforts in creating an identity for the network.[20] This attentiveness to curating how the project would be remembered culminated in the archiving of the initiative itself.

When the conference series and *ANY* magazine ended in 2000, the Anyone Corporation’s full holding – seventy cardboard boxes containing fax communications, over 4,300 photographs, 199 video recordings, and 204 audio recordings, digital files and publicity objects – were acquired by the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montréal. By safeguarding its own record in one of architecture’s premier archives, the Anyone Project effectively anticipated future scholarly inquiry. Its legacy, in other words, was designed as part of the experiment itself.

CONCLUSION

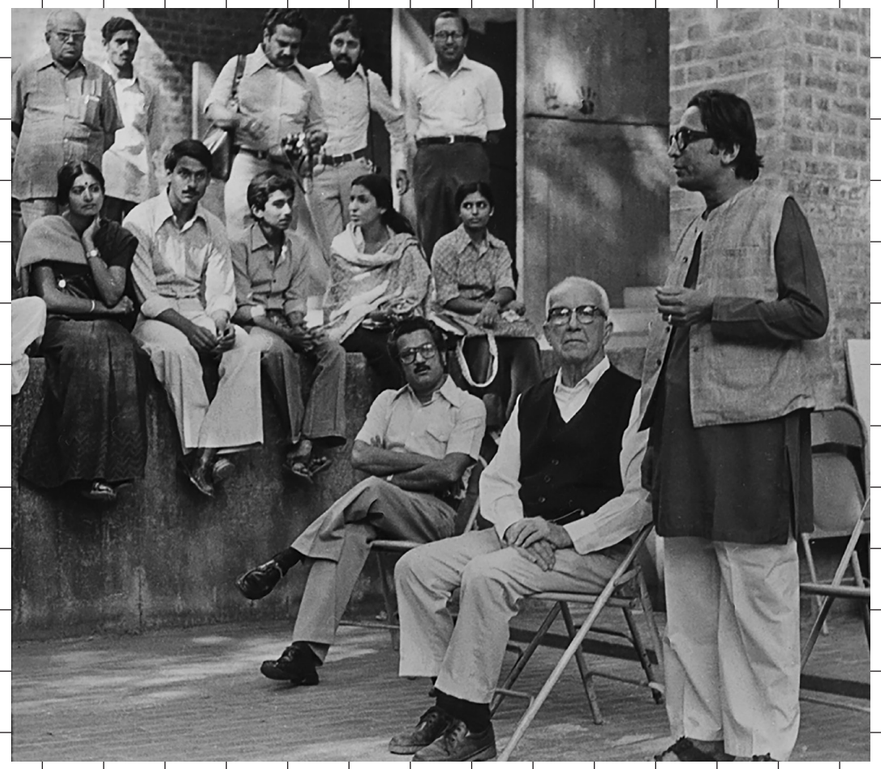
The Anyone Project demonstrates how an architectural network of the 1990s operated not only through itinerancy, but through mediatisation, relying on the combined infrastructures of corporate sponsorship, institutional hosting, print publication, and media circulation to project its debates worldwide. Built on pre-existing editorial and professional connections, sustained through corporate and philanthropic sponsorship, amplified through publicity, and consolidated in print, Anyone mobilised media into its operating logic. At the centre of this network was Cynthia Davidson’s editorial labour, which translated ephemeral debates into carefully edited printed records, deciding what would circulate, and what would be silenced. In this way, the Anyone Project’s coherence rested on its network of support as much as on its ability to mobilise conferences, journals, symposia, and books into a provisional but durable network.

At the same time, Anyone embraced undecidability, experimenting with how architectural theory might travel across borders through the infrastructures

19 Michael Rock and Susan Sellers, “The Critical Path,” *Blueprint*, June 1998, 29.
20 The idea for t-shirts was initiated by Arata Isozaki during ‘his’ 1992 Anywhere Conference in Yufuin, Japan. Cynthia Davidson, interview with the author, New York, September 15, 2025.

that sustained it. Yet this experiment was not without its contradictions. Local hosts were sometimes overruled, regional ambitions sidelined, and the reliance on Euro–American ‘regulars’ made the promise of diversity uneven. The dependence on star power and the domination of its ‘top’ people over local voices, revealed the vulnerabilities of the corporation’s model of global exchange. Still, Anyone’s polyvocal, multidisciplinary exchanges without fixed headquarters anticipated how theory might be mediated in today’s global networks, where diversity, equity, and the need to foreground non-Euro-American voices demand new types of infrastructures for architectural discourse.

Networks and Coloniality



Balkrishna Doshi addressing a gathering, with Buckminster Fuller (seated, beside Doshi) and Hasmukh Patel (seated behind), surrounded by students and faculty at School of Architecture (CEPT University), c. 1978. Photographer unknown. Courtesy of the CEPT Archives.

Chinmay Gheware (CEPT University)

Blueprints of a Shift: Moments and Movements that Shaped Post-Independence Indian Architecture

ARCHITECTURE FOR INDEPENDENT INDIA

India was to be an experiment. With its independence, the country also inherited practices and institutions that had ripened in the colonial regime. The effects of this inheritance would also be seen in approaches to the development of the built environment. A major force towards this development in the pre-independence period was in service of the empire – both stylistically and professionally. Independent India would hence be an experiment in modernity – of indigeneity, and of modernism. For now, there would be no mandate, but an ethos that would govern the development of various smaller and diverse states choosing to come together – at least until the experiment bore some formal and ideological fruit, and continue to do so with each lesson along the way. This would transform civic institutions into machines, that would help build the nation. Newer institutions in education, research and civic infrastructure – were all unprecedented typologies, and each an architectural language that was to attempt to define a new nation, albeit with influences that the protagonists in incumbent institutions like Public Works Department and government contracted practitioners bore from learnings across the globe.[1]

The nation building endeavour witnessed a strong foreign force, a radical act of creative influx in the form of Le Corbusier and his steady, foresighted host prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru duel with a titular vision of using a state capital in the form of Chandigarh to define an idea for radical and free thinking through architecture. The Indian experiment thus began with a network that would transcend continents. However, it took more than a decade for its foremost minds in practice and education of the built environment to formally convene in 1959, to discuss what it would mean to collectively envision a future for the country's–built environment.

This paper will thus foreground that convention as a pivotal and overlooked moment in contextualising the timeline of post-independence Indian modern architecture. It considers the transformations and the movements in the practice and education of architecture in the initial and subsequent decades

1 The Public Works Department was founded in 1854 in an effort to standardise architectural and construction practices during the expansion of the British Raj; Jon Lang, Miki Desai and Madhavi Desai, *Architecture and Independence: The Search for Identity – India 1880 to 1980* (CEPT University Press, 2022), 212–213, 214–215.

as recurring and evolving experiments in the act of nation building. In doing so, the paper acknowledges the absence of a robust archival knowledge system of the period and shall situate and argue for the convention – the 1959 Seminar on Architecture to have been an influence towards shaping these movements.

THE 1959 SEMINAR ON ARCHITECTURE IN NEW DELHI: PROVOCATIONS FOR A POST-INDEPENDENCE INDIAN ARCHITECTURE

The 'Seminar on Architecture' was an unprecedented convention that brought together architects in India from both private and government sectors to discuss the future of the profession vis-à-vis the country.[2] It however remains a footnote in the historiography of the nation building endeavour in Indian architectural modernity. The seminar is discussed in major historical surveys of Indian modern architecture mainly for the provocation that Jawaharlal Nehru made in his inaugural address.[3] This would be his first formal proclamation to use architecture as a vehicle for the nation building exercise, declaring his faith in the 'great experiment' of Chandigarh – especially in its brevity and creativity, while raising the debate of rationalism vs. revivalism, one that would linger the architectural practice in the decades to follow. His address to what would emerge as the next generation of India's modern architects – to be free, to be creative, would cement his patronage of modernism and modern Indian architecture.[4]

The seminar, through a series of papers presented later, only revealed at length the dichotomy that Nehru discussed. The more intriguing aspect about it however, is the discussed themes and the speakers – for both could then be used to look at the seminar as a crucible for the shifts seen in Indian architectural language and the practice in the following three decades. Eighty-two practicing architects participated in the seminar – eighty men and two women, of which four were international invitees.[5] Most of these architects were practitioners in the later halves of their careers, which spanned in working and/or teaching in colonial India. With learnings in the British and early modern way of adopting standardisation in the built environment and thinking (speakers being the likes of G. M. Mandalla, S. H. Parelkar, B. M. Pradhan, J. H. Ghadiali, and others) they echoed for a grounded approach. Another portion of participants, a significant number of whom were first generation architects, had been trained in architecture across various parts of Europe and the Americas, some even sponsored by the Indian state. The likes of Habib Rahman, Piloo Mody, Aditya Prakash, Cyrus Jhabvala, Charles Correa and others hence spoke of creativity and rationality. They asserted autonomy and balance of thoughts – the convenor of the seminar, Achyut Kanvinde, being one of them.

The range of themes discussed in the seminar also echoed this duality in thinking. With architectural expression at the core of discussions, papers were presented to discuss the effects of climate, technology, visual arts and indigenous rural forms on architecture, in addition to subjects like architectural education, the architect and society, and the effect of culture on architectural expression and national policy – sound arguments for a country in making.[6] Apart from these ideas, the seminar concluded with some very foresighted recommendations. Speakers called for autonomy to private practices in moving beyond the standardised methods of the Public Works Department. They decreed certain styles obsolete – aesthetically and economically; argued for legislation to formalise the profession of architecture and mainly; seeked encouragement – financially and by insinuating the merits of collaboration, towards developing rich educational institutions. Eventually, these debates would influence the development of architectural practices and the ethos of major educational institutions in the country, and somehow, the ghosts of Chandigarh and its 'creativity' as a philosophy in architectural thinking would haunt this duality, seeking questions as to what would it mean to have an 'Indian way of thinking', if there were to be one.[7]

MOVEMENTS IN THE SHIFT: AN ARGUMENT FOR THE SEMINAR'S INFLUENCE ON INDIAN MODERNISM

The Seminar on Architecture, as unprecedented as it was, remained a solitary moment in the timeline of Indian modernism. A symposium that included inter-generational, pan-Indian voices and ideas would not convene for decades thereon. Its seminal ideas and recommendations would still see the light of the day – in the form of educational institutions, the Architects' Act of 1972 and a vision manifested collectively by a generation of foreign-trained architects like Achyut Kanvinde, Charles Correa, Balkrishna Doshi,

2 Peter Scriver and Amit Srivastava, "Nation Building", in *India: Modern Architectures in History* (London: Reaktion Books, 2015), 166; The seminar was organised by the *Lalit Kala Akademi,* from March 17–21, 1959, and held at Vigyan Bhavan in New Delhi. *Lalit Kala Akademi*, The National Academy of Art for India was first established in 1954, at new Delhi. It is housed at Rabindra Bhawan since 1961, designed by Habib Rahman, the erstwhile chief architect of the Public Works Department.

3 Scriver and Srivastava, *India: Modern Architectures in History*, 166–167; Malay Chatterjee, "The evolution of contemporary Indian Architecture" in *Architecture in India* (Electa Moniteur, 1985), 126–127; Lang, et al., *Architecture and Independence: The Search for Identity – India 1880 to 1980*, 324.

4 Nehru's patronage in modern Indian architecture would only get substantiated with his support to architectural education, by way of extending international exchange programs for students in the newly developing schools of architecture. (Jon Lang, et al., *Architecture and Independence: The Search for Identity – India 1880 to 1980*, 190.); Jawaharlal Nehru, "Inaugural Address by Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister"; in *Proceedings of the Seminar on Architecture,* edited by Achyut Kanvinde (Lalit kala Akademi, 1959), 5–9.

5 The 78 Indian architects here represented a slowly growing number of architects in the country, which in 1947 were about 300 while in 1974 had increased to 6000. (Chatterjee, "The evolution of contemporary Indian Architecture", 124, 132.); The international invitees included Catherine Bower (U.S.A.), M. Beaudoin (France), Mr. Albert Mayer (U.S.A.) and Mr. Gordon Cullen (England) and can be inferred as a deliberate effort to engage in contemporary international discourse as an extension to the then on-going international collaborations at Chandigarh; Ed. Achyut Kanvinde, *Proceedings of the Seminar on Architecture*, (Lalit Kala Akademi, 1959)

6 Kanvinde, *Proceedings of the Seminar on Architecture.*

7 Charles Correa, "Architectural Expression", in *Proceedings of the 'Seminar on Architecture* (Lalit Kala Akademi, 1959), 48–50.

Raj Rewal, Cyrus Jhabvala, Anant Raje and their contemporaries, few of whom spoke at the Seminar in 1959. The Seminar however, in this paper's argument, could be connected with two different manifestations – the development of pedagogical frameworks seen through School of Architecture (CEPT University) at Ahmedabad from 1962 and the curation of '*Vistāra*–The Architecture of India' in 1986, both still in the continued vision of developing and proliferating an Indian architecture and its expanded network in the 20th century.

THE PEDAGOGIC MO(VE)MENT: SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE IN AHMEDABAD

The seminar was coincidentally hosted between two pivotal moments – the formalisation of the School of Planning and Architecture (SPA) at New Delhi in 1958 and founding of the School of Architecture (CEPT University) at Ahmedabad in 1962 – the first of the =-0987654 wo manifestations.[8] SPA, built on the influences of the architectural developments in Chandigarh, with a lot of the architects who worked on the project beginning to teach here developed a formal and rigorous curriculum for training architects. On the other hand, CEPT was a result of a collaboration between Balkrishna Doshi, Corbusier's apprentice and eventual collaborator and the French architect Bernard Kohn. Doshi and most of his peers who helped build the school were not a part of the seminar, but in a series of movements that were led to reimagine the practice for an emerging country, the school's ethos reverberated the seminar's discussions and recommendations.

Born out of Doshi's realisation during his stint with Corbusier, that the only way to shape the practice of the built environment was to create thinkers and leaders in that movement for the coming generations, the school in Ahmedabad would eventually begin to rightfully do so. CEPT benefitted greatly from its mercantile patronage in Ahmedabad alongside National Institute of Design and the Indian Institute of Management, all a result of transnational collaboration in their physical development.[9] It is also pertinent to note that the mercantile patrons of these institutions were ideologically, socially and professionally inclined to Nehru's vision, thereby furthering his proclamation from the seminar. This institutional triad saw architects and designers like Louis Kahn, George Nakashima, Buckminster Fuller and the Eames, apart from noted Indian architects across the country to frequent CEPT for talks and reviews. It was thus founded, and grew as a hub, not only for education, but for exchange of ideas and creative pedagogical methods in developing professionals, and aware architects who delved into society, culture, science and art – ones who could collaborate.

8 The school was founded in 1941 as Department of Architecture in Delhi University and was formalized as a school in 1958 with Cyrus Jhabvala shaping its curriculum as director from 1966–1978.

9 All the three institutions were founded with the patronage of the mercantile families Lalbhai and Sarabhai. While National Institute of Design was designed by Gira and Gautam Sarabhai in collaboration with Charles and Ray Eames, Indian Institute of Management was designed by Louis Kahn upon Doshi's invitation and taken over later by Anant Raje.

The pedagogic structure at CEPT during its first decade focused on three streams. It emphasised learning interrelationships between various sciences, building a relationship between the contemporary and the historical antecedents, and developing a balance between the technical and humanistic aspects of architecture.[10] It was deemed to be a continuous back – and – forth process of learning, one which Doshi systematically developed by bringing a series of architects, artists, and professionals on board to teach. With his continuous teaching collaborators like Kohn, Hasmukh Patel, Anant Raje, and Christopher Benninger, Doshi created a network of architects who with their pedagogical and professional explorations, shaped the architectural language in the region.[11]

THE CURATORIAL MO(VE)MENT: *VISTĀRA* AND THE FESTIVAL OF INDIA

The three subsequent decades after the seminar was held saw an evolution in approach. The duality discussed in the Seminar steadily brewed with strong juxtapositions of contemporary formal language and techniques with indigeneity and the cultural ethos of various regions that saw the emergence of public architecture. Its leading faces would be people like Charles Correa and Raj Rewal, owing to their creativity in turning commissions into cultural manifestos, but mainly in how they proliferated a bridge between the modern and the indigenous, the rational and the mythic, across the *vistāra*, as Correa would call it.[12] This ideological manifesto expanded in the 1980s and led to a movement that reignited the debate of architectural expression, as connoted in the seminar and its relation to society and history. One of the youngest speakers in the Seminar then, Charles Correa, now at the peak of his career helmed this movement with works across the country and mainly by writing and curating exhibitions, with which he would then travel across the world and discuss these ideas.

As a part of the government-led 'Festival of India' project initiated in 1985 and meant to create international networks of cultural exchange, Correa, along with Pravina Mehta curated and promoted '*Vistāra* – The Architecture of India'. The exhibition aimed to bring relevance to the past and pertinence to the present, all through a showcase of 80 architectural works that resonated with this juxtaposition – conceptually, materially and tectonically. This, along with one designed by Raj Rewal and Ram Sharma for Paris, would travel to Berlin, Tokyo and Moscow between 1985–1991and act as moments of the emergence and proliferation of an Indian modernity in these parts, albeit their selective inference. These exhibitions did not

10 Neelkanth Chhaya, Pratyush Shankar and Vishwanath Kashikar, *Pedagogy: Course Curriculum at the Centre for Environment Planning and Technology–1963, 1976, 1988, 2001* (CEPT University, 2012)

11 Chhaya, et al., *Pedagogy: Course Curriculum at the Centre for Environment Planning and Technology–1963, 1976, 1988, 2001*

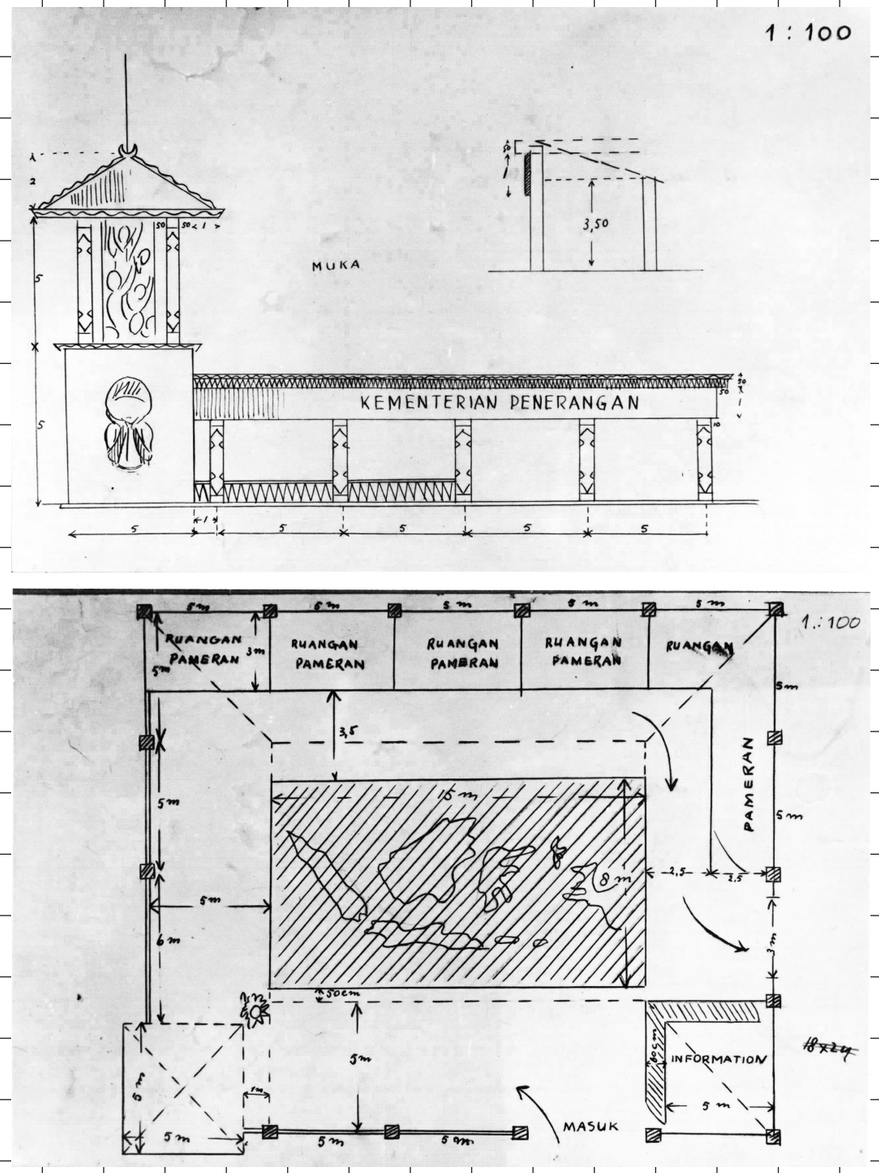
12 *Vistāra* is a sanksrit term, meaning expanse. Correa ascribed this term to denote the limitless possibilities that architecture in India had owing to its rich architectural and cultural lineage; Charles Correa, "Introduction", in *Vistāra: Architecture of India,* edited by Carmen Kagal (The Festival of India, 1985), 48–50.

distance themselves from the Euro-American influences on Indian modern architecture. They represented a genealogy of works that made evident the emergence of an Indian modernity through specificities in response to the very provocations of the Seminar. What the world blindly saw as a lineage of practice born out of the efforts of Chandigarh, would be systematically broken down to talk about the much complex and nuanced takes on establishing a bridge in the duality. It is interesting to note that the reception to these exhibitions across the world was quite different than in India. The west and the east chose to see it as an introduction to India through parts that were disparate and exotic. The indigenous and the mythic took precedence over the modern and the curated juxtaposition and influence of one on the other.

CONCLUSION

The rest of the world had only recently but not fully begun to acknowledge the geographical specifications and nuances in modernism through a 'regionalist' approach.[13] By the time the Seminar had convened, modernism had branched into further explorations. Networks like CIAM and Team 10 foregrounded the immediacy in exchange and proliferation of architectural language and ideas for countries, but in Europe. In absence of consistent formal networks like those, institutional exchanges through School of Architecture (CEPT University) and the intentional and expansive consolidation of an architecture of India through *Vistāra* highlight the importance the Seminar on Architecture bears. It calls to be more than a footnote in the shifts and the timeline of post-independence architecture in India, which developed with an inheritance of, but as a departure from the ideas of CIAM and similar Euro-American networks. These two movements can be argued to have been pivotal in discussing the architecture *of* India, mainly owing to their decadal progression and thereby bringing to fore a response to theoretical frameworks of modernism, regionalism and postcolonialism, which the seminar had previously highlighted very well thematically. Until then – and still largely thereon – Corbusier and Chandigarh were the gateway to Indian modernism for the rest of the world. The eventually highlighted mythic and the established brutal force of Chandigarh would necessarily require a generation of architects built in schools of architecture and the strong provocations like *Vistāra* to initiate a network that could co-exist and invite more regional voices, along with the ones already established.

13 Carmen Popescu. "Critical Regionalism: A not so Critical Theory"; in *The Figure of Knowledge: Conditioning Architectural Theory, 1960s–1990s,* edited by Sebstiaan Loosen, Rajesh Heynickx and Hilde Heynen (Leuven University Press, 2020), 211–224.



Indonesia Ministry of Information Pavillion Elevation and Plan, 1954. Courtesy of the National Archives of the Republic of Indonesia [Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia].

Tashania Akemah (Independent Scholar)

Aligned in Exchange: Fairgrounds of Sovereignty

NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT, SPATIAL DIPLOMACY, AND AGENCY

Although international trade fairs facilitated the appearance of multidirectional exchange, they also laid bare the enduring asymmetries between newly independent Non-Aligned countries and Cold War superpowers. These disparities manifested in the flow of industrial technologies, building systems, and cultural messaging largely originated from the bloc powers. While the presence of superpower pavilions showcased their global reach, the host nations often lacked equivalent means to reciprocate the exchange. Yet, this imbalance did not preclude local agency. For host countries, the fairgrounds became sites of selective appropriation, where global symbols of modernity were curated and recontextualised to articulate national identity, sovereignty, and diplomatic position. These fairs, then, were not simply showcases of superpower influence but stages on which postcolonial nations actively negotiated their place in the global order.

The founding of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) marked a collective response by newly independent states to the binary logic of Cold War geopolitics. Rejecting alignment with either the Western or Eastern blocs, Non-Aligned countries sought to assert an alternative diplomatic and economic order rooted in the Wilsonian idea of self-determination and decolonial solidarity.[1] This effort crystallised at the 1955 Bandung Conference in Indonesia, where twenty-nine Asian and African nations convened to articulate shared principles of sovereignty, mutual respect, non-aggression, and non-interference.[2] The “Bandung Spirit” forged at this gathering laid the ideological foundation for NAM’s formal establishment in Belgrade in 1961, led by figures such as Sukarno (Indonesia), Nkrumah (Ghana), and Tito (Yugoslavia). Each of their countries would go on to host international trade fairs not only as vehicles for economic growth but as platforms to project political non-alignment on the world stage. These fairs functioned as diplomatic infrastructures through which Non-Aligned nations mediated asymmetrical relationships with Cold War superpowers, while simultaneously asserting their autonomy. For participating powers like the United States, USSR, and China, the fairs were strategic sites for expanding soft power influence, making the fairground a stage for both reciprocal and uneven forms of exchanges.

1 Jason Parker, “Cold War II: The Eisenhower Administration, the Bandung Conference, and the Reperiodisation of the Postwar Era,” Diplomatic History 30, no. 5 (2006): 867.
2 V. Venakata Rao “The Asian-Africa Conference.” The Indian Journal of Political Science 16, no. 4 (1955): 320.

The architectural infrastructures of NAM fairs were often co-produced by a mix of local state agencies, international firms, and bloc powers consultants. These pluralistic assemblages reflected the nature of NAM itself: an inherently political coalition where architecture was an apparatus of the political discourse. The networks generated, were less doctrinal and more pragmatic, shaped by the institutional capacities of postcolonial states, shifting alliances, and resources available to each fair.

International trade fairs emerged as key infrastructures through which countries in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) navigated global currents of ideology, commerce, and culture. These fairs were simultaneously economic, diplomatic, and spatial, which provided public and physical platform for nations to position themselves within a polarised world order. While often framed as industrial showcases, trade fairs functioned as architectural platforms for transnational networks of exchange, where goods, ideas, and political imaginaries converged across East–West divides. International trade fairs served as performative sites for postcolonial agency and non-aligned networks, with architecture playing a central role in shaping how these exchanges were both staged and negotiated.

International trade fairs offered Non-Aligned countries a rare platform to articulate sovereignty through visual and spatial means. These fairs became non-violent arenas of negotiation and ideological positioning. The architecture of the fairgrounds did not merely contain political expression, it *produced* it. Drawing on the notion of the exhibitionary order, where colonial power depended on rendering subject nations visible, measurable, and knowable, trade fairs too made nations appear modern, coherent, and open to global exchange.[3] The exhibition thus became a political device: an objectifying frame that simultaneously enabled national representation and constrained its complexity. These spaces were not neutral; they were architectures of legibility, where postcolonial states staged their entry into a global order still shaped by imperial optics.

The rise of international trade fairs within the Non-Aligned Movement emerged from intertwined forces of decolonisation, Cold War rivalry, and the desire of newly independent states to assert diplomatic and economic autonomy. Trade fairs across Indonesia, Yugoslavia, and Ghana, became infrastructures through which these ambitions were enacted with each country's distinct proximity to Cold War superpowers reflecting specific political transformation. These fairs became arenas of negotiation where newly independent nations articulated aspirations for sovereignty, development, and international recognition; revealing the convergence of architecture, diplomacy, and spectacle. The fairs acted as institutions, filling gaps left by formal bodies and enabling nations to experiment with spatial narratives of sovereignty. Fairgrounds became repositories of political ambition and technological vision, where architectural displays inscribed lasting geopolitical alignments.

3 Timothy Mitchell describes the *exhibitionary order* not merely as a display of the world, but as a process of producing the world as if it were an exhibition – where reality is staged for observation, arranged into visual order. This logic rendered imperial power and cultural difference intelligible and consumable, separating viewer from viewed and turning political realities into objective truths. See Timothy Mitchell "The World as Exhibition." Comparative Studies in Society and History 31, no. 2 (1989): 217–24; Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt* (University of California Press), 1988, 33.

INDONESIA INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR

Post-independence, Indonesia was undergoing rapid transformation in the wake of political instability, asserting its political sovereignty while embarking on large-scale urban and institutional development. The Indonesia International Trade Fair, held annually from 1953 to 1955, took place in Jakarta's Kebayoran Baru district, a recently developed satellite city.[4] Intended to accelerate economic development and build trade relationships, the fair simultaneously became a platform for political recognition through architectural diplomacy and image-making.[5]

Organised under the Ministry of Information in relation with the Ministry of Economic Affairs, and executed through the Central Indonesian Exhibition Council (DEXIP), the fair's architecture was shaped by a layered institutional network. The Ministry of Information also established a dedicated visual division, to deploy architecture and display as instruments of statecraft and image-making.6 Notably, the Ministry of Information pavilion displayed five golden pillars representing the *Pancasila* state philosophy, which symbolised Indonesia's projection of national ideology through modern architectural expression.[7]

At the international level, these fairgrounds became a rotating stage for Cold War powers to engage Indonesia through display. China led the inaugural 1953 fair with the largest pavilion, encompassing heavy industry, textile, and agricultural sectors.[8] These structures were later donated to the Indonesian government for civic reuse as a kindergarten pavilion, a women's collective pavilion, and a handicrafts pavilion. In 1954, the Soviet Union took centre stage, constructing the largest building on-site, supported by forty Russian technicians and significant financial investment.[9] The 1955 fair marked a visible shift with major participation by the United States. The American Pavilion coordinator, Mr. Ivan Baker of the Department of Commerce, was welcomed by the fair coordinator, J. M. Laihad, and expressed the United States' interest in building a relationship with Indonesia.[10] The highlight of the event was the model train and the "Holiday on Ice" performance, which required a large imported ice rink measuring 100 by 50 feet, involving the transport of freezing units, piping, and American technicians.[11]

4 Bambang Eryudhawan, "Urban Conservation in Jakarta since 1968," *SPAFA Journal* 1 (November 17, 2017): 7.
5 Direktorat Pengolahan, Deputi Bidang Konservasi Arsip, *Inventaris Arsip Foto Kementrian Penerangan RI: Wilayah Jakarta Tahun 1954*, Vol. 1, No. Arsip 72222–20858 (Jakarta: ANRI, 2021).
6 Ibid.
7 "Soviet Bloc Stars at Indonesia Fair," The New York Times, August 24, 1954.
8 "The China Pavilion at the Indonesia International Expo Opens," *People's Daily*, September 7, 1953, 4.
9 "Soviet Bloc Stars at Indonesia Fair."
10 Information Office, Embassy of Indonesia., Report on Indonesia:, vol. 6–13, 1964, 5.
11 Robert Alden, "U.S. Ice Show a Hit at Indonesia Fair," The New York Times, August 29, 1955.

While the Indonesia Fair did not host direct encounters between Cold War superpowers, it became a proxy stage for diplomatic choreography. Each pavilion functioned as a national emissary: China gifted its exhibition buildings showing architectural goodwill, The Soviet Union deployed technical labour. The United States delivered a theatrical demonstration of engineering prowess which required importing refrigeration units and technicians to maintain in Jakarta's tropical climate. These architectural exports operated as symbolic investments: material tokens of alignment, soft power, and spatial persuasion.

Although the flow of resources and technologies was largely one-way, Indonesia exercised strategic agency. It orchestrated participation by extending invitations, shaping spatial arrangements, and projecting openness. Rather than balancing power, the fair managed asymmetry through hospitality, where architecture functioned both as a diplomatic offering and as a stage for competing global imaginaries.

ZAGREB FAIR

In contrast to the economy driven orientation of the Indonesia Fair, the 1956 revitalisation of the Zagreb Fair was embedded directly into Yugoslavia's socialist urban agenda. Rather than functioning as a temporary structure, the fairgrounds were planned as a permanent feature of New Zagreb, a large-scale expansion effort that included housing developments for 250,000 residents.[12] This integration meant that the fair was not simply adjacent to urban growth — it actively participated in shaping the spatial and ideological fabric of the city. The fairgrounds and their exhibitions became instrumental in promoting models of domestic life, such as housing typologies that bridged spatial policy and ideological pedagogy. Organisations like Family and Household held exhibitions to inform the public and explore new housing models. These displays reflected aspirations for life in a new society through educational exhibitions of social standards, which were held annually from 1957 through 1960.[13]

In the context of accelerated housing rationalisation and construction reforms,[14] The United States mounted a carefully curated exhibition at the 1956 Zagreb Fair titled *America at Home*. Yugoslav workers were invited to compare their daily lives with those of their American counterparts. The centrepiece was a fully furnished, pumpkin-shaped dwelling made of sprayed concrete, designed by architect John Johansen.[15] Its unsupported domed roof and unconventional use of material showcased emerging construction technologies and experimental building forms.

12 Tihomir Jukić, "Novi Zagreb — New City Next to the City," *Engineering Power: Bulletin of the Croatian Academy of Engineering* 14, no. 4 (2019): 5.
13 Ibid, 4.
14 Ibid.
15 Mirna Meštrović and Aleksander predstavljač Laslo, "The Fairground as a Geopolitical Playground: The Zagreb International Trade Fair and Cold War Circumstances," *Engineering Power: Bulletin of the Croatian Academy of Engineering* 14, no. 4 (2019): 16.

The following year, in 1957, the first permanent U.S. pavilion at the Zagreb Fair was designed by the Walter Dorwin Teague Association.[16] Its construction relied on a hybrid of American and Yugoslav resources: while the Y-shaped steel posts spanning twenty-nine metres were fabricated in Yugoslavia, the aluminium louvres used for the facade were manufactured and shipped from the United States. Continuing the previous year's theme, the 1957 exhibit featured a model apartment, agricultural machinery, a fully equipped laundromat, and its central attraction, a supermarket. This full-scale replica mirrored the organisation and inventory of a typical American grocery store, with aisles stocked with fresh, frozen, and canned goods.[17] After the exhibition, American style supermarkets continued to spread throughout Zagreb and Belgrade.[18]

While the United States tailored its exhibitions to reflect Yugoslavia's domestic reforms and evolving urban agenda, the USSR and China used the Zagreb Fair to project their own cultural and technological narratives. China presented a multi-tiered wooden pagoda pavilion built by artisans under architect Cheng Sung Mao which stood out as a traditional architectural structure on-site, emphasising craftsmanship over political alignment.[19] The Soviet Union focused on showcasing industrial and space-age achievements, with minimal attention to Yugoslavia's internal socialist reforms.[20]

Unlike in Indonesia, where Cold War powers calibrated their exhibitions to court favour, the Zagreb Fair reveals a different dynamic: while the West, guided by president Eisenhower's economic policy, sought to impress and influence through consumer spectacle, the Eastern bloc relied on ideological proximity and historic ties, opting instead to reinforce its own image.[21] Architecture, across these divergent strategies remained the vehicle of soft power through which national identity, technological prowess, and diplomatic aspiration were rendered spatially legible.

GHANA INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR

Opened in 1967 in Accra's La district, the Ghana International Trade Fair was conceived under Kwame Nkrumah's socialist regime but realised by Joseph Arthur Ankrah. In the decade following independence from British rule, Ghana oscillated between superpower influences. Under Nkrumah, the country aligned closely with the Soviet bloc, evident in state-led housing projects and a centralised economic vision.[22] After the 1966 coup, Ankrah's government sought to repair relations with the West, promoting

16 Elie Abel, "Yugoslavs Praise U.S. Supermarket,"*New York Times*, September 8, 1957.
17 Meštrović and Laslo, 17.
18 Paul Underwood, "U.S. Exhibit Wins Approval of Tito,"*New York Times*, September 7, 1958.
19 Meštrović and Laslo, 18.
20 Ibid, 17–18.
21 Brendan M. Jones, "U.S. to Go Behind Iron Curtain to 'Show American Way' at Fairs," *New York Times*, May 22, 1956.
22 Lukasz Stanek, Architecture in Global Socialism: Eastern Europe, West Africa, and the Middle East in the Cold War (Princeton university press, 2020), 64.

a mixed economy that fused socialist planning with capitalist enterprise. This ideological shift was legible in the fair's spatial reorganisation. Soviet participants were no longer included, while the United States and Britain emerged as dominant presences. One of the main attractions exemplified pan-African solidarity by placing African nations display at the entrance of the round pavilion, positioning the fair as both a stage and an instrument of geopolitical repositioning.[23]

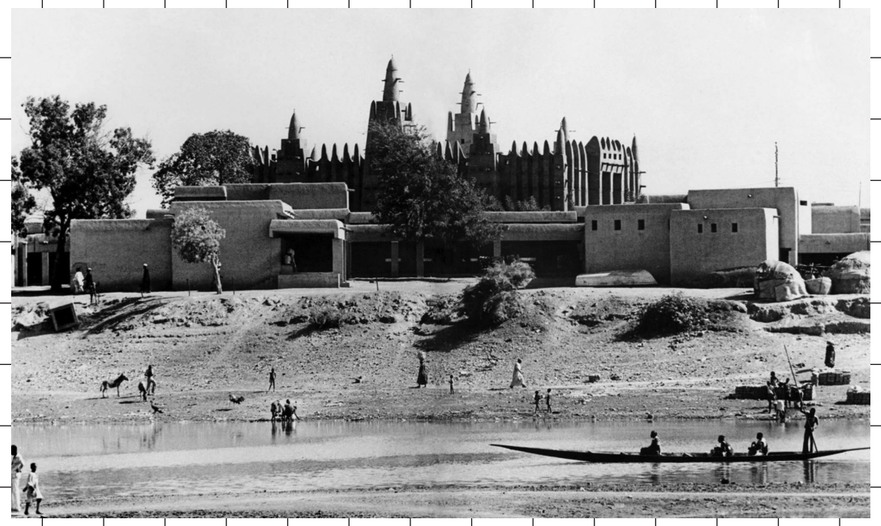
Prior to the International Trade Fair, Ghana hosted exhibitions from China, beginning with a series of temporary halls in Accra in 1961. These were part of cooperative agreements with Nkrumah's government and helped advance China's growing political and economic ambitions in Africa. Architecturally, the halls blended traditional aesthetics with socialist content: ceremonial *pailou* gateways and imperial ornamentation framed interiors filled with models of industrial production and everyday socialist life similar to the ones in Indonesia and Yugoslavia.[24] This tension between decorative heritage and modern political messaging was a strategic softening of ideological presence. Modest in scale and projection, China's exhibitions promoted technical ambition without threatening Ghana's sovereignty, offering an alternative to the binary Cold War alignments.

By contrast, the ITF marked a turn toward Western engagement. Designed by the Ghana National Construction Corporation (GNCC), its team included Polish architects Jacek Chyrosz and Stanisław Rymaszewski, with Ghanaian architect Victor Adegbite trained at Howard University as chief architect. The site was divided into multiple pavilions, including a Made in Ghana hall, blending state and foreign industries.[25] Yet the prominent presence of Great Britain and United States pavilions gave it a distinctly Western tenor.[26] The fair thus became both a stage and an instrument for Ghana's political repositioning, mapping global alignments through architectural space.

CONCLUSION

International trade fairs became strategic infrastructures through which Non-Aligned nations projected postcolonial sovereignty and negotiated global alignments. In Indonesia, the fairgrounds acted as stages of early Cold War tensions; in Yugoslavia, the Zagreb Fair became a performance of domestic reform propaganda; in Ghana, the fair signalled a shift in geopolitical preferences. Across these contexts, the fairgrounds reflected overlapping agendas of decolonisation, national development, and global positioning amidst Cold War tension. They materialised through architectural commissions, state agreements, and industrial collaborations that bridged local ambitions with transnational networks. Acting as provisional institutions, trade fairs enabled spatial experimentation and symbolic nation-building. On these grounds, industrial and political interests converged, turning pavilions into ideological vessels. Through design, organisation, and spectacle, these events made sovereignty visible and negotiable. Far from passive recipients of global influence, Non-Aligned nations used the fairs to assert agency, reconfiguring architectural and diplomatic exchange outside Cold War binaries.

23 Ibid, 87.
24 Cole Roskam, "Non-Aligned Architecture: China's Designs on and in Ghana and Guinea, 1955–92," *Architectural History* 58 (2015): 261–91.
25 Stanek, 52.
26 Stanek, 87–88.



André Ravereau, Medical Centre, 1976 (recipient of the Aga Khan Award for Architecture, 1980) in front of the Great Mosque of Mopti, Mali. Courtesy of AKTC.

Tomà Berlanda (Politecnico di Torino)

The Aga Khan Award and the Idea of ‘Modern African’ Architecture

INTRODUCTION

In a 1961 statement that resonated widely across the continent, Ghana’s president Kwame Nkrumah articulated a concern shared by many post-independence African leaders: that political independence had not ended external domination, but merely transformed it. He drew a sharp line between two emblematic events in European history: the Berlin Conference of 1884–85, which sanctioned the partition of Africa and formalised the structures of colonial rule, and the Treaty of Rome of 1957, which established the European Economic Community. For Nkrumah, the connection between the two was clear. If the former secured Europe’s direct control over African territories, the latter signalled a new phase of indirect control. In his words, ‘the Berlin Conference established the undisputed sway of colonialism in Africa; the Treaty of Rome marks the advent of neocolonialism’.[1]

From the early 1960s, direct military occupation and formal governance were replaced, or integrated, by subtler mechanisms, channelled through international organisations, global financial institutions, bilateral aid programmes, and multinational corporations. Their influence extended to territorial transformation, urban policy, and architecture, generating a form of ‘collective colonialism’ mediated by actors based in the global North.[2]

In this transition phase, cultural institutions acquired particular significance. Bodies such as UNESCO used their prestige, and a veneer of neutrality, to shape the vision of a ‘new Africa’, also in architecture. Their 1967 directive stated: ‘As new forms of society develop, African architects are called upon to evolve a style and an approach (…) that not only reflects tradition but has a functional modern utility’.[3] The directive’s illustrations make this dichotomy explicit. Tradition was represented by the Djenné mosque, rebuilt by the French in 1907 and presented as emblematic of a vast Sahelian cultural zone. Modernity instead, was embodied in the work of two Western-educated Nigerian architects, Oluwole Olumuyiwa and Alex Ekwueme, whose works featured in international surveys.[4]

1 Address to the Ghana national assembly, May 30, 1961, quoted in Peo Hansen and Stephan Johnson, “Eurafrica Incognita, The Colonial origins of the European Union,” *History of the Present*, vol. 7, n. 1 (2017): 1–2.

2 On the role of former colonial officers in the Economic European Union see the chapter “EEC Development Policy. A sedimentation of Empires?,” in Véronique Dimier, *Recycling Empire: The Invention of an European Development Aid Bureaucracy* (Palgrave McMillan, 2014): 99–115.

3 “African Architecture old and new,” *The UNESCO Courier*, XX, 6 (1967): 14–16.

4 Olumuya’s elementary school in Lagos and the Supreme court in Abuja; and Ekwuene’s hospital for the Nigerian Railway Corporation in Lagos belong to the buildings selected by Udo Kultermann, ed., *World*

By the 1980s, such prescriptions were examined through two conceptual lenses: one is that of ‘invented tradition’, and the other of ‘invented Africa’, both exposing how the continent’s representation continued to serve colonial ideologies.[5] Within this intellectual and political climate, the Aga Khan Award for Architecture (AKAA), established in 1977, offers a singular lens to elucidate how architecture became an instrument of postcolonial cultural politics.

Conceived to honour architectural excellence in the Muslim world, the AKAA was also a site of triangulation, where new geopolitical players, especially the United States, could intervene indirectly in African affairs by partnering with actors not directly tied to the colonial project.[6] Although the AKAA’s remit was global, its influence in Africa has been substantial. From 1980 to the present, it has recognised fourteen projects on the continent and shortlisted thirty more. Although His Highness the Aga Khan[7] repeatedly stated that the Award did not intend to create ‘any particular school of architectural thought’, both winning and shortlisted works have become benchmarks in defining ‘modern African architecture’.[8]

CHARTING THE EARLY CYCLES OF THE AKAA

In 1986 Brian Brace Taylor, reflecting on the first three cycles (1980, 1983, and 1986) of the AKAA, affirmed how that year’s edition represented ‘a turning point in the Award living process’. A moment in which ‘the winners leave us with a yearning to know the full range of nominees, because of the voids in our retrospective chart’.[9]

Mindful of Taylor’s perplexities, this study examines the first three cycles focusing on nominated projects that received no public exposure. The approach combines analysis of the formal aspects with research into commissioning, funding, and promotion, using archival nomination forms, correspondence, and associated records.

Two hypotheses guided the work. The first was that unrecognised nominations could reveal how certain stereotypes of African architecture, vaulted roofs, hand-made brick, ‘vernacular’ motifs, were imposed even where historically absent. The second was that reconstructing the network of nominators, reviewers, and Steering Committee members could explain how a relatively closed circle of actors influenced the canon that emerged.

Architecture 1900–2000. Vol. 6, Central and Southern Africa (Springer, 2000).

5 Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The invention of tradition* (Cambridge University Press, 1983); Valentine Mudimbe, *The invention of Africa* (Indiana University Press, 1988).

6 Evidence of this would be how Its creation was soon (1979) followed by the establishment of the Aga Khan Program in Islamic Architecture at Harvard and MIT, linking the Award to two major American academic institutions.

7 Throughout this article His Highness the Aga Khan refers to Prince Karim al-Hussein, known as the Aga Khan IV (1936–2025).

8 AKAA, *Steering Committee Meeting*, Apr. 1978; See for eg. Kultermann, 2000.

9 Brian Brace Taylor, “Reflections on the 1986 Aga Khan Award for Architecture,” *Mimar,* n. 22 (1986): 52.

The period under review was critical for African states. Many had gained independence only in the previous two decades. In the 1970s, a wave of coups displaced socialist-leaning governments; economic crises were met with World Bank and IMF structural adjustment programmes.

NOMINATION PROCEDURES

The Award’s procedures were established by the first convenor Renata Holod with a Steering Committee that included prominent architects, scholars, and the Aga Khan himself.[10] Early drafts of the rules proposed multiple categories, from ‘monumental’ to ‘indigenous’, each with defined criteria. Monumental works were valued for their symbolic impact on national identity; indigenous works were defined as locally designed and built using non-mechanised methods.

These categories were later simplified into broader ‘areas of interest’ such as housing, public buildings, and restoration. Importantly, the Award was never open to general submission. Projects had to be proposed by a network of invited nominators, likened by Grabar to ‘antennae’, scanning their regions and transmitting information to what he called ‘the general staff’.[11]

The anonymity of nominators obscured the extent to which selections reflected personal networks and the priorities of international organisations. Many nominators had participated in preparatory seminars alongside UNESCO, ICOMOS, the World Bank, and multinational planning firms.

Nomination files reveal an often-cursory process. Some nominators admitted they had not visited the project; others copied descriptions directly from designers’ promotional materials. Even colonial-period buildings were nominated, praised for blending modern movement principles with ‘indigenous’ forms, without acknowledging their role in colonial exploitation.

Reviewers, usually based in the global North for ease of coordination, could be assisted by local consultants, but this centralisation reinforced a Western frame of reference in judging African projects.[12]

DESIGNERS, PATRONS AND DONORS

Across the first three cycles of the Award, sixty-nine projects from Muslim-majority African countries were nominated, but only four became winners. Most were designed by European architects whose influence persisted well beyond the end of formal colonial rule, supported by governments,

10 William Porter, Hassan Fathy, Oleg Grabar, and Charles Correa among them.

11 Oleg Grabar, “The Mission and its People,” in *Architecture for Islamic Societies Today*, ed. James Steele (Academy Editions, 1994): 9.

12 A early recommendation by the Steering committee goes as far as suggesting they be based in the US East coast. See AKAA, *Steering Committee Meeting*, Report n. 4, vol. 2, Nov. 1978.

international organisations, and private investors. Together, these networks defined much of what was recognised as ‘modern African architecture’.

In Francophone Africa, architects with deep colonial roots secured prominent commissions. Henri Chomette, active in Senegal since independence, designed ministries, hotels, and university buildings for President Léopold Sédar Senghor. His work, nominated multiple times, was framed as rooted in a “triple culture” of African, Islamic, and European influences.[13] In Niger, the French practice KPDV — Michel Kalt, Daniel Pouradier-Duteil, and Pierre Vignal — produced the Niamey’s master plan and built hundreds of schools under European Development Fund sponsorship, perpetuating segregationist zoning between European and African populations. In Cameroon, Armand Salomon, a former colonial administrator, continued to design public works under President Ahmadou Ahidjo, including the Ngaoundéré Mosque, financed by a wealthy merchant.

British architects dominated nominations in Anglophone Africa. Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew, long celebrated as pioneers of the International Style in West Africa, were nominated for Bussa New Town in Nigeria, a resettlement scheme for 45,000 people displaced by a dam. Commended for climate-responsive design, the settlement nonetheless provoked protests from residents, who denounced the erosion of cultural and social structures. In Kenya, Richard Hughes promoted heritage-oriented approaches, nominating his own Lamu house renovation while cultivating links with government and international organisations.

Shifting political landscapes also shaped nominations. After Mali’s socialist president Modibo Keita was deposed in 1969, French influence resurged. André Ravereau’s Medical Centre in Mopti, built with European Development Fund support, won the Award in 1980. Bamako’s National Museum, initiated after a 1977 French presidential visit, was designed by Jean-Loup Pivin with Alpha Oumar Konaré, then a UNESCO consultant and later Mali’s president. In Niger, Laszlo Mester de Parajd designed the Onersol solar research centre with a patchwork of domestic and foreign funding, including USAID.

International organisations and donors were not peripheral but central actors. UNESCO’s Nianing Training Centre in Senegal, co-funded by Caritas, was praised for mobilising labour-intensive strategies engaging local communities.[14] In Sudan, UNESCO-backed schools in Kala el Nahal and Karari experimented with vaulted prototypes justified as resonant with indigenous clustering of circular huts. Designer Barry Kummins wrote that ‘the grouping of individual parabolic units is not an entirely foreign concept to the population’, while nomination documents stressed the ‘enhancement of the flat desert landscape’ through the chosen roof form.[15] The World Bank tied architecture directly to economic policy, as in Mauritius’s Junior School, intended to prepare rural youth for work in agriculture and manufacturing. Large-scale irrigation projects in Sudan, such as the Rahad scheme, combined Arab capital, Western technology, and local resources.

Private investors also reshaped the landscape. In Senegal, the Cap Skirring Club Méditerranée resort and the Almadies complex, financed and managed internationally, were nominated as exemplars of modern African architecture. In practice, they catered primarily to foreign tourists, their designers aiming to give visitors a sense of local specificity while embedding the sites into the global leisure economy.[16]

Taken together, these projects show how nominations reflected a dense network of exchange. European architects maintained influence through personal and political ties; international organisations advanced development strategies; and private investors promoted tourism as cultural export. Within this web, African actors were present but rarely decisive.

EXPERIMENTATION AND ‘APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY’

Another subset of nominated projects came from experimental groups encouraged by donors to develop ‘appropriate technologies’. These initiatives, framed as alternatives to expensive imported systems, aligned closely with the Award’s ideological emphasis on combining modern innovation with traditional forms. Vaults, domes, and earth construction were repeatedly presented as embodying both continuity and progress, regardless of historical roots.

Adaua, the Association pour le développement naturel d’une architecture et urbanisme africaine, worked in Mauritania and Burkina Faso on housing and hospitals using domes, vaults, and materials often unfamiliar to the communities concerned. In Satara Zone Housing, a UNICEF-financed slum resettlement project, Adaua employed stabilised earth; in Nouakchott it used plaster made from dehydrated gypsum. As Joylon Leslie observed in 1995, such innovations often had little impact on living conditions.[17]

CRAterre’s work in Mayotte, part of a French Overseas Territories housing programme, involved low-cost earth construction prototypes in a region where such techniques had little historic presence. Similarly, the Swiss practice AUA designed a farmers’ training centre in Cameroon, funded by US and Dutch aid, aimed at producing a ‘region-wide network of agricultural innovators’.[18] The assumption that a one-year programme could transform rural incomes soon proved illusory.

13 Roland Depret, “The Assimilation of Traditional Practices in Contemporary Architecture,” in *Reading the Contemporary City*, ed. Brian Brace Taylor (Concept Media / Aga Khan for Architecture, 1983): 70.
14 Sibel Bozdogan, “The Aga Khan Award for Architecture. A Philosophy of Reconciliation,” *Journal of Architectural Education*, vol. 45, n. 3 (1992): 183.
15 Barry Kimmins, *Sudan. Low-cost school building* (Unesco, 1965); AKAA archives, 125.SUD.
16 AKAA archives, 0305.SEN
17 AKAA archives, 245.MAU & 300.MAU
18 William K. Jaeger, *U. S. Aid to Cameroon: its Impact on Agricultural and Rural Development* (World Bank, 1987): 122.

Development Workshop's Chikal Literacy Centre in Niger, built under the 'Tapis Vert' anti-desertification programme, was conceived as 'a prototype of a typical Sahelian village' relying on vault-and-dome technology to reduce wood consumption.[19] While striking in form, it depended on imported methods, underlining the tension between local appropriateness and donor-driven experimentation.

What unites these experiments is not their technical ingenuity alone but the way they mirrored the Award's wider discourse: celebrating architecture that appeared simultaneously traditional and innovative. Whether promoted by architects, governments, or donors, these projects reinforced the same canon of 'authentic' African architecture that the AKAA helped to codify, even when the traditions invoked were inventions, or external impositions.

AFRICAN ARCHITECTS AND REPRESENTATION

Despite the Award's emphasis on 'native practices and talents', few African architects were nominated, and fewer still were recognised.[20] Two untrained master masons — Lassina Minta in Mali and Falké Barmou in Niger — won for mosques celebrated as fusions of tradition and outside influence. The Jury described Minta as 'a perfect example of the master-mason in the tradition of Djenné: strongly attached to local building traditions yet open to external influences', while Barmou's work was seen as partly traditional, partly innovative, 'allowing more scope for a transition with continuity'.[21]

Not all agreed with this framing. Jury member Doruk Pamir penned a dissenting note, warning against 'a romantic prejudice in favour of traditionalism, historicism and vernacular, a prejudice which reflects a dominant tendency in the architectural discourse in Europe and the United States in the last ten years'.[22] His critique underscored the contested nature of authenticity as applied by the Award.

At the other end of the spectrum were elite African architects whose careers were embedded in international networks. Cheikh N'Gom's Grand Medina Settlement in Dakar standardised housing according to income bands and reflected both local ambitions and technocratic models, seeking to 'introduce social standards previously not known in Senegal'.[23] In Sudan, Abdel Moneim Mustafa, a Leicester graduate with Rockefeller Foundation support for tropical architecture studies, was praised as the first Sudanese architect to adopt a distinctive modernism, yet his career was also entangled with donor agencies.

19 AKAA archives, 0398.NGR
20 Grabar, 1994: 7.
21 Raoul Snelder, "The Great Mosque at Djenné. Its impact today as a model," *Mimar*, n. 12, (1984): 74; Master Jury, "Aesthetic Assessment", in *Space for Freedom*, ed. Ismail Serageldin (Butterworth architecture, 1989): 143.
22 Mehmet Doruk Pamir, "Dissenting report" in Serageldin, 1989: 75.
23 AKAA archives, 0461.SEN

In Nigeria, where a strong local profession existed, nominations often foregrounded foreign, i.e. British, tropical modernists. Nigerian architect David Aradeon criticised Maxwell Fry's dismissive response to whether contemporary African architecture should draw on local cultures, quoting Fry's rhetorical question: 'How much continuing life is there in these cultures? Have they contemporary validity?', capturing the persistence of colonial hierarchies in architectural thought.[24]

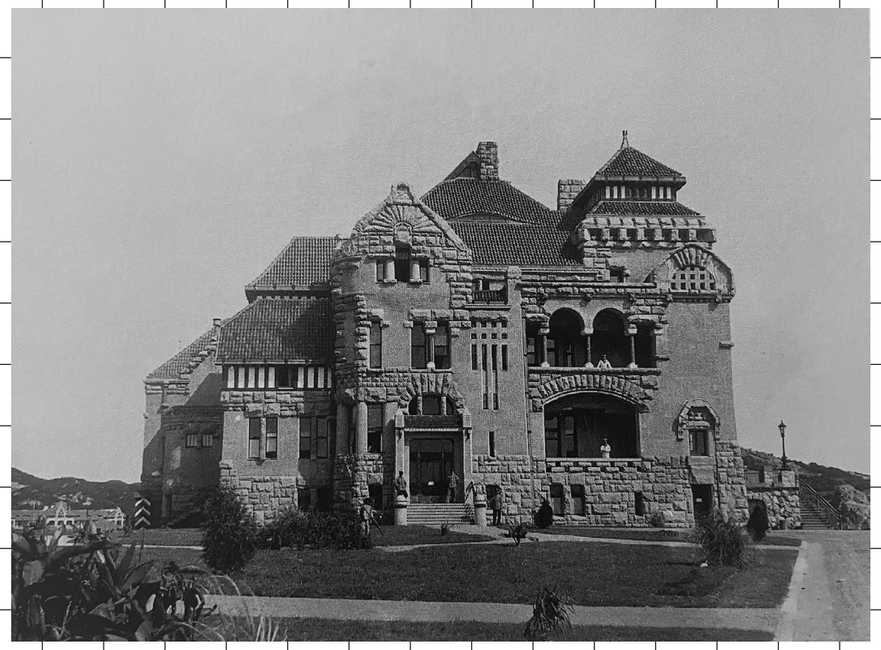
CONCLUSION

The AKAA archives reveal how recognition of African projects was shaped by a relatively homogenous, tightly connected network of nominators, reviewers, designers, and Steering Committee members — predominantly from the global North. This was less a neutral apparatus than a circulatory system of exchange, in which architectural projects, donor agendas, and keywords, such as identity, tradition, and modernity, were circulated and legitimised.

Many celebrated works were bound to external political and economic agendas, serving as symbols of progress while reinforcing dependency. The invention of 'modern African architecture' was therefore less the product of African architects and communities defining their own environments than of outsiders validating a canon. As Hobsbawn and Ranger remind us, 'invented traditions' arise when selective fragments of the past are codified as timeless continuity. Within the AKAA, the repeated valorisation of vaults, domes, and earth construction, even where historically absent, functioned precisely in the way, lending an aura of authenticity to a new, imposed vocabulary.

Seen in this light, Mudimbe's observation that there was 'no space for insiders' remains relevant. The AKAA's history in Africa underscores how external actors, patrons, experts, and institutions, continued to shape architectural narratives, leaving unresolved the question of whose voices and interests define the spaces in which Africans live and work.

24 David Aradeon, "Space and House Form: Teaching Cultural Significance to Nigerian Students", *Journal of Architectural Education*, vol. 35, n. 1 (1981): 26.



German Governor's Residence, Tsingtao, 1905–1907. Christoph Lind, "Heimatliches Idyll und Kolonialer Herrschaftsanspruch: Architektur in Tsingtau," in *Tsingtau ein Kapitel Deutscher Kolonialgeschichte in China 1897–1914*, ed. Hans-Martin Hinz and Christoph Lind (Deutsches Historisches Museum, 1998), 98.

Moe Omiya (University of Zurich)

Memories of Palimpsest: Yamada Mamoru and the Architectural Discourses on the German-Japanese Colony of Tsingtao

INTRODUCTION

A trio of Japanese architects visited Tsingtao (Qingdao) together in 1919 as students from Tokyo Imperial University, a year before graduation. On a journey across China and Korea after participating in the Manchurian Railway Company's internship programme, their sojourn in this 'German-Japanese' colonial site in China happened five years after Japan invaded the region, which had been under German Naval rule since 1898.[1] 'The artistic excitement and delight I felt when we were greeted by the German-style new architecture of the Shandong province is one of the things I should never forget in my life', wrote one, Mamoru Yamada (1894–1966), within a year after the visit.[2]

Yamada, one of Japan's representative architects of the twentieth century, has been referenced as a founding member of the Japanese 'Secessionist' group, *Bunri-ha*, as the only architect from Asia whose work was featured in the book, *The International Style* (1932), by Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Phillip Johnson, or as the designer of the iconic Kyoto Tower or Budōkan in Tokyo. However, previous studies have paid little attention to his 1919 trip to Tsingtao.

This case study about Mamoru Yamada, is part of the on-going research project that follows the Japanese architects' transitioning attitudes towards the German predecessors' palimpsest on what I call the understudied 'colonial third sites'. In this framework, I will discuss here how Yamada's experience and memory from this trip would shape his architectural principles at different phases of his career and thus the wider Japanese architectural communities' discourses.

1 Mayumi Takizawa, Sutemi Horiguchi, Keiichi Morita, Bunzo Yamaguchi, and Teijirō Muramatsu, "Zadankai Bunriha, Tōkyō Chūō Denshinkyoku, Yamada Mamoru (Roundtable Talk: Bunri-Ha Group, Tokyo Main Telegraph Office, Yamada Mamoru)," in *Kenchiku Kiroku/Tōkyō Chūō Denshinkyoku [Architectural Record/ Tokyo Main Telegraph Office]*, ed. Satoru Mukai Tōkyō Denshi Denwa Kōsha, 1969), 79.

2 Mamoru Yamada, "Gojin ha Ikanaru Kenchiku wo Tsukuru Bekika [What Kind of Architecture should We Create]," in *Bunri-ha Kenchiku-kai Sengen to Sakuhin [Bunri-ha (Secessionist) Architectural Group Manifestoes and Works]*, ed. Bunriha Kenchiku-kai (Iwanami Shoten, 1920), 30.

THE ARCHITECTURAL CONFRONTATION IN TSINGTAO

The Chinese city of Tsingtao and the Micronesian Islands in the Pacific, were taken over by Japan from Germany around the end of the First World War. These are what I call the 'colonial third sites' as the world's only two sites that underwent both German and Japanese occupations consecutively, and thus where the Japanese colonial architects encountered the German architecture on neither of their metropoles but as palimpsest on the colonial site. Especially in the case of Tsingtao, the other empires' gazes from the surrounding protectorates, colonies, and settlements played a critical role for the colonisers in Tsingtao to demonstrate their power. The former coloniser, the German Imperial Navy, scrapped the land for the port city-to-be in Shandong Peninsula and constructed what they would call the 'model colony' from scratch.[3] For Yamada and his travelling companions, the visit to Tsingtao was their first occasion to see the 'German' architecture built for the Germans in the flesh. After the European architectural training at Tokyo Imperial University, they expressed the thrill and admiration to confront the 'real' buildings they had learned about in their subsequent graduation works.[4]

In 1942, however, the readership of the *Kenchiku Zasshi* [Journal of Architecture] would face the following sentence by the same person, Yamada: 'The architecture of Tsingtao is indeed no less representative of those bad examples of what we call the colonial architecture and is not something that was created with "sincerity" for the site and for the people'.[5] What led him to criticise the buildings he remembered with 'delight' so harshly? The primary factors lay both on the buildings in Tsingtao and on Yamada's career after the trip. One characteristic about Tsingtao architecture was that almost all the buildings were built after 1898 because of the German Navy's levelling and construction of the city from scratch from that year. What Yamada saw as the 'German city' thus only comprised the architectural styles – the mixture of Historicism and Reform Architecture – from the short, specific fifteen years of German occupation of the region.[6] Another point to note is that it was the local Chinese carpenters and construction workers who actually built the Tsingtao architecture. As was often the case in other colonies, too, the vernacular knowledge about the local housing, topography, and climate was crucial in multiple aspects of the construction from determining the floor plan according to feng shui to the arrangement

3 Torsten Warner, *Deutsche Architektur in China – Architekturtransfer [German Architecture in China – Architectural Tarnsfer]* (Ernst & Sohn, 1994).
Gert Kaster, "'Image-Pflege': Geschichte und lokale Aneignung von deutschem Architekturerbe in Qingdao, China," in *Kulturerbe und Denkmalpflege transkulturell Grenzgänge zwischen Theorie und Praxis*, ed. Michael S. Falser and Monica Juneja (Transcript, 2013), 167–79.

4 Yamada, "Gojin ha Ikanaru Kenchiku wo Tsukuru Bekika (What Kind of Architecture should We Create)," 30.

5 Mamoru Yamada, "Daitōa Kenchiku no Shidō Rinen [Principles of Instructions on Daitōa Architecture]," *Kenchiku Zasshi 690*, (September 1942): 681–85.

6 Shin Muramatsu, "Kōsai-sen ga Hakonda 'Chintao Zetseshiōn' ['Tsingtao Secession' Transported by the Kōsai-line]," in *Ajia no Toshi to Kenchiku: 29 exotic asian cities [Cities and Architecture in Asia]*, ed. Yūzō Katō (Kashima Shuppankai, 1986), 231–44.
Akira Hasegawa, "Chintao to Doitsu Hyōgen-shugi [Tsingtao and German Expressionism]," in *Bunriha-Kenchikukai: Nihon no Modanizumu Kenchiku Tanjou [Bunri-ha: the Birth of Japanese Modernism Architecture]*, ed. Takahiro Taji (Kyoto University Press, 2020), 50–63.

of the windows and walls against the cold wind to the decorative details.[7] Unaware of these specificities of the Tsingtao architecture the moment he confronted them on site, Yamada would embark on his career as a professional architect a year after the trip.

EARLY CAREER AND SOJOURN IN EUROPE

Graduating in 1920, Yamada entered the Ministry of Communications' building and repairs department as an architect. The largest and unforeseen project he was directly involved in was the reconstruction of Tokyo upon the Great Kanto Earthquake that destroyed the city in September 1923.[8] On this occasion, he developed the awareness about the role of architecture in politics, too. As he gradually established himself both among star architects and leading discussants, Yamada was dispatched to Europe and the US in summer 1929 by the Ministry of Communications. Especially during his stay in Germany, he learned to depart from his original passion in a hard way. For, neither the styles he had studied about nor the buildings in Tsingtao he confronted as the new German architecture turned out to be among the cutting edge trends in the metrople any more. He wrote to his wife from the artists' colony from the Secession era in Darmstadt, 'That very artists' colony, which used to be at the frontier of architecture during our university days, was now lying cold like corpses'.[9] With the expanding discussions and growing numbers of experimental works of International Architecture in Germany, introducing simple geometric forms and steel and reinforced concrete as materials was gaining popularity quickly enough to be immediately recognisable even to a visitor for a few months like Yamada.

However, Yamada did not depart from his past to immediately leap at a new trend, but rather accumulated ideas and inspirations over the voyage via personal connections.

Instead of solely observing the designs in different places, he tried to acquaint himself with the architects personally, by attending the second Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM) and widening the contacts from there.[10] With his contemporaries – including Erich Mendelsohn, Walter Gropius, Joseph Hoffmann, Le Corbusier, Hans Scharoun, and Hugo Häring – he talked about each other's architecture by visiting their works and bringing photographs of his own. He recalled being praised by them for his 'free and international' designs.[11] He also discussed with some of them that

7 Yuting Dong, "Red Brick Imperialism: How Vernacular Knowledge Shaped Japanese Colonial Expertise in Northeast China, 1905–45," *Technology and Culture* 63, no. 1 (2022): 118–52.
Warner, *Deutsche Architektur in China*, 260.

8 Rieko Omura and Jin Motohashi, eds., *Bunri-ha Kenchiku-kai Hyakunen: Kenchiku wa Geijutsu ka? [100 years of Bunriha: Can architecture be art?]* (The Asahi Shimbun, 2020), 208–9.

9 Satoru Mukai, ed., *Kenchikuka Yamada Mamoru no Tegami: 1929–30 [Letters of the Architect Mamoru Yamada: 1929–1930]* (Yamada Mamoru Architectural Office, 1982) 76.

10 Ken-Tadashi Oshima, "Yamada Mamoru – From the Japanese Secessionists to The Inernational Style," *Ochanomizu University Center for Comparative Japanese Studies Annual Bulletin*, no. 7 (2011): 81–99.

11 Oshima, "Yamada Mamoru – From the Japanese Secessionists to The Inernational Style," 90.
Mukai, *Kenchikuka Yamada Mamoru no Tegami: 1929–30 [Letters of the Architect Mamoru Yamada:*

'the Japanese people would smoothly accept the simplistic characteristics of the International Style due to its similarity to their traditional housings', or 'how the Japanese natural factors such as earthquakes and rainy seasons were reflected in the design'.[12] Another key product that struck him during the journey was the design of the Ship *Lloyd Bremen* he was on board from Europe to the United States in April 1930. Ships resonated with the emerging ideas of the International Style and had served Modernist architects as a symbol of internationality. Yamada had already indicated his interest in ship as architecture a few years after graduation, noting, 'I would like to express the architectural beauty in the *Linienlos* [lineless] forms […] as the manmade cars and ships have developed from straight lines and flat surfaces to curved lines and curved surfaces'.[13] These personal meetings and confrontation with the combination of technology and design served as a occasion to update his principles.

After the journey, Yamada emphasised the significance of getting to know both the architects and clients personally and bringing their ideas and needs into each project. It was a practically opposite concept from what he was delighted to capture in Tsingtao — the 'magnificent' colonial buildings expressing German dignity. Yamada was now keen to design something rational and experimentally inspiring by cultivating more personal understandings. Thus, for Yamada, using the elements of International Style, or more broadly of Modernism, was not so much about importing the 'Western' architectural styles to his work, but more about introducing various recent trends he familiarised himself with through personal discussions to improve his own designs in function and beauty. One of his first designs after returning to Japan was a residential house, in which he combined one-story wooden part and two-story reinforced concrete part.[14] From this work onwards, his designs would swing between the emphasis on old-style decorative curves and the simpler rational forms, and the scientific pursuit of functionality.

On whether Yamada was nationalistically searching for the 'Japaneseness' of the architecture after returning to Japan, there has been no general agreement among his former colleagues or among researchers. At roundtables, some of his former colleagues attested he would insist on the 'return to the Japanese architecture', to which some others disagreed.[15] Yet another colleague of him suggested his opportunistic attitudes sometimes resulted in the designs that catered to the client's needs such as the nationally highlighted construction projects. A key to understanding the disputes can be found in what Ken-Tadashi Ōshima pointed out: Yamada defied the classic dichotomy of the older Expressionism and the functional International Style or of the 'Western' and the 'Eastern', and cherished personal elements than universal.[16] The individual characteristics of each person, place, and form were more crucial for Yamada than the larger categories when he pictured suitable architecture for the future. Yamada pursued to create his own ideal works by employing elements from the newly encountered foreign trends, returning to his own identity, and considering the practical needs and backgrounds of each project, freely all at the same time.

FROM EXPERIENCE-BASED PRINCIPLES TO MEMORY-BASED IDEOLOGIES

During the above-described two decades of working and travelling, Yamada barely mentioned Tsingtao in concrete terms at any occasion. Then in 1942, he suddenly brought up and criticised the German colonial architecture in Tsingtao for not being created with 'sincerity' in the earlier cited article. This piece came out in the ever growing framework of Japan's *Daitōa* [Great East-Asian Sphere] expansion. By this point, through his sojourn in Europe, confrontation with his contemporary German architecture and architects on site, and large-scale public projects, his principles were updated with a sort of individualist thinking to cherish each person and site involved. These engagements during the two decades after the Tsingtao visit overshadowed his experiences from Tsingtao or his awareness about the situation in other East Asian colonies. Rather, Yamada's memory of Tsingtao, which had been left behind unupdated as a youthful moment, was vulnerable to the approximation to his updated principle, which in itself was prone to the ideological discourses in the turbulent political state of the time.

Yamada's multiple publications and practices related to Japan's Expansion Policies indicate how architects were increasingly involved in the politics especially from the late 1930s onwards. While their propagandistic activities were sometimes directly reflected in the governmental decision making, the majority of their discussions about urban planning and design strategies for colonial and metropole constructions stayed within the architects' committees they established. Yamada and some of his former *Bunri-ha* group fellows played significant roles in these architectural committees and on various media, too. Amidst the national and international situation around the Second World War and amidst the Japanese government's smaller interest in politically involving the architects compared to other imperial governments like the German or the Italian, the Japanese architects actively attempted to engage with these topics to promote their own status on the political level, and to secure their opportunities in the wartime.[17]

1929–1930], 151.

12 Mukai, *Kenchikuka Yamada Mamoru no Tegami: 1929–30 [Letters of the Architect Mamoru Yamada: 1929–1930]*, 151.

13 Mamoru Yamada, "Volumen no symphonie toshi Kenchiku wo Sōsaku shitai [The Will to Create Architecture as the Symphonie of the Volumes]" in *Bunri-ha Kenchiku-kai Sengen to Sakuhin [Bunri-ha Group Manifestoes and Works]*, ed. Bunriha Kenchiku-kai (Iwanami Shoten, 1924), unpaginated.

14 Whether the idea to combine the wooden part and the reinforced concrete part was Yamada's own idea or his client's idea is not clear. Therefore, I am not regarding this design itself as his attempt to bring the European modernism and Japanese conventional housing parts together.

15 Mayumi Takizawa, Sutemi Horiguchi, Keiichi Morita, Bunzo Yamaguchi, and Teijirō Muramatsu, "Zadankai Bunriha, Tōkyō Chūō Denshinkyoku, Yamada Mamoru [Roundtable Talk: Bunri-Ha Group, Tokyo Main Telegraph Office, Yamada Mamoru]."

16 Oshima, "Yamada Mamoru — From the Japanese Secessionists to The Inernational Style," 96.

17 Terunobu Fujimori, *Nippon No Kindai Kenchiku — Taishō, Shōwa Hen [Modern Architecture of Japan — Taishō and Shōwa Periods]* (Iwanami Shoten, 1993), 249–51.

Contrary to the wording he had chosen to praise Tsingtao architecture without reserve two decades before, he referenced the same buildings to criticise for not following his newly proposed Japanese Expansionist Policies. As the article's title suggested, his view was based on the hierarchical assumption of Japan's position as the 'instructor' of the Daitōa sphere instead of the 'Westerners', although the idea of the colonisers' being the 'instructor' itself was a result of the Japanese imitation of the 'Western' colonialism. Furthermore, his proposals in the main text revolved around the term 'makoto' [sincerity], which was not a particularly frequently used term among the Expansionist discussants but was probably rather an arbitrary choice a vague keyword he did not define clearly. He argued, 'The attempt to transplant the local Japanese architectural styles and forms as they are to a foreign land for a foreign people is a wrongdoing that lacks "sincerity"', and continued, 'The recent state of East Asia has let the Europeans and Americans do whatever of this wrongdoing without "sincerity"'.[18] By naming the negative examples of the 'West', he warned against an increasing number of proposals to 'transplant the mere shell of old Japanese architectural styles' to the expanding Japanese empire.[19] According to his view, one should sweep away 'those inhumane evil architecture' and produce architecture with the true Japanese spirit of 'sincerity', which would harmonise the local land's nature and each people unlike the modern 'Western' manners.[20] This ambiguous wording of 'sincerity' and the call for reforming the European colonial systems showcased the discrepancy – and thus his ambivalent stance – between the previous strong and emotional advocate of the modern European architecture and the current nationalistic and spiritualistic proponent of Japanese colonial architecture. To support his own argument, Yamada brought up the Tsingtao case by re-interpreting the German authorities' architecture to approximate to his updated ideologies.

CONCLUSION

Yamada's case reveals how some crucial elements of Japan's mainstream architectural discourses should be re-contextualised in the global networks that originated not on their metropoles but on the less-known colony with layered colonial histories. The transitions of his attitudes and ideological discourses might have been an inadvertent act. How he appropriated the memory of German colonial architecture in Tsingtao in favour of his later arguments, however, would deconstruct the major previous understanding of both European and Japanese modern architectural movements in the metropoles as well as in the colonies. The aim of this paper is to re-situate the architectural ideologies in the lesser-known colonial encounter of two former empires on their third site that they consecutively occupied, which served as the exchange point of ideas, knowledge, techniques, and materials.

18 Yamada, "Daitōa Kenchiku no Shidō Rinen [Principles of Instructions on Daitōa Architecture]," 683.
19 Ibid., 683.
20 Ibid., 684.

Networks and Education

CIAM Summer School, 1956. Students and Tutors in Piazza San Marco, 1956. Courtesy of Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam, BAKE.110300874, BAKE_f21–1.

Leonardo Zuccaro Marchi (Politecnico di Milano)

Tracing CIAM Summer School's Networks: Continuity, Connections, and Peerships in CIAM's Experimental Pedagogy

FRIENDSHIPS AND PEERSHIPS AS MAIN MODERN LEGACY

> 'I have a vivid but fragmentary memory of that summer… For me, the most important thing was the friendships that were formed there.'[1]

The CIAM Summer School was a radical pedagogical experience between 1949 and 1957, with the aim of reorganising architectural education on a global scale and ensuring the continuity of modern principles in the younger generation. The CIAM summer school had its first edition in London (1949) and – after the discussion on the Heart of the City at CIAM 8 – it moved to Venice with four editions (1952–1953–1954–1956). A final edition in 1957 no longer referenced CIAM, following the theoretical and generational rift with TEAM 10, and used the more neutral 'International Seminar of Modern Architecture.' This paper originates from personal meetings and interviews with the Italian architect Vittorio Gregotti, conducted between 2012 and 2013. The interviews covered Gregotti's experience at his first CIAM in Hoddesdon in 1951, when he was not yet 24 years old and was invited by Ernesto Nathan Rogers, as well as his pedagogical experience at the first CIAM summer school in Venice in 1952. These personal meetings culminated in a conference at IUAV held on 2 September 2013, titled 'CIAM 8 – Il cuore della città,' with Vittorio Gregotti as the main speaker.[2] Interestingly, according to Gregotti, the most important legacy of the CIAM Summer school was not embedded in the urban projects or research regarding the lagoon city, or in the modern principles which young architects reinterpreted. The main inheritance was rooted in human contacts, personal friendships, and professional peerships, which young architects and students from around the world had the chance to develop in Venice under the CIAM's umbrella. Most of these connections lasted in the following years, shaping the careers of those involved. This position was also supported by Joseph Rykwert, who attended the summer school edition with Gregotti in 1952.[3] '…The Venice School was quite important

1 Private email from Joseph Rykwert to Leonardo Zuccaro Marchi, (Thursday 19 June 2014)
2 The conference by Gregotti was in dialogue with Joseph Rykwert, Bernardo Secchi, Paola Viganò, Tom Avermaete, Leonardo Zuccaro Marchi. See https://www.leonardozuccaromarchi.com/il-cuore-della-citta-ciam-8/ (Accessed on 18 August, 2025)
3 As explained in private emails by Joseph Rykwert to Leonardo Zuccaro Marchi in 2014 and meetings

because it laid the foundations of a form of internationalism… however, in which we all knew each other,' Gregotti said at the 2013 conference.[4] 'It was a generation of a few,' not more than a hundred, who could have direct contact and share ideas. The small numbers in education, which would later expand to a more open, democratic, and complex education debate in subsequent decades, enhanced this kind of internationalism, and 'the school of Venice, favored this'.[5]

This condition also favored addressing common topics popular among Gregotti's generation. For example, the listening to the context and history, the Heart of the City (CIAM 8), whose debate in Hoddesdon in 1951 influenced the decision to organise the summer school in Venice, 'had very different answers, but nevertheless they remained,' at least until the 1960s and 1970s. Tellingly, these recurring themes of discussion occurred within groups of architects who knew 'each other as different heirs, but [all as] heirs of the CIAM.'[6; 7]

Recent interviews the author has conducted with other participants of the CIAM Summer School, Denise Scott Brown, Louis Sauer (both in Venice in 1956), and Paul Spreiregen (in Venice in 1954), have highlighted that Venice, rather than CIAM, was the main pedagogical actor that catalysed the students' shared interest. Whereas critique of CIAM's dogmas – the four functions and the grid – began to emerge in particular from the third edition in 1954, the students were united by 'learned from' Venice. 'Modern architecture needs Venice, the quintessential "place",' rather than the other way around, Gregotti stated in 'Venice, city of the new modernity,'[8] especially after the breakdown of the unified system of Modern Architecture. Also, Louis Sauer recently reiterated this role of Venice as a global classroom: 'So, what have you learned so far about your studies and CIAM? I guess what you're discovering is that the school wasn't teaching much, but the city [Venice] was teaching a lot.'[9] This learning process also occurred in conjunction with a shift in pedagogical tasks between 1949 and 1952. In London, the CIAM summer school primarily served as an 'organ for design', whereas in Venice, it shifted to a research-oriented classroom, focussing more on the analysis process and heterogeneous debates than on the final design output.[10]

in his house in Cannareggio, Venice.

4 Vittorio Gregotti. "Il Cuore della Città. CIAM 8", Conference at IUAV, September on 2 September 2013 (IUAV recording)

5 Vittorio Gregotti. "Il Cuore della Città. CIAM 8", Conference at IUAV, September on 2 September 2013 (IUAV recording)

6 See Leonardo Zuccaro Marchi, The Heart of the City. Legacy and Complexity of a Modern Design Idea (Routledge, 2018).

7 Vittorio Gregotti. "Il Cuore della Città. CIAM 8", Conference at IUAV, September on 2 September 2013 (IUAV recording)

8 Vittorio Gregotti, "Venice and the New Modernism" AA Files, No. 10 (Autumn 1985), 13. Vittorio Gregotti, Venezia Città della Nuova Modernità (Consorzio Venezia Nuova, 1998), 9.

9 Louis Sauer, online interview with Leonardo Zuccaro Marchi, Elia Villa on 8 September 2025.

10 MARS, DRAFT, Letter to CIAM Groups, "CIAM Summer School: London 1949", SG-19-31b, gta/ETH.

Finally, following Gregotti's belief, the aim of this conference paper is to humbly start to trace and map some of these contacts, friendships, and networks of this experimental modern classroom. This research argues that it is not possible to draw a clear map of networks or to categorise participants by thematic interests, aside from Venice as a research laboratory. The fluid, private friendships and peer relationships are difficult to fully define due to their private nature and the inability to rely on direct testimony from all participants. Nevertheless, this paper emphasises the need to shift perspectives on the Modern Movement, while also highlighting the voices to the lesser-known young participants of the CIAM's global classrooms and their personal connections, as the main heirs and legacy of CIAM itself.

LONDON, 1949: THE 'FRANKLY EXPERIMENTAL' FIRST SUMMER SCHOOL

The initial 'frankly experimental' CIAM International Summer School took place in London, sponsored by the MARS Group.[11] The classroom sessions were held at the Architectural Association from 8 August to 3 September, 1949. Among the students and young architects in London, Polish architect, artist, and theorist Oskar Hansen (1922–2005) was also involved. Hansen is well-known for his Open Form theory, which he later presented at the last CIAM in Otterlo (1959), embracing the new radical ideas of the younger generation of Team 10. Hansen's Open Form in 1959 aimed to radically and disruptively reframe architecture as the staging of human activity rather than a fixed object, promoting new ideas of flexibility, indeterminateness, and collective participation. However, ten years before Hansen's proposal at the CIAM Summer School in London (1949), it was still driven by CIAM principles and direct references. His project reflected a reinterpretation of Le Corbusier's *Unité d'Habitation* in Marseille, which was still under construction at that time.[12] Hansen's project was considered among the four that deserved special merit.[13] Among the Italian participants, Franco Berlanda (1921–2019) later became a tutor of the CIAM Summer School in Venice, describing the students' projects in the journal *Urbanistica*.[14] Francesco Gnecchi Ruscone

11 The Summer School was led by Mr. Maxwell, with Miss Jaqueline Tyrwhitt serving as Assistant Director. MARS GROUP, CIAM SUMMER SCHOOL, Information Sheet, 42-JT-3-219, gta/ETH. See Leonardo Zuccaro Marchi, "CIAM Summer School in Venice. The Heart of the City as continuity," in The Heart of the City. Legacy and Complexity of a Modern Design Idea. (Routledge, 2018), 98–148.
See also Lorenzo Mingardi, "Reweaving the City: The CIAM Summer Schools from London to Venice (1949–57)," in Post-war Architecture between Italy and the UK, ed. Lorenzo Ciccarelli and Clare Melhuish (UCL Press, 2021),107–126.

12 Hansen worked in Paris between 1948 and 1950 as a collaborator of Pierre Jeanneret. He also collaborated with the Italian CIAM member Ernest Nathan Rogers at the Royal Institute of British Architects before returning to Poland to join the post-war reconstruction effort.

13 The four schemes were: House Scheme – Oskar Hansen (Poland), Office Block (Jaime Ponce de Leon (Colombia), National Theater A..G. Hamilton (Australia) with Ricardo Sievers(Argentina), Traffic Complex L.T. Croft (South Africa), CIAM, (24/11/ 1949) 42/JT/4/215, gta/ETH.
In 1949, Hansen also attended the CIAM Congress in Bergamo (22–31 July, 1949), along with other colleagues from the summer school, such as Ponse de Leon (Columbia). At Bergamo, Hansen drew attention by criticizing Le Corbusier himself. Culture.pl "Oskar Nikolai Hansen," https://culture.pl/en/artist/oskar-nikolai-hansen (Accessed on 31 August, 2025)

14 Franco Berlanda, "Considerazioni sulla scuola estiva C.I.A.M. A Venezia," Prospettive, 5 (1953): 83–86. Franco Berlanda, "La Scuola del C.I.A.M. A Venezia," Urbanistica, 13 (1953): 83–86.

(1924–2022) designed an office building with Giovanna 'Giogiò' Pericoli and Paul Boissevain (1922–2014),[15] with a final 'very thorough study of the area.'[16] After the Summer School, Gnecchi Ruscone was appointed full member of the teaching staff at the AA. His later professional activities continued to emphasize a significant connection between Italy and Great Britain, remaining a member of the AA until 1985 and collaborating with both journals The Architectural Review and Domus.

VENICE, 1952–'57: PEERSHIPS IN THE CITY OF THE NEW MODERNITY

At the 1952 CIAM Summer School, Vittorio Gregotti (1927–2020) was the only Italian among an English group of young architects consisting of Michael Burton, Patrick Crooke (1927–2018), William Ollis, and John Turner (1927–2019). The historian Joseph Rykwert (1926–2024) joined the team while attending a concurrent UNESCO meeting in Venice. The group emphasised the negative consequences of tourism: 'We were the only group that envisioned Venice's future not as a tourist-"cultural" centre – as Rykwert reminded – but proposed the development of the glass industry and the development of the lagoon as a fishing centre and, in the cultural field, support for the growth of the university (the latter actually happened).'[17] Regarding the other members of the group, John Turner studied at the AA in London with Pat Crook. In the late 1950s, Turner worked closely with residents of barriadas (informal settlements) on the shanty towns and squatter settlements of Peru.[18] In '*Autobiografia del XX secolo*' (2015), Gregotti highlighted his friendship with Turner, noting that these socio-anthropological topics studied by Turner were still completely absent and marginal in the Italian cultural debate at that time, even though they affected the lives of millions of people.[19]

Tourism was also considered in the second edition (5 September to 4 October, 1953), which focused on the historic and tourist city through the redesign of the Biennale Gardens. Among the young participants was Giuseppe Terragni's nephew, Emilio Terragni (1929–2018). Giancarlo Guarda (1928–2016) participated in the summer school and reported on it in Rogers' Casabella-Continuità.[20] He later worked at the intersection of planning practice and editorial translation of books such as Lynch's 'The Image of the City'.[21]

In 1954, the participants of the summer school began to criticise CIAM's dogmas, aligning with the critiques that were occurring simultaneously at the main meetings. For example, students Hans Drews and Patricio Samper (Colombia), Peter Letz (Austria), William Liskamm, and Paul Spreiregen (USA) openly rejected the functional hierarchy of the Athens Charter's four functions because of their inefficacy in facing the complexity of urban relations, especially in Venice.[22] Paul Spreiregen recently reminded in an interview of the role of Venice, 'a city as a whole working entity,' and the importance of walking through the city with Ernesto Rogers, pointing 'at things that normally you wouldn't even notice'.[23] This careful glaze on the city was definitely at odds with a functionalist compartmentalization analysis. This critique of modern tools and principles became more evident at the fourth edition of the CIAM Summer School in Venice, which took place from September 6 to October 6, 1956. It took place exactly one month after CIAM 10 held in Dubrovnik (August 3–12, 1956), when the generational rift between CIAM and Team 10 became more radical. The school's main focus shifted from the historical Lagoon City to its mainland expansion in Mestre/Marghera, to the emerging industrial-territorial development of the new 'territorial organism,' as Ludovico Quaroni discussed in Venice in 1956. The young participants embraced the challenge of the territorial scale, bringing critical perspectives to CIAM's predefined modern solutions. New proposals emerged, such as the linear core or 'street centre,' which openly diverged from the faith in civic preservation of pedestrians' rights as praised for instance at CIAM 8. Among the supporters of the 'line town,' a young Denise Scott Brown, who was not yet 25 years old, along with her first husband, Robert Scott Brown, and other team members, proposed a rapid suburban transport backbone for the linear urban development of Mestre-Marghera.[24] 'That linear city was the result of a previous experience

15 Paul Boissevain (1922–2014), a Dutch-born, London-based architect also listed as Irish, attended the summer school and, interestingly, later designed a commercial centre in one of the CIAM summer school sites, the Elephant & Castle Shopping Centre (1960–65). The Elephant & Castle Shopping Centre was a fully enclosed mall above a transportation hub – which was recently demolished in 2021.

16 CIAM, M. Fry, J. Tyrwhitt, H.T. Cadbury, "Letter to Gnecchi Ruscone, November 1949," Archive: Comune di Milano. Centro di alti studi sulle arti visive – CASVA (Milano, MI), Gnecchi – Ruscone Francesco (Milano, 1924–), PROF.FORM.1

17 Private email from Joseph Rykwert to Leonardo Zuccaro Marchi, (Thursday 19 June 2014) Tellingly, forty years later, in 1992, Gregotti himself proposed a project for a Maritime station in Venice; however, with a less ideological position expressed during his youth at the CIAM Summer School, towards a tourist monoculture.

18 He re-evaluated the importance of everyday life and vernacular self-building, as discussed in the well-known books "Freedom to Build" (with Robert Fichter, 1972) and "Housing by People" (1976).

19 Vittorio Gregotti, Autobiografia del XX secolo (Skira editore, 2005),124. Gregotti also mentions that he met Donald Appleyard at the CIAM summer school, who later became Kevin Lynch's assistant and authored the book "Livable Streets" (1981). Ibid. 123 Also Louis Sauer mentioned to have been closest with Donald Appleyard in Venice (1956), describing him as "a kind of a design poet." Louis Sauer, online interview with Leonardo Zuccaro Marchi, Elia Villa on 8 September 2025.

20 Giancarlo Guarda, "Attualità di una scuola," Casabella Continuità, 199 (December 1953–January 1954): v–vi.

21 Guarda translated the Italian edition of Kevin Lynch's "L'immagine della città" for Marsilio, which was first published in the mid-1960s. Additionally, Dutch architect and educator Dirk Cornelis "Dick" Apon (1926–2002) participated in 1952. His Biennale pavilion featured a Y-shaped design with courtyards on the roof and pedestrian promenades on the facades while spanning a canal. He later co-founded the Rotterdam firm Apon, Van den Berg, Ter Braak & Tromp – ABBT (1955), and worked for the magazine Forum and the Technical University of Eindhoven (TU/e).

22 Paul Spreiregen (1931–), who came to Italy in 1954 thanks to the Fulbright Grant, later became the first Director of Urban Design Programs at the American Institute of Architects – AIA (1962–66) and then the inaugural Director for Architecture and Design at the National Endowment for the Arts (1966–70). He was a student of Kevin Lynch. He published the book "Urban Design: The Architecture of Towns and Cities" in 1965, which focused on morphological analysis and public space, relying on European and North American traditions as case studies. He also served as a professional advisor and jury member for the well-known Vietnam Veterans Memorial design competition (1980–82) in Washington, D.C. In his book "Building a New Town: Finland's New Garden City, Tapiola" (1971), co-authored by Paul D.. Von Hertzen, he described Finnish architecture, mentioning the Suvikumpu competition won by Pietilä himself.

23 Paul Spreiregen, Personal Interview with Leonardo Zuccaro Marchi, Elia Villa. 22 September 2025.

24 See Leonardo Zuccaro Marchi, "Digression: Denise Scott Brown," in: The Heart of the City. Legacy and Complexity of a Modern Design Idea (Routledge, 2018), 136–137. The other members were Campbell (North Ireland), Chipkin (South Africa), Heinemann (Germany), Hultberg (Scotland), Jackson and McKay (Australia), Paredes (Peru) and Townsend (Australia).

in England – at the AA,' Denise affirmed in a recent interview, highlighting the connection with her previous London experiences and the continuity of the linear idea across different geographies and pedagogical contexts.[25] Indeed, in the mid-1950s, Venezia and Mestre-Marghera served as key urban development areas to 'learn from', foreshadowing later civic-symbolic interpretations of the linear city in the US.

Besides Oskar Hansen, other students later became members or collaborators of Team 10, participated directly, or were mentioned in later ILAUD activities, often opposing or contradicting CIAM's positions. In 1952, the Dutch architect Jan Stockla participated.[26] His team adopted the CIAM Grid, which students later rejected in later editions, dividing Venice into four main scales (lagoon, Mestre-Venice, Venice, and parish), analysed through the four functions of living, working, leisure, and circulation.[27] Stockla later worked for Van den Broek and Bakema, becoming responsible for many of the office's main housing projects, such as the urbanisation of Kennemerland near Amsterdam, which was presented at the final disruptive CIAM conference in Otterlo in 1959.[28] The dogma of CIAM's grid was abandoned in favor of an "open society" as supported by Bakema and Team 10.[29]

In 1954, among other participants, the group of Reima Pietilä (Finland, 1923–1993), together with Gino Jennewein and Robert Swartz (USA), explored a preliminary study of land use and zoning of Venice in-between the tourism from the sea and the commercial flow from the mainland. Interestingly, Reima Pietilä participated in TEAM 10 activities, taking part in discussions with an active presence at the ILAUD.[30] He traced another line of continuity between the CIAM Summer School and ILAUD, which were respectively founded on the ideals of CIAM and Team 10.[31]

In the 1956 edition, it is noteworthy to mention the presence of the American architect Louis Sauer (1928–), whose housing projects became relevant in U.S. urban design in the 1960s and 1970s. Sauer became a long-term friend of the other member Giancarlo Guarda, while Venice represented a very important lesson for him, 'absorbing' its urban space and context, as Antonino Saggio praised in 'ILAUD: Territory & Identity' (1997).[32] Finally, in 1957, among the students, the Chinese-American planner, historian, and community activist Tunney F. Lee (1931–2020) was listed as a participant.[33] A professor at MIT, invited by Kevin Lynch in 1970, focussed his research on community-based design. He also collaborated extensively with ILAUD, which recently celebrated his 'Intellectual and Ethical Legacy,' emphasizing another *fil rouge* between Italian radical pedagogies.[34]

CIAM'S HEIRS: OPEN CONCLUSIONS

The 'frankly experimental' CIAM Summer School was certainly a disruptive, radical pedagogy for both connecting international networks and embracing CIAM principles in architectural schools through the complexity and ambiguity of the everyday life of London and Venice. The summer school opened opportunities for young architects and students on a global scale to foster critical thinking and independence beyond the scope of CIAM's theoretical framework.

More importantly, the CIAM summer school intertwined friendship, professional, and academic connections among participants and tutors, which lasted for their entire lives, as the main heirs of CIAM. The generational and pedagogical continuity praised by some CIAM members, such as Rogers, is most evident in the legacy of networks traced at the summer school, which made CIAM's experience a global, open cultural milieu until nowadays.

25 "You could learn about garden cities and all of that, but we felt that the effective one for an industrial age was a linear city." Denise Scott Brown in a personal interview with Leonardo Zuccaro Marchi. 28 May 2025. See Leonardo Zuccaro Marchi, "Digression: Denise Scott Brown."

26 Jan Stockla participated with Rita Ruprecht (CH), John Smith (UK), Pieter Tauber (NL), Alan Wightman (UK).

27 See Zuccaro Marchi, Heart of the City, 120.

28 Dirk van den Heuvel, "Architecture and democracy – contestations in and of the open society," in Jaap Bakema and the Open Society, ed. Dirk van den Heuvel (Archis, 2018), 244–245.

29 See also Leonardo Zuccaro Marchi. "Fragmenting CIAM's 'thinking tool.' Towards a new humanist epistemological grid," Territorio n. 92 (2020): 157–167.

30 With Candilis, Erskine, Van Eyck, Bakema, Hertzberger. See Mirko Zardini, "Urbino, Siena, San Marino and Venice (Taly) 1974–2004. Giancarlo De Carlo and the International Laboratory of Architecture and Urban Design," http://www.team10online.org/team10/meetings/1974-2004-ilaud.htm (Accessed on 4 June 2019) Reima Pietilä became a well-known architect, in partnership with Raili Paatelainen, for his radical expressionist, organic, and free-form tectonic projects. Such as the Dipoli Student Centre (1961–66), the Suvikumpi housing complex (1967–69; extended 1981–82), Tapiola.

31 See Leonardo Zuccaro Marchi, "The Disruptive Avant-Garde in Continuity: From the CIAM Summer School to ILAUD," in This Is Not a Summer School: The International Laboratory of Architecture and Urban Design (ILAUD), ed. Elke Couchez and Hamish Lonergan (gta Verlag, 2025), under publication. https://doi.org/10.54872/gta/4845-01

32 Louis Sauer, online interview with Leonardo Zuccaro Marchi, Elia Villa on 8 September 2025. Antonino Saggio, "Absorbing Venice. Low-rise High-density Housing by Louis Sauer," in Ilaud, Territory & Identity, eds. Giancarlo De Carlo, C. Occhialini (Santarcajgelo Tomagna: Commune di Venezia-Maggioli editore, 1997) pp 74–79.

33 After completing a degree in architecture, he worked with Buckminster Fuller and I.M. Pei. He later became professor and head of the Department of Urban Studies and Planning (DUSP) at MIT. Antonio Di Mambro, "Tunney F.Lee: a Biographical Overview of His Work and Contributions," in ILAUD, Learning from Tunney F.Lee. An intellectual and Ethical Legacy, ed. Paolo Ceccarelli, (ILAUD, 2023), 11.

34 ILAUD, Ceccarelli, Learning from Tunney F.Lee. An intellectual and Ethical Legacy

Photo of BA3 class in 1930, Liverpool School of Architecture. Courtesy of the University of Liverpool Library Archive and Special Collections.

Juliana Kei (University of Liverpool)

Class of ’30: ‘International’ Students and the Liverpool School of Architecture

> ‘…and Tat Cho Yuen, the best, I am sure, of the Cantonese architects if by now he and his buildings and his lovely little wife and child have not been bombed to pieces by the friendly Japanese who carry out these gentle acts but refuse to call them war.’[1]

At first glance, this remark by Charles Reilly, the former head of Liverpool School of Architecture (LSA), is horrific. However, it prompts more questions about the international students and their relationship with the LSA. Existing scholarship has already discussed the oversized influence of graduates and former staff of the school in modern architecture and town planning.[2] Many have prioritised Liverpool’s trans-Atlantic ties or tilted towards the LSA’s role in exporting expertise from Britain. What is less discussed, is that – since the end of World War I – a notable portion of the LSA’s student body were overseas intakes.[3] Historians have noted that there were, on average, about five or six international students enrolled in the LSA each year between 1919–1932.[4] More work can be done in understanding the experience, ambitions, and knowledge brought by these students, thus to paint a more complete picture of the architectural network formed at Liverpool. In addition to expanding the scholarship in the LSA’s history and British architectural coloniality, this paper aims to offer a reflection on the current drive for ‘internationalisation’ and ‘globalisation’ in architectural schools.

INTER ‘NATIONAL’?

In this effort, one cohort of students – the year 1930 – is focussed on, to reconstruct the international environment at the LSA. Three years before Reilly’s retirement, the LSA had an established reputation, and the

1 Charles Reilly, *Scaffolding in the Sky* (George Routledge, 1938), 234.
2 See for example, Peter Richmond and Jack Dunne, *The World in One School: the History and Influence of the Liverpool School of Architecture 1894–2008* (Liverpool University Press, 2008). Iain Jackson, “Tropical Architecture and the West Indies: From Military Advances and Tropical Medicine, to Robert Gardner-Medwin and the Networks of Tropical Modernism” *The Journal of Architecture* 18, no. 2 (2013): 167–95. Mark Crinson, *Modern Architecture and the End of Empire* (Ashgate, 2003)
3 Reilly, *Scaffolding in the Sky,* 204.
4 Joseph Sharples et al., *Charles Reilly and the Liverpool School of Architecture* (Liverpool University Press, 1997), 7.

shift towards architectural modernism was becoming more pronounced.[5] In 1930, the LSA had thirty-three international students (and twelve female students) in a cohort of about a hundred and eighty students from its degree (B.Arch), Diploma, and Certificate programmes. The ratio was even more significant for some classes, such as the third year degree class, which had ten international students among a cohort of twenty-eight people.[6] Our current research capitalises on the expanding literature on the careers of international architects from this cohort, including Charoon Tulyananda from Siam (current-day Thailand), Mahmoud Riad from Egypt, Oliver Weerasinghe and Shirley d'Alwis from Ceylon (currenty-day Sri Lanka), and William Holford, who became the first South-African born Rome Scholar that year.[7] Knowing the extensive networks developed through the LSA, the attention paid to one cohort allows us to highlight the resulting collaboration, such as ones between Patrick Abercrombie (Professor in Town Planning) and Clifford Holliday (graduate 1922) with Weerasinghe and a'Alwis respectively.[8] Focussing on a short period of time further enables one to chart the geopolitical conditions that shaped the architectural education in Liverpool.

To return to Tat Cho Yuen. He was not 'blown to pieces' but had a prolific career in Hong Kong after World War II, producing projects akin to other modernist pioneers.[9] Reilly's description of Yuen as a 'Cantonese' architect, however, warrants more attention, since it offered a glimpse into how the LSA attracted and sustained the international network. Yuen was born in Portuguese colonial Macau, but studied and worked in British colonial Hong Kong. In the 1930s, there was the Japanese invasion and civil war that rendered the existence of a 'Chinese' nation tenuous. Therefore, Yuen could be described as a genuinely 'inter-national' student as there was hardly a nationality he could unequivocally claim. The term 'overseas' students was equally provocative for the LSA in 1930. For example, there was the oscillating British colonial direct rule over Newfoundland, which would affect Hugh Graham Rennie. From the University records and registries, one can also find complexities around students from the Irish Free State. Other notable differentiations included I.P. Ross from Durban, who were marked as Natal in his nationality; while students from Cape Town and Johannesburg were listed as South Africans.[10] These differentiations determined students' access to awards, fundings and fellowships, thus in turn shaped their outputs. Therefore, in addition to the paradigm shift towards architectural modernism, there was other turbulence that affected the ways students engaged with the school of architecture.

5 Alan Powers, "Liverpool and Architectural Education," in *Charles Reilly and the Liverpool School of Architecture*, 16–20.
6 Classification of Students 1930–31, P5100/7. University of Liverpool Special Collections & Archives.
7 Chomchon Fusinpaiboon, *Modernisation of Building: The Transplantation of the Concept of Architecture from Europe to Thailand, 1930s–1950s.* PhD Thesis, University of Sheffield, 2014. Mohamed Elshahed, *Cairo since 1990: an Architecture Guide* (The American University in Cairo Press, 2020). G.E. Cherry, *Holford: a Study in Architecture, Planning and Civic Design* (Mansell, 1986).
8 Pradeep Dissanayake Sangapala Arachchige Don Dissanayake, *Sacred Geographies, Nationalism, and Space: Negotiating Colonial Praxis and Nationalist Visions in the Planning of Anuradhapura's New Town.* PhD Thesis, University of Alberta, 2024.
9 Wong Hao Yu, *Mainland Architects in Hong Kong after 1949: A Bifurcated History of Modern Chinese Architecture.* PhD Thesis, University of Hong Kong, 2008, p. 192.
10 Classification of Students 1930–31. Classification of Students 1929–30, P5100/6.

The LSA's record should be understood as part of a larger imperial infrastructure, including *The Yearbook of the Universities of the Empire,* that systematically surveyed higher education institutions across the British Empire. These efforts reinforced the standardisation of education and professional qualification, as well as the geographical, racial, and political differentiations capitalised by the Empire. The university record, for example, differentiated Ceylonese students Shirley d'Alwis and W.E. Claessen from Oliver Weerasinghe, because the formers were 'Burghur,' indicating their Euro-Asian heritages. These arrangements intersected with the networks formed at the school of architecture, too. For example, many South African students lived on seventy-six and ninety-one Bedford Street, including David Naudé and Adriaan Meiring, who later co-founded a firm in Cape Town in 1938.[11] Moreover, Liverpool's global trade and shipping network drew students from far-away places.[12] For example, since the early 20th century, Liverpool's South American shipping trade route concentrated on the River Plate, thus explained the presence of students like Alfredo Gregorio Martinez from Uruguay, Luis Manuel Hernandez from Panama, and F. Vasquez and M.Aya from Colombia.[13] Scholarships on South American architecture, meanwhile, contextualised the economic growth and urbanisation that justified the cost of earning an architectural degree in Europe before the Second World War.[14]

'SELF-IMPOSED PROBLEMS'

These students, in turn, informed the pedagogies at the LSA. Non-British students were encouraged to devise thesis projects based in their places of origin. At times, the projects referenced local culture and climate, such as Hernandez's bullring in Panama and Rennie's sports hotel in Newfoundland.[15] There were equally disparate designs for different parts of the British Isles proposed by international and British students. One may ask how architectural design was taught and evaluated at the LSA. First, the shift towards an international modern architecture engendered common pursuits. Shared attributes of the students' work included skilful organisation of complex functions, circulation, and spatial planning. Then, there was the sensitivity towards the building's surrounding context. The student projects, as the *Manchester Guardian* observed in 1932, regularly 'adapted to an actual site whose dimensions and conditions are intimately known to the student who selects this self-imposed problem.'[16] The thesis drawings found in the university archives often contain site plans and sections at various scales.

11 "Naudé, David Francois Hugo," *Artefacts the Built Environment of Southern Africa,* https://artefacts.co.za/main/Buildings/archframes_mob.php?archid=1147, accessed 26 August 2025.
12 Sharples, *Charles Reilly and the Liverpool School of Architecture,* 27.
13 Rory M. Miller and Robert G.Greenhill, "Liverpool and South America, 1850–1930" in *The Empire in One City,* ed. Sheryllynne Haggerty, Anthony Webster and Nicholas J. White (Manchester University Press, 2017). Noel Maurer and Carlos Yu, "What T. R. Took: The Economic Impact of the Panama Canal, 1903–1937," *The Journal of Economic History* 68, no. 3 (Sep., 2008):686–721.
14 Giaime Botti, "Geographies for Another History: Mapping the International Education of Architects from Colombia (1930–1970)" *Architectural Histories* 5, no. 1 (2017).
15 Photographs of Students Final Project, S3204/7B. Special Collections and Archives, University of Liverpool
16 "Liverpool School of Architecture: Professor Reilly's Work," *The Manchester Guardian;* Jul 4, 1932, p. 6.

Looking at these drawings nearly a century after they were produced, we can readily locate the proposed sites. Together, they cultivated among the students an appetite for ambitious interrogation into the purpose and capability of architecture. This shared aspiration can be readily gleaned from the thesis titles: 'a block of service flats for Cape Town' by Naude, 'an opera house for Cairo' by M.C. Neumann, 'a government house for Johannesburg' by D.N.Cowin. These international students explored the value of architecture in *their* respective geopolitical, cultural, and urban context. More competent students like Mahmoud Riad proposed a complex bus and railway terminal for Alexandria, showcasing their aspiration for architecture-led modernisation of their homelands.[17] As Holford recalled, the LSA instilled in the students 'a belief in the fundamental importance of architecture and an unswerving confidence – perhaps sometimes *over*-confidence – in their abilities'.[18]

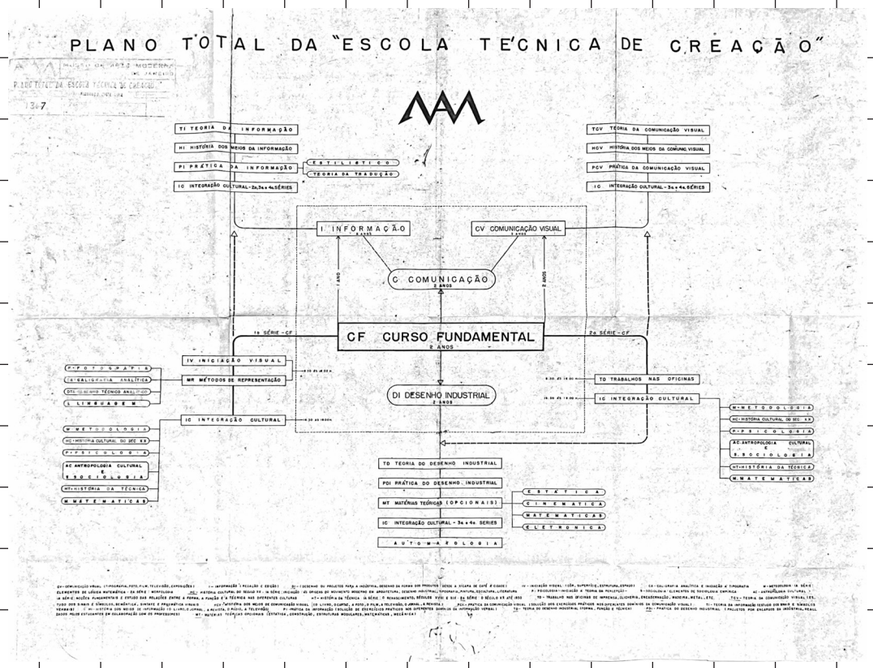
The design pedagogy at the LSA facilitated these diverse architectural explorations, too. The requirements for drawings, building details, and materiality were addressed in the lower years. Students developed the program-driven practice through the six-hour-long sketch sessions regularly held on Mondays, when they were encouraged to indulge in architectural fantasies. For example, a monument to a 'United States of Europe' was a theme chosen by Holford and a female student, Marjorie Solomon in 1930.[19] The graduating works thus prioritised whether the students could identify a 'programme,' which included a problem, a building type, and an architectural solution on a specific site. In the students' works, technical specificities and feasibilities were not scrutinised closely in part because of the confident that architecture would drive paradigm shifts in industries and technology. Moreover, it was known that the younger students were recruited by the graduating cohort to produce thesis drawings and models. Skills, and knowledge were passed from one cohort to another through this practice.[20] Meanwhile, this relationship established several 'Fifth Year Giants,' among them international students, who influenced the aspirations of the younger students.[21] Hence, the evaluation of the students' works was not only dictated by the staff but also at least in part informed by the dynamics among the students.

On the one hand, there was a notable degree of freedom given to the students, focussing on design rationalisation, collaboration, and programmatic complexity over stylistic preferences. On the other hand, we could not overlook the fact that the train stations, market halls, and entertainment buildings proposed for different parts of the world resembled similar structures in Europe and the U.S. In the 1930s, perhaps unsurprisingly, students were not given lectures on architectural culture of different parts of the world. In fact, the LSA curriculum at the time offered only limited theory, history, and construction lectures.[22] Hence, despite the emphasis on careful analysis of the site conditions, students were not often equipped with the know-how to develop a modern architectural vision for their places of origin.[23] Yuen, who studied engineering in Hong Kong before enrolling in the LSA, was among the few who had the prior learning to support his thesis that incorporated Chinese classical architectural elements. Also important was that although the students' works were evaluated based on their self-determined programme, the aspirations of the graduates were to win the Rome-Prix and other fellowships, or to secure an internship in offices in the United States. Mahmoud Riad, for example, worked at Shreve, Lamb & Harmon in New York before returning to Cairo.[24] Hence, despite the intellectual freedoms, few students would forego these opportunities to present architectural projects that were drastically different from the Anglo-American mainstream at the time.

We can further situate this cultural conditioning within the city. Despite the LSA's international student body being enabled by the shipping network, the docks, and the industries. The architectural studio life and university accommodation led students to turn their backs on Liverpool's diverse and complex urban environment. A quick mapping shows that the students' daily life was largely separated from the docks and areas of migrant communities, from West Africa, China, India, Southeast Asia alongside a large Irish and Welsh population. This segregation, on the one hand, offered protections for students whose ethnicity, despite the cosmopolitanism of inter-war Liverpool, could still draw discrimination.[25] On the other hand, it also meant the students – some coming from extra-ordinarily privileged backgrounds – were not often exposed to the socio-economic and environmental costs of industrialisation, urbanisation, and globalised trade that plagued Liverpool throughout the 20th century. One notable omission among the LSA's students' works from the cohort of 1930, for example, was mass housing design. This lack of interest in the ways people lived stood in stark contrast with contemporaneous architectural discourses, as well as the expanding social housing initiatives found in Britain at the time.[26] It was only in the late 1930s, in part through former graduate Maxwell Fry, that mass housing issues garnered more attention at the LSA.[27] It was then when international architectural students started to take a keen interest in working with the often disadvantaged migrant communities in Liverpool.[28] These issues, therefore, suggest more can be parsed out by reconstructing the networks formed among different cohort of students.

17 Mahmoud Riad, "Alexandria: its Town Planning Development," *The Town Planning Review* 15, no. 4 (Dec., 1933): 233–248.
18 Sharples, *Charles Reilly and the Liverpool School of Architecture*,39.
19 Photographs of Students Final Project, S3204/7B.
Students' 6-hour Sketches, S3204/5. Special Collections and Archives, University of Liverpool.
20 Reilly, *Scaffolding in the Sky,* 205.
21 Ibid, 207–208.
22 Lionel Budden, *The Book of the Liverpool School of Architecture* (The University of Liverpool, 1932).
23 Sharples, *Charles Reilly and the Liverpool School of Architecture*,36.
24 Mohamed El Shadad and Mahmoud Riad, "Mahmoud Riad: Architect and Planner for the Modern Age," *The Cairo Observer.* July 2013. https://cairobserver.com/post/55018468104/profile-mahmoud-riad. Accessed 25 August 2025.
25 John Belchem, *Before the Windrush: Race Relations in 20th-Century Liverpool* (University of Liverpool Press, 2017)
26 See, for example, Chiara Monterumisi, Aino Niskanen & Johan Mårtelius, "Affordable housing in the 1910s–1930s: new narratives on unbeaten tracks," *Planning Perspective* 40, no. 3 (2025): 453–471. Elain Harwood and Alan Powers, ed. *Housing the Twentieth Century Nation* (Paul Holberton, 2008).
27 "Liverpool School of Architecture" *The Architects' Journal.* 1 August 1935, 150–151.
28 Jun Wang, *Beijing Record: A Physical and Political History of Planning Modern Beijing* (World Scientific, 2011), 95.

Lastly, the strengths and problems found from the class of 1930 resonate with conversations on architectural education in Britain today. Currently, universities champion the mass intake of international students for academic prestige and financial reasons. The ‘innovative’ pedagogies of diversifying outcomes, student-led learning, and collaborative activities could be found nearly a century earlier. Can one make use of the legacies of the international architectural networks today? In this paper, the reference to national identities, class, race and urban experiences are in fact issues raised by our second-year students — from China, Egypt, Ireland, and other places — who examined the LSA’s alumni’s works as part of their modernist architectural history classes. They considered the career of the 1930s architects with the hindsight of the built environment issues in Britain and their countries today. This research is also made possible through the contribution of PhD students, who are compiling an intersectional archive of gender and race at the school. In short, the importance of current and past international students can be better accounted for through a collective re-examination of the school’s legacies. This examination of the international network also destabilises the existing narrative about the exportation of Western modern architectural and planning. Although individuals did not drastically transform the tenets of architectural modernism as students, together as a cohort they necessitated the changes to the LSA’s curriculum. This dynamic, in turn, shaped the modernist architectural culture that were developing in 1930s Britain. This study argues that British modern architecture was made possible through channelling the international networks, augmenting the existing view that international students were conduits through which Western modernism travelled.



Plano Total da Escola Técnica de Criação [Total Plan of the Technical School of Creation]. Courtesy of the ESDI Archives, Escola Superior de Desenho Industrial.

María Paszkiewicz (University of Navarra, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology)

The World as Project: Pedagogical Exchanges between the Hochschule für Gestaltung Ulm and the Design Schools of Latin America

A MODERN VISION FOR LATIN AMERICA

The student rebellion of the 1960s was a global cultural phenomenon that transformed the conception of higher education, particularly in architecture, urban planning, and design. Yet even before this wave of effervescence, the foundations for change had been laid through public and private initiatives that – from the mid-1950s onwards – promoted new relationships between art, technology, and industry. During those years, Latin America underwent profound transformations that redefined its cultural structures. In this context, the import substitution industrialisation (ISI) policies and the developmental ideas of CEPAL fostered the notion of design as a strategic instrument for productive modernisation and the symbolic construction of the nation.[1]

Modernisation implied not only industrial expansion, but also a cultural shift in the relationship between knowledge, technology, and society. As Latin American economies consolidated, they required professionals capable of mediating between industry and identity. Design thus emerged as a new disciplinary field institutionalised through university degrees and technical programmes, seen as key to development, industrial optimisation, and technological autonomy. Consequently, design entered the political agenda of developmentalist states as a tool for planning and national progress.

In Argentina and Brazil, conditions were especially favourable. In Argentina, Arturo Frondizi's presidency (1958–1962) prioritised technological innovation and industrial expansion; in Brazil, Juscelino Kubitschek's government (1956–1961) launched an ambitious national development plan. Design education in Brazil, aligned with the cultural vitality of the period, became associated with the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism (FAU) and the Instituto de Arte Contemporâneo (IAC), from which pioneering institutions such as the Escola Superior de Desenho Industrial (ESDI) and FUMA – now the School of Design at UEMG – emerged in the early 1960s, linking art, science, and industry under an ideal of national progress.

1 CEPAL (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean), a UN regional body created in 1948 to foster regional integration and socio-economic development.

Within this framework, international exchange networks proved decisive. The Hochschule für Gestaltung (HfG) Ulm had a major impact on the emergence of design schools across the region during the 1960s and 1970s.[2] Its relationship with Latin American institutions marked a turning point in the professionalisation of design. The connections between teachers, students, and organisations fostered a circulation of ideas and pedagogical models that consolidated the field. This was not a one-way transfer but a dialogue between local initiatives and external contributions, united by a shared horizon of modernisation and development. Designers became mediators between culture, technology, and politics within the regional productive system.

The Museum of Modern Art of Rio de Janeiro (MAM), founded in 1948, exemplified this articulation between culture and modernity. It sought to project a modern national image through exhibitions, conferences, and programmes linking art and industry. As Patricio del Rey noted in his study of the MoMA in New York, cultural institutions functioned as agents of power that, through the circulation of knowledge, operated within hegemonic networks of representation.[3] The MAM reproduced this logic in Brazil, incorporating design education into a progressive project combining technological innovation, industrial development, and cultural affirmation. The Museum of Modern Art of Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio) became the epicentre of modern Brazilian design.[4]

The experience of the HfG Ulm was interpreted in Latin America as a model to adapt rather than replicate. Unlike the Bauhaus, HfG Ulm proposed an education based on systemic analysis, applied research, and product planning within a context of technological complexity. This approach appealed to countries undergoing industrialisation, where design education still lacked a unified structure. By the late 1950s and early 1960s, Argentine institutions integrated *Ulmian* principles[5] within an interdisciplinary vision.[6]

The debate on adopting or adapting the German model in Latin America remains relevant.[7] Yet most authors agree that the Ulmian expansion was not a mechanical copy, but rather a situated reinterpretation. Each country reconfigured Ulm's pedagogical principles according to its cultural and political conditions, giving rise to a 'Latin American Ulmianism', defined by the synthesis of technical rationality, social commitment, and local

2 Silvia Fernández, "The Origins of Design Education in Latin America: From the HfG in Ulm to Globalization," *Design Issues* 22, no. 1 (Winter 2006): 3–19.
3 Patricio del Real, "MoMA Builds: The Gaze of the Museum of Modern Art of New York Toward Latin America," *Revista Vitruvia* 1, no. 1 (October 2014): 105–121 (Montevideo, Uruguay).
4 Mariana Boghosian, *Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro: Um epicentro do design moderno brasileiro (1948 a 1978)* (master's thesis, PPDESDI, 2020).
5 Silvia Fernández, "HfG Ulm: At the Origin of Design Education in Latin America," in *Design: HfG Ulm, Latin America, Argentina, La Plata. 5 Documents*, ed. Heiner Jacob, Silvia Fernández et al. (Ediciones NODAL, 2002), 33–74, at 48.
6 In Argentina, design education advanced with new departments at the National Universities of Cuyo (1947, 1958), La Plata (1962), and the Litoral (1960), the latter promoting Ulm-inspired university-industry collaboration.
7 On the historical "culture of copy" in Brazilian design education and its appropriation of foreign models in the 1950s–1960s. See: Rafael Amato, *Desenho incerto: O mito da "cópia" na historiografia do design brasileiro* (master's thesis, Universidade de São Paulo, 2023).

expression.[8] Beyond a simplistic 'centre–periphery' opposition, the exchange networks established were not only formal – through institutional agreements and key figures – but also informal, disseminated by alumni trained in Germany, who became multipliers of Ulmian thought upon their return.[9]

FROM THE COFFEE SPOON TO THE URBANISATION OF A CITY: THE ESCOLA TÉCNICA DE CRIAÇÃO AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART RIO

The Brazilian case stands as a paradigmatic example of how the pedagogical model of the Hochschule für Gestaltung (HfG) Ulm was appropriated, reinterpreted, and institutionalised in Latin America. This process took shape through the convergence of private cultural initiatives, state industrial modernisation policies, and the decisive role of the Museum of Modern Art of Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio). During the 1940s and 1950s, a vigorous cultural expansion – driven mainly by São Paulo's elite – promoted the arrival of foreign artists and intellectuals who helped redefine the nation's modern image. Under Pietro Maria Bardi's direction, the Museum of Art of São Paulo (MASP, 1947) became a catalyst for this movement, alongside other key institutions such as the Museum of Modern Art (MAM, 1948), the Vera Cruz film studio (1949), and the São Paulo International Art Biennial (1951). Together, these initiatives positioned São Paulo as the economic and cultural centre of a post-war Brazil seeking to align industrialisation with artistic and social progress.

Within this landscape, the São Paulo Biennial played a crucial role in integrating the country into international circuits of modern art. In its first edition (1951), Swiss artist Max Bill – a former Bauhaus student and future founder of the HfG Ulm – won the International Sculpture Prize for *Tripartite Unity*. His presence in Brazil, reinforced by a retrospective of his work at MAM São Paulo in 1952, consolidated his influence on the aesthetic and pedagogical debates of the period. Bill championed design as mediation between art, technology, and society, as well as the idea of a 'museum-school' integrating teaching, research, and production – all fundamental notions for the emergence of a design school in Brazil.

In Rio de Janeiro, MAM assumed a complementary role. From 1951, under Niomar Moniz Sodré Bittencourt, the museum became a space for cultural experimentation.[10] Her administration conceived the museum as an active agent of modernisation, fostering educational projects and establishing links with the European avant-garde and Latin American constructivist movements.[11]

8 Regarding the role of design in the processes of modernization and regional development, see: Gui Bonsiepe, *Design and Democracy* (Infinito, 2011).
9 Brazilian Alexandre Wollner and Argentine Mario Forné studied at the HfG Ulm and later applied its systemic approach in Brazil's ESDI and Argentina's *Taller Total* (1970–1975).
10 Niomar Moniz Sodré Bittencourt (1916–2003) was a Brazilian journalist and art collector, co-founder of the Museum of Modern Art of Rio de Janeiro.
11 From its inception, MAM Rio was designed as a museum-school offering art training. Over time, its classrooms hosted many notable artists and designers.

Within a few years, Sodré transformed an elitist institution into a dynamic, interdisciplinary centre supported by intellectual and media networks that she helped to forge.[12] Among her closest collaborators were critic Mário Pedrosa, who organised the exhibition calendar from 1951, and artist Ivan Serpa, who taught the first courses in 1952 with an experimental pedagogy that replaced rigid methods with experiential learning. Engineer Carmen Portinho reinforced the museum's technical dimension.

During those years, Sodré also established contact with Argentine artist and pedagogue Tomás Maldonado, a central figure in concrete art and modern design. Their first encounter dates to 1951, when Maldonado visited Brazil at the invitation of Hans Joachim Koellreutter to deliver the course *Concrete Art and the Polemic of Formalism* in Teresópolis.[13] At that time, Maldonado was moving from art to design, inspired by his 1948 trip to Europe and consolidated in his essay 'Design and Social Life' (1949), where he argued that the artist of the future must enter the universe of mass production. His theoretical work also led him to found the journal *Nueva Visión* (1951–1957), a platform linking art, architecture, and science.[14] Invited by MAM Rio, he returned in 1953 for the exhibition *Grupo de Artistas Modernos Argentinos*, presenting several paintings. That same year, Bill was invited to give seminars at MAM, and formally proposed to Sodré the creation of the Escola Técnica de Criação (ETC), inspired by the principles of the newly founded HfG Ulm, established by Aicher-Scholl, Otl Aicher, and Bill himself as director.[15]

Contacts with Maldonado continued. In 1956, already rector of the HfG Ulm, he returned to Brazil to take part in an exhibition on the German school at MAM Rio. During his stay, he delivered the lecture *Education in the Face of the Second Industrial Revolution*, arguing that education should respond to the effects of automation on design and proposing 'new types of higher schools of industrial design'.[16] That same year, Sodré visited the HfG Ulm at his invitation. Impressed by the integration of art and science, she returned determined to adapt the model to Brazil.

From these exchanges emerged the project for the Escola Técnica de Criação (ETC). The academic programme was designed by Maldonado with the assistance of young Brazilian designer Alexandre Wollner, a former Ulm student. Between 1956 and 1958, they developed a complete curriculum that included architectural adaptations within MAM and envisaged Maldonado as potential director. In their correspondence, Maldonado suggested changes ranging from building design to possible names such as *Escola Superior de Desenho para a Indústria* or *Rio School of Design* to attract sponsors. The 'museum-school' model would serve as a production centre linking artistic education and industrial innovation.[17] The four-year curriculum (see: image) was divided into two cycles: a two-year basic course – unlike Ulm's one-year foundation course – and two years of specialisation.[18] The first included Visual Initiation, Constructive Representation Methods, Mathematics, and Cultural Integration. The final years offered specialisations in Industrial or Communication Design, anticipating debates that would later become central to contemporary design. As in Ulm, the plan included a self-financing system: the production and sale of designed objects would sustain the school economically, reinforcing the relationship between teaching, industry, and market.

Financing, however, remained an obstacle. In 1957, Sodré travelled to thet United States to raise funds and promote the project internationally.[19] Yet, MAM's financial difficulties and lack of state support prevented its implementation. Maldonado also noted the absence of a qualified national teaching body, which made reliance on foreign specialists necessary and increased costs. The final attempt took place in 1959, during the annual meeting of the International Association of Art Critics (AICA) in Rio. Maldonado and Otl Aicher then conducted the course *Elementos de Comunicação Visual*, the ETC's first official course, from 20 August to 15 September. In 1962, two more followed: Alexandre Wollner and Aloísio Magalhães taught *Graphic Arts*, and philosopher Max Bense, also an Ulm professor, taught *Visuality and Aesthetics*. After these, no further activities were recorded. Despite its conceptual solidity, the ETC failed to consolidate. Some locals viewed the Ulmian model as an external transposition, though undeniably innovative.[20]

Although the Escola Técnica de Criação never fully materialised, its conception marked a turning point in the history of Brazilian design.[21] It represented the first systematic attempt to articulate art, technology, and industry from a modern pedagogical perspective. Its intellectual legacy was crucial for the subsequent foundation of the Escola Superior de Desenho Industrial (ESDI) in 1963, during the government of Carlos Lacerda.[22] The ESDI thus consolidated Ulmian principles within a state framework, integrating product and visual communication design in a five-year programme and

12 Through strategic navigation of Brazil's bureaucracy, she mobilized elite support and relied on her husband's newspaper, *Correio da Manhã*, to publicize the museum.
13 Hans Joachim Koellreutter (1915–2005) was a German-born composer who introduced modernist music to Brazil, greatly shaping its musical education and culture.
14 The first issue of *Nueva Visión* (December 1951) featured Henry Van de Velde, Max Bill, and Alvar Aalto as pioneers of visual art synthesis, along with an essay by Ernesto N. Rogers on Max Bill's unity.
15 In the MAM Museum Bulletin, the episodes and statements from his visit to Brazil in July 1953 were published. See the transcriptions in: Mariana Boghosian, *Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro: Um epicentro do design moderno brasileiro (1948 a 1978)* (master's thesis, PPDESDI, 2020), 317–329.
16 Pedro Luiz Pereira de Souza, *ESDI: Biography of an Idea* (UERJ, 1996), 4.
17 The building, designed by Affonso Reidy (praised by Max Bill during his visit to the city), embodied the ideals of a new society: it stimulated creativity, sensory experience, and community participation.
18 The foundation course lasted one year and – until 1961 – was the same for all students, who then attended a specific department for three or four additional years. See: Hans Lindinger, *La scuola di Ulm: una nuova cultura del progetto* (Costa & Nolan, 1988).
19 See the image from the catalogue intended for the international membership campaign in: Aleca Le Blanc, "The Material of Form: How Concrete Artists Responded to the Second Industrial Revolution in Latin America," in *Making Art Concrete: Works from Argentina and Brazil in the Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros* (Getty Publications, 2017), 1.
20 Souza Leite, João de. "De costas para o Brasil, o ensino de um design internacionalista." In *O design gráfico brasileiro: anos 60*, edited by Chico Homem de Melo, 259. Cosac & Naify, 2006.
21 Initially planned by a small committee, the school adopted the Ulm model without local adaptation or industry input. A new structure was later developed with Karl Heinz Bergmiller and Alexandre Wollner (both former Ulm students).
22 The decree was signed on 5 December 1962. The State of Guanabara resumed the project under the direction of Carlos Flexa Ribeiro, and the school was inaugurated in the Lapa district of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

reinterpreting Ulm's scientific rationality for a developmentalist Brazil. In 1975, it became part of the Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (UERJ), continuing the ideal that had inspired the ETC: from the everyday object to the transformation of the city.

NETWORKS OF EXCHANGE AND CONTEMPORARY PROJECTIONS

In *The World as Project*, Otl Aicher conceived design as an integrated system in which every element – from a coffee spoon to urban planning – contributed to shaping the shared world.[23] This notion resonates with Niomar Sodré's vision for the *Escola Técnica de Criação* (ETC), where design was understood as a total practice uniting the everyday and the monumental, the practical and the symbolic. Aicher sought to restore the ethical, social, and political dimensions of design as a network of exchanges between theory and practice, between subjects, objects, and contexts – a perspective that remains productive for reinterpreting the histories and discourses of design in Latin America.

The pedagogical experiences derived from the *Hochschule für Gestaltung Ulm* (HfG Ulm) in Latin America – particularly in Brazil – demonstrated how design projects were structured through transnational institutions and networks. These functioned as spaces of mediation and knowledge production, integrating design into a modernisation project in which art and industry converged in national construction.[24] Design education thus assumed a strategic role by accompanying industrialisation while shaping a modern identity capable of negotiating between internationalism and nationalism.[25]

Within this framework, the MAM Rio initiative for the ETC school, far from representing failure, embodied a pioneering vision to train professionals who could link art, design, and industry in alignment with national progress. The museum possessed both the conceptual and physical infrastructure to implement the project, yet financial constraints and political tensions proved decisive obstacles. The lack of public funding, due to the museum's private status, and the complex relations between MAM's autonomy and the State of Guanabara's limited institutional support hindered its realisation.

Despite these difficulties, the project's significance lay in its intellectual and pedagogical ambition. The ETC synthesised Ulmian principles within a Latin American context, articulating design as a bridge between technological innovation and social transformation. Even without material consolidation, it generated an enduring model for collaboration between cultural institutions and industry, anticipating later initiatives such as the *Escola Superior de Desenho Industrial* (ESDI).

23 Otl Aicher, *The World as Design* (Gustavo Gili, 1991).
24 Boghosian, *Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro*, 79.
25 Rafael Amato, *Desenho incerto: O mito da "cópia" na historiografia do design brasileiro* (Universidade de São Paulo, 2023), 24.

Beyond the contingencies of its implementation, the legacy of MAM Rio endures in its commitment to education and critical reflection. Through open courses and community programmes, the museum maintained its pedagogical vocation, fostering a space where art, design, and social awareness converged. The ETC project, though unrealised, thus became a symbolic reference for understanding design as a cultural and political instrument in the modernisation of Brazil and Latin America.

Group of students and teachers (Mozambican and Italian) in front of the Faculty of Architecture and Physical Planning at Eduardo Mondlane University in Maputo, 1996. Courtesy of Maria Spina.

Patricia Noormahomed (Dinâmia'CET-Iscte)

Cooperation and Exchange Networks in Architectural Education: Notes from Post-Independence Mozambique

INTRODUCTION

Formal architectural education in Mozambique is a relatively recent development.[1] It was not until 1986, eleven years after gaining independence from Portuguese colonial rule, that the country's first school of architecture opened its doors. Despite the construction boom experienced after the end of the Second World War, architects working in the territory during the colonial period were either trained in Portugal or neighbouring South Africa. Once independence was achieved in 1975, the local training of architects remained a pending task. The new, post-independence government did not prioritise it for several reasons: the association between architecture and the real estate speculation practices that had previously excluded most of the Mozambican population, the continuation of ongoing projects supported by foreign development workers, the widespread belief that territorial planning concerned only economy and society and not architecture, and, ultimately, because 'no one knew what architects really do'.[2]

However, after independence, Mozambique faced many challenges in architecture and spatial planning. The Portuguese colonial administration had left behind a large territory with a poorly developed transportation and communication network, mainly designed to export resources rather than meet local development needs. This situation was further exacerbated by an unequal distribution of the population across the territory, resulting from the imbalance of colonial economic exploitation, and a precarious housing situation for most urban citizens, who had been subjected to a process of social exclusion.[3] The mass departure of settlers that accompanied the decolonisation process intensified these challenges by reducing Mozambique's

1 The first schools of architecture in Sub-Saharan Africa were established in South Africa at the University of the Witwatersrand in 1921 and the University of Cape Town in 1922. The first post-independence school was inaugurated in 1958 in Ghana at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology. See: Mark Olweny, "Architectural education in sub-Saharan Africa: an investigation into pedagogical positions and knowledge frameworks," *The Journal of Architecture* 25, no. 6 (2020): 723. In the territories that were once under Portuguese colonial administration, the first school of architecture was established in Angola in 1980 at the University Agostinho Neto.

2 José Forjaz, "Abertura do ano lectivo 2006/07 – FAPF-UEM," José Forjaz Arquitectos, https://www.joseforjazarquitectos.com/textos-1/abertura-do-ano-lectivo-2006%2F07---fapf-uem.

3 José Forjaz, "A planificação física em Moçambique independente," José Forjaz Arquitectos, http://www.joseforjazarquitectos.com/textos/planmocind.html.

technical and administrative capacities and causing a shortage of senior technical staff in the building industry.[4] By 1976, there were only six architects, who had to take on mainly administrative and management responsibilities.[5]

Mozambique's post-independence brain drain was addressed with technical assistance from other, mainly socialist-oriented countries. Continuing with the alliances forged during the anticolonial struggle, the post-independence government of the Mozambican Liberation Front (Frelimo) established cooperation agreements, among others, with the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Cuba, the German Democratic Republic, and the Scandinavian states, which sent several professionals to assist in dismantling and replacing the colonial administration with a new modern state. Their support contributed to the Mozambican government's programme of socialisation of the built environment, which included the nationalisation of land and rental housing, the construction of communal villages for collective agriculture in rural areas, and the improvement of urban housing conditions through completion of unfinished colonial buildings, construction of communal neighbourhoods and assistance to self-build.[6]

TERMS OF COOPERATION

The establishment of Mozambique's first architecture school fell within this framework of international cooperation. Located in the capital city, Maputo, the Faculty of Architecture and Physical Planning [Faculdade de Arquitectura e Planeamento Físico (FAPF), in Portuguese] at Eduardo Mondlane University was established with the support of the Italian government.[7] It was created in response to the pressing need to train higher-level technicians to address the country's post-independence challenges in land use management and territorial organisation.

Italy was a reliable and logical partner to collaborate with on this project. Cooperation between Italy and Frelimo dates back to the anti-colonial struggle when Mozambique's national liberation movement received support from Italian left-wing political groups, regional governments, trade unions, and non-governmental organisations. Immediately after independence, the new government launched a preliminary programme that included Italian technical assistance to Eduardo Mondlane University, aimed at guiding the direction of a public university in a country that had just emerged from a revolution. Following the signing of an initial Technical Cooperation Agreement between the two nations in 1977, the first delegation from the University of Rome and other Italian universities travelled to Mozambique to identify the main areas of cooperation, specifically agriculture, geology, and medicine.[8] The extension of Italian support to the fields of architecture and spatial planning came to fruition with the creation of an intermediate-level course in Physical Planning, which awarded its first diplomas at the end of 1984.[9] Yet, for some authors, it was the association between Mozambique's influential architect and Secretary of State for Physical Planning, José Forjaz, and Gianni Ferracuti, professor at the University IUAV in Venice, that ultimately determined Italy's involvement in the opening of the FAPF. Their close relationship and Forjaz's connections in Rome prompted *La Sapienza* University [formally Università degli Studi di Roma La Sapienza] to assist in the creation of Mozambique's first school of architecture.[10]

The terms of the cooperation agreement stipulated financial support from the Italian government to cover the salaries of instructors from *La Sapienza* who would travel every year to teach in Mozambique. Most of them were driven by the desire to have an experience outside their country, and teaching was a way to achieve this goal.[11] Italy would also provide the necessary equipment and materials, from desks to computers, while the Mozambican counterpart would be responsible for establishing the required infrastructure and administrative procedures to ensure the effective operation of the course.[12]

READING THE LOCAL

Based on these arrangements, the first group of five Italian professors travelled to Maputo in 1985 to assess the project and 'study the specific conditions of Mozambique, so that the faculty is not created as a copy of those existing in Italy'. That same year, renovation work also began on the building where the school would operate.[13] From this initial assessment, the Italian instructors developed the course curriculum whose strong focus on physical planning sought to encompass José Forjaz's goal of tackling

4 After the Carnation Revolution that overthrew the Portuguese fascist regime in 1974, the population of European origin in Mozambique started leaving the territory due to the uncertainty brought by the new political scenario. The country's independence and the nationalisation policies implemented by the new government between 1975 and 1976 accelerated this exodus. As a result, about 90% of the Europeans had fled the Mozambican territory by the end of 1976. Margaret Hall and Tom Young, *Confronting Leviathan: Mozambique since independence* (Ohio University Press, 1997), 50, 59.

5 Forjaz, "A planificação física".

6 See the case of the Torres Vermelhas in Maputo, whose construction was left unfinished due to the events that led to the country's independence and completed several years later following a new project carried out by a team of development workers of Bulgarian origin: Patricia Noormahomed, "Towards the Definition of an Ever-changing Heritage: A Reading of the (Re)appropriation Processes of the Torres Vermelhas in Mozambique," *Curator: The Museum Journal* 65, no. 3 (2022); and the pilot project for upgrading and providing basic infrastructures in the Maxaquene neighbourhood in Maputo: Barry Pinsky, "Territorial Dilemmas: Changing Urban Life," in *A Difficult Road. The Transition to Socialism in Mozambique*, ed. John Saul (Monthly Review Press, 1985), 295–98; David Morton, *Age of concrete: housing and the shape of aspiration in the capital of Mozambique* (Ohio University Press, 2019), 188–93.

7 Eduardo Mondlane University is the oldest higher education institution in Mozambique. It was established in 1962 as the General University Studies of Mozambique, later renamed the University of Lourenço Marques (Maputo's former colonial designation). It adopted its current name in 1976 in honour of the first president of Frelimo, Eduardo Mondlane.

8 Tiziano Cirillo, interview by Promarte, *ItaloMoz História*, August 12, 2022, text, 5–6, https://italomozhistoria.com/testemunhos/tiziano-cirilo/.

9 Forjaz, "A planificação física".

10 Sandra Ferracuti, *Não consigo ser moçambicana. Arti, antropologie e patrimoni culturali a partire da Maputo* (Edizioni Museo Pasqualino, 2021), 7; Luís Lage, interview by Promarte, *ItaloMoz História*, September 8, 2022, text, 1–2, https://italomozhistoria.com/testemunhos/luis-lage/.

11 Maria Spina, interviewed by the author, July 9, 2024.

12 Luís Lage et al., "Ensinos e práticas em arquitetura, urbanismo e território em Moçambique: Entrevista com Luís Lage," *Laje* 1 (2023): 91.

13 "Unidade agro-pecuária e Faculdade de Urbanística, dois projectos da UEM com apoio italiano," *Notícias*, May 11, 1985, https://mozambiquehistory.net/education/higher_education/19840511_proiectos_da_uem.pdf

the various challenges of physical 'space at all levels, national, regional, urban and later architectural'.[14] However, despite the early efforts to understand the country's local context, the curriculum failed to reflect the realities of Mozambique's territory, as it was grounded in the knowledge and assumptions of the Italian educational context.[15]

The first cohort of students consistently criticises the founding curriculum. For Maria dos Anjos Rosário, the school's first female graduate, 'the course we took is a course for a modern country…It's a course designed for international standards…but that's not enough, our course didn't teach us how to make a good diagnosis of our reality'.[16] Echoing this perception, Mário Rosário, one of the first four graduates in 1991, remarked that 'Italian professors with no knowledge of peri-urban reality, let alone rural areas, are bound to be out of step with the future vision of [Mozambique's] urban development'.[17]

However, at the intersection between the European background and the Mozambican landscape, different readings emerged. While some instructors regarded the country's built environment and self-produced neighbourhoods – where most of the population lives – as ephemeral and temporary because they did not match their ideals of what architecture should be.[18] For Maria Spina, who joined the faculty in 1989, Mozambique's building practices offered significant insights: 'For a European woman architect, it was important to see how, in reality, what is called "informal settlements" was actually women's heritage. I discovered that a Mozambican woman, an ordinary woman, a woman who knows nothing about architecture, can build a house because she knows the price of the beams, the price of a bag of cement, the price of the brick, the price of the sheet metal. The construction of a house – bedroom, living room, and bathroom – is in the hands of women. It's an incredible thing that I discovered, and I was very impressed by it'.[19]

Recurring trips to Maputo contributed to consolidating the Italian teaching staff and refining their initial readings. By travelling throughout the country, particularly after the end of the civil war in 1992, the Italian professors also gained a deeper awareness and knowledge of the Mozambican built environment.[20] The surveying and mapping of the first urban centres, their houses, neighbourhoods, and infrastructures, provided essential insights for adjusting their teaching techniques to the local context.[21]

14 José Forjaz, interview by Ana Sousa Dias, *RTP Arquivos*, November 7, 2006, video, 56:56, https://arquivos.rtp.pt/conteudos/jose-forjaz/.
15 Lage et al., "Ensinos e práticas em arquitetura," 92.
16 Maria dos Anjos Rosário, interviewed by the author, September 8, 2024.
17 Mário Rosário, *Contando aos amigos…* (CIEDIMA Lda, 2025), 14.
18 Lage, interview, 8.
19 Spina, interviewed by the author.
20 Lage et al., "Ensinos e práticas em arquitetura," 92.
21 Spina, interviewed by the author.

Key to this process of understanding Mozambique's different realities was the interaction and exchange with the first cohorts of students, many of whom had a previous professional background in other domains, 'and now we all wanted to be architects. Some of us had already been in architecture, others had not…And all of us had already held positions in ministries, and we knew how everything worked. So, when Italian professors came to give us lessons, they had to face a set of individuals who were critical and opinionated'.[22] This led to a process of mutual learning and knowledge exchange among students and teachers, and among the students themselves.

As part of this shared learning experience, field mapping exercises became a collaborative effort to understand the local built environment, from planned urban areas to self-built neighbourhoods. The exploration of Mozambique's architectural history also brought professors and students together in library and archival research, inspired by *La Sapienza*'s long-standing interest in architectural heritage. This collective work resulted in joint publications with the creation of FAPF's publishing house in the late 1990s,[23] which went on to provide a platform for documenting local realities while also engaging the school with global architectural debates with the translation and publication of influential texts such as Tanizaki Jun'ichirō 'In Praise of Shadows'.[24]

These knowledge exchange networks continue to develop after the first local architects graduated. The challenge was to further their training, now as educators, so that they could eventually take over from the Italian faculty. This initiated a series of training trips to Italy, beginning in 1998 when a group of six Mozambican lecturers went to *La Sapienza* to take a specialised training course on new technologies. The experiences, reflections, and cultural clashes that emerged from this trip were collected by Júlio Carrilho in the text 'Riário', where he highlights the value of the interpersonal relationships forged between the Mozambicans and the Italians and the transnational bridges built through the cooperation programme.[25]

In 2000, the CICUPE project further enhanced the capacity-building efforts by enabling Mozambican teachers to pursue their postgraduate studies in Rome.[26] As a result, nine obtained their master's degrees and four completed their PhDs, in some cases under the supervision of their former Italian instructors.[27] However, to fully assess the impact of Italian cooperation in Mozambique's

22 Rosário, interviewed by the author.
23 To name a few: Sandro Bruschi, Júlio Carrilho, and Luís Lage, *Era uma vez uma palhota: História da casa moçambicana* (Edições FAPF, 2005); Sandro Bruschi and Benjamim Sondeia, *Inhambane: Elementos de história urbana* (Edições FAPF, 2003); Claida Abubakar et al., *Antigo Bairro Militar de Maputo* (Edições FAPF, 2003).
24 Nikolai Brandes, "Tanizaki in Maputo. Japanese cultural theory and the decolonisation of architectural education in Mozambique," *Static* 2, no. 2 (2023).
25 Júlio Carrilho, *Riário. Olhos moçambicanos numa certa Itália* (Centro de Estudos e Desenvolvimento do Habitat, 2001), 94–95.
26 The *Centro Interuniversitario per la Cooperazione Universitaria con i Paesi Emergenti* (CICUPE) was a technical assistance programme to universities in emerging countries initiated by the Italian government in the year 2000.
27 Lage, interview, 5; Spina, interviewed by the author.

architectural education, it is essential to look beyond the pioneering programme established between Eduardo Mondlane University and *La Sapienza*. After the end of the programme in 2005, with the departure of the last Italian professors, a new momentum emerged when some returned to Mozambique in 2010 to collaborate in the creation of a new school of architecture: the Faculty of Architecture and Physical Planning at Lúrio University in Nampula, northern Mozambique. Among them were the former FAPF director António Catizone, Maria Spina and Maurizio Berti, who served as head of the faculty from 2012 to 2016.[28] It was also a group of alumni trained under the Italian curriculum who, in 2009, developed the course programme for a new private school in Maputo: the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism at the Higher Institute of Science and Technology of Mozambique (ISCTEM).[29] Among their motivations was the desire to overcome the shortcomings of their own academic training.[30]

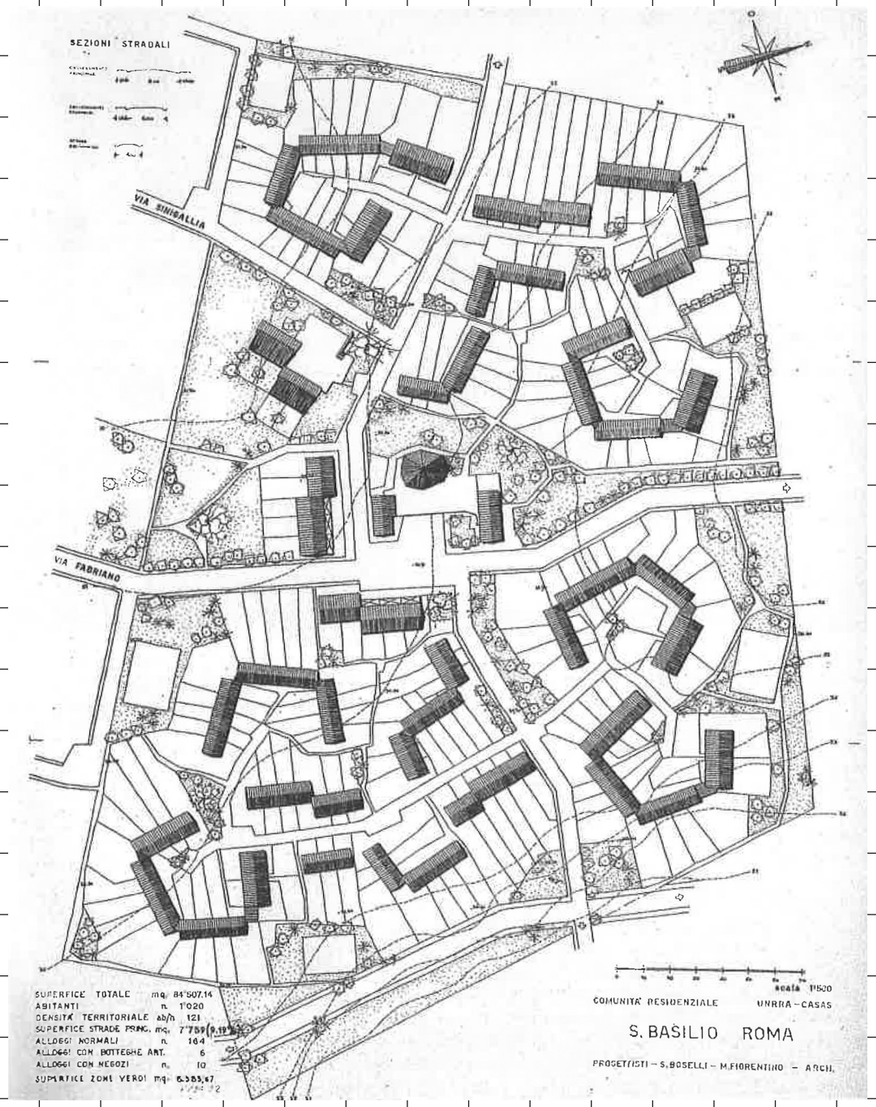
CONCLUSIONS

As the historiography of 20th-century architecture in Africa has recently started to focus on the influence of international solidarity networks and development aid initiatives in shaping the continent's postcolonial landscape, this paper offers new insights into the subject by examining the role of international cooperation in post-independence architectural education. Drawing on personal recollections from former students and professors, this exploratory research also foregrounds lesser-known voices that have been overlooked in the history of Mozambique's architecture, mainly due to previous studies that have predominantly focused on the architect-practitioner who served the colonial regime.

The Mozambican-Italian networks of collaboration unveil the complexities and challenges involved in developing a post-independence pedagogy rooted in both global and local knowledge. Instead of a one-way transfer where 'aid recipients' are expected to uncritically adopt the visions and ideas of 'donors', the implementation of Mozambique's first architecture and physical planning course fostered a process of dialogue and mutual knowledge exchange. Reciprocal learning emerged not only through formal training programmes; personal relationships proved to be as influential as formal institutional agreements, as well as joint and collaborative work and publications. The outcomes of these cycles of academic exchange have left their mark on the first generations of architects who graduated in Mozambique. Now, many of them, as professors and instructors, continue to draw on the lessons learned from their Italian-backed academic education as they train the country's new generations of architects. This reveals the long-lasting impacts of the Mozambican-Italian partnership on the country's architectural education and practice. It also calls for a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the intangible, relational, and technical dimensions of international cooperation projects in shaping Africa's post-independence landscape.

28 Maurizio Berti, interviewed by the author, July 4, 2024.
29 It is worth noting that there are currently five schools of architecture in Mozambique. In addition to those previously mentioned, the Faculty of Architecture and Physical Planning at Wuitivi University in Boane, founded in 2014, and the Faculty of Architecture at Zambeze University in Beira, established in 2017.
30 Rosário, interviewed by the author.

Networks and Dwelling



Mario Fiorentino and Serena Boselli, UNRRA-Casas Residential Community at San Basilio, Rome (1951–1955), Masterplan. Image published in Istituto nazionale di Urbanistica, Esperienze Urbanistiche in Italia (Rome, 1952).

Jiayao Jiang (University of Cambridge)

UNRRA-Casas and Post-war Social Housing in Italy: Transnational Exchanges and State Welfare

FROM CIAM TO RELIEF PLANNING: THE CALL FOR NEW EXCHANGE NETWORKS

As the Second World War drew to a close, architects and planners increasingly recognised the inadequacy of existing international organisations for town planning – such as the Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM), the Town and Country Planning Association, the Housing Bureau of the League of Nations – to address the multifaceted challenges of post-war reconstruction.[1] By the early 1940s, members of the American CIAM group were already calling for more integrated and action-oriented platforms. In 1943, they founded the New York Chapter for Relief and Postwar Planning, seeking to embed architectural expertise within broader debates unfolding in humanitarian and diplomatic institutions, while also disseminating the American technological advances for the reconstruction of European cities.[2] Their initiative reflected a growing understanding that post-war recovery required more than design solutions: it is a problem that encompasses political, industrial and legislative aspects and calls for interdisciplinary coordination – bringing together engineers, anthropologists, sociologists, economists – and, crucially, cooperation among nations.

This call for new modes of exchange networks converged with the creation of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) in November 1943.[3] Comprising forty-four nations, UNRRA became the first large-scale international forum in which military officials, local governments, and technical experts – including architects and planners – jointly debated policies on welfare, housing, and urban rehabilitation. Its mandate was ambitious:

> 'To plan, co-ordinate, administer or arrange for the administration of measures for the relief of victims of war in any area under the control of any of the United Nations through the provision of food,

1 Bruno Zevi, "International Construction and Reconstruction for a Planning Commission in the United Nations Organization," *Metron* 6 (January 1946): 2–11.
2 Eric Mumford, *CIAM Discourse: Articles and Documents on Modern Architecture, 1928–1960* (MIT Press, 2002), 142–49.
3 *50 Facts about UNRRA* (Division of Public Information, United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, 1946).

fuel, clothing, shelter, and other basic necessities, as well as medical and other essential services'.[4]

Unlike CIAM, which remained largely confined to architectural discourse, UNRRA operated at the intersection of humanitarian aid, international diplomacy, and practical logistics. Reconstruction was no longer an abstract technical matter or an academic concern: it had become a geopolitical imperative. Contemporary observers described UNRRA as an unprecedented experiment in international civil service, bringing together diverse nations and professions to imagine a 'true world community' through new systems of welfare and planning.[5]

Building on these new networks, transnational exchanges intensified in the immediate post-war years, as groups of architects and planners from Italy, France, Britain, Poland, China, Russia, Finland, Chile and Paraguay toured North America to study prefabrication, mass housing systems, and neighbourhood planning models.[6] Italian architect Bruno Zevi, who took part in these visits, pointed out that such experiences confirmed the limitations of theoretical studies: planning had become a state function, inseparable from international coordination. As he argued, 'only an inter-statal organisation like the United Nations Organization can tackle international planning.'[7]

UNRRA-CASAS IN ITALY: TRANSNATIONAL FLOWS AND THE POLITICS OF POST-WAR HOUSING

After the end of the war and the collapse of the Fascist government, Italy faced not only an acute housing shortage but also a volatile political situation, marked by dissonance among competing parties: the Christian Democrats (DC), the Communists (PCI), and the Socialists (PSI).[8] The establishment of the Italian Republic in 1948, under Christian Democratic leadership, created both opportunities for reconstruction and challenges in managing political divisions and social expectations. Reconstruction was widely understood as a chance to modernise outdated welfare structures and to redefine the relationship between the state, communities, and citizens.

Unlike the Communists, who emphasised class struggle and collective ownership, the Christian Democrats framed housing not only as a response to urgent social need but also as a means to promote family stability,

4 Agreement for the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, November 9, 1943, Articles 1 and 2, New York.
5 Susan T. Pettit and Lynne Taylor, *After the Shooting Stopped: The Story of an UNRRA Welfare Worker in Germany, 1945–1947* (Trafford, 2004), 5–7; Francesca Wilson, *Aftermath: France, Germany, Austria, Yugoslavia 1945 and 1946* (Arthur Baker,1947), 19.
6 Zevi, "International Construction and Reconstruction," 5.
7 Ibid., 7.
8 See Nicole De Togni, "Italian Postwar Reconstruction and the Contribution of UNRRA-Casas: Ideologies, Models, and Actors for Architecture and Society," in *Architektur und Akteure: Praxis und* Öffentlichkeit *in der Nachkriegsgesellschaft,* ed. Wolfgang Sonne and Sigrid Hofer (transcript Verlag, 2018), 26.

social harmony, and loyalty to democratic institutions. It was within this contested political environment that the UNRRA-Casas programme was launched in 1946. Created as the housing arm of the UNRRA and financed largely by American relief funds, UNRRA-Casas channelled international aid into state-administered housing projects across Italy. Later national initiatives, like the INA-Casa plan (1949), deepened this effort by embedding social housing within a broader system of welfare provision that combined employment creation, urban development, and support for middle- and working-class families. In this way, the Christian Democrats harnessed social housing as both a symbol and a tool of state-led welfare, countering Communist influence in the popular classes and grounding the legitimacy of the Republic in tangible improvements to everyday life.

What distinguished UNRRA-Casas from subsequent Italian national housing initiatives such as *INA-Casa* and the *Istituto Nazionale per le Case degli Impiegati Statali* (INCIS) was it explicitly transnational character.[9] Its hybrid name, merging the English acronym of the international body with the Italian *Comitato Amministrativo Soccorso ai Senzatetto*, encapsulated this duality. Financed primarily by the United States but dependent on Italian institutions, professionals, and political frameworks, UNRRA-Casas embodied a new form of post-war architectural diplomacy.[10] For Italy it was also a political statement – a way of rejoining the international community after a period of fascism. Leadership was divided between American administrators in Washington D.C., and Italian experts on the ground, with architects, engineers, and planners forming the operational backbone. This structure made the programme international in scope while anchored in local knowledge and practice.

Between 1947 and 1963, UNRRA-Casas launched over 1,000 housing projects across Italy, focussing particularly on the regions most devastated by war.[11] Its flagship initiative was the La Martella village in southern Italy, for which Italian architects travelled to the United States to study building technologies, while American experts – including anthropologists, sociologists, and photographers – offered technical support on site. Figures such as sociologist Friedrich Friedmann, photographers Marjory Collins and Henri Cartier documented and disseminated the project, projecting its significance onto an international stage.[12] Guided by the twin objectives of 'Home and Work,' it prompted the use of local materials and provided employment for local craftsmen. In this way, UNRRA-Casas became a laboratory of knowledge exchange, where architecture and planning were inseparable from social science and cultural diplomacy.

9 For INA-Casa and INCIS, see Istituto nazionale di urbanistica, *Esperienze urbanistiche in Italia* (Rome, 1952); Stephanie Pilat, *Reconstructing Italy: The Ina-Casa Neighborhoods of the Post-War Era* (London: Routledge, 2018); David Escudero, "Personalising Architecture: The Contribution of Neorealism to Italian Architecture through the INA-Casa Programme (1949–56)," *Architectural Theory Review* 24, no. 1 (2020): 86–109.
10 Paolo Scrivano, "Signs of Americanization in Italian Domestic Life: Italy's post-war Reconstruction and the Role of UNRRA-Casas," *Journal of Modern Italian Studies* 9, no. 2 (2004): 163–180.
11 Scrivano, "Signs of Americanization," 322.
12 Michele Tenzon, "Rural Modernity in Post-War Southern Italy: The La Martella Village in Matera," *The Journal of Architecture* 23, no. 3 (2018): 498–522; Paolo Scrivano, *Building Transatlantic Italy: Architectural Dialogues with Postwar America* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 55.

The Italian state positioned itself as the mediator between the international solidarity and national sovereignty: it negotiated the terms of foreign assistance, decided how resources were distributed, and integrated UNRRA-Casas within the broader national framework of rehabilitation. Through this mediation, international aid was reshaped to serve national priorities: stabilising rural areas, addressing peasant poverty, and containing political unrest in the Mezzogiorno. Unlike INA-Casa, which targeted industrial workers, or INCIS, which privileged civil servants, UNRRA-Casas was directed primarily at peasants — the social group least protected by Italy's fragmented welfare system. In this way, the Italian government transformed an international relief programme into a strategic instrument of domestic politics.

'THE NEIGHBORHOOD UNIT' AS A MODEL: TRANSNATIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND LOCAL ADAPTATION

The 'neighborhood unit', adapted from American urban planning and translated into the Italian context, played a crucial role in guiding UNRRA-Casas housing projects in Rome and beyond. Rooted in early twentieth-century American urban sociology, the concept offered a powerful model for community-centred design in the post-war period. It was first conceptualised in the 1910s and systematised by American urban planner Clarence Perry in *The Neighborhood Unit* (1929), produced for the Russell Sage foundation's *Regional Survey of New York and its Environs*.[13] The neighbourhood unit model envisioned cities organised into self-sufficient, walkable communities of 3,000–10,000 inhabitants over an area of 40–70 hectares. Each unit would contain schools, parks, shops, and civic institutions within walking distance. Perry's model responded to the disorderly sprawl of industrial cities, promoting socially cohesive, human-centred housing design.

Resonating with Scandinavian housing experiments and with the British Garden City movement, the neighbourhood unit offered not just a technical solution but a vision of community as the foundation of urban life. Its six guiding principles — size, boundaries, open spaces, institutional sites, local shops, and internal street systems — together with the unit's cellular structure, allowed it to be utilised as a modular building block for neighbourhood development, readily adaptable for rapid urban expansion in many countries across the globe.[14]

Across Europe, the neighbourhood unit was disseminated through transnational networks: from the United States to Britain, exemplified by the 1943 County of London Plan by Patrick Abercrombie and John Henry Forshaw; in France, promoted by Gaston Bardet; and in Italy, introduced and adapted by Adriano Olivetti.[15] Advocates such as William E. Drummond envisioned the neighbourhood unit not only as a planning tool but as a political and social structure of the city.[16]

In Italy, the neighbourhood unit — known as *unità di vicinato* — was debated, disseminated and adapted through networks of architects, institutions, and media. Media platforms played a pivotal role in integrating the model into local contexts. *Comunità,* led by Adriano Olivetti, and *Metron*, led by Bruno Zevi, actively published essays written by international scholars such as Lewis Mumford, Erwin Anton Gutkind, Robert Nisbet, and Ferdinand Tönnies, thereby introducing foreign planning theories into Italian cultural discourse. In *Metron* 6 (January 1946), Roberto Calandra's article 'Teoria americana della "Neighborhood unit" [American theory of "Neighborhood unit"],' offered one of the earliest Italian expositions of Perry's principles. Terms like *unità di vicinato* and *unità residenziale* entered professional discourse, often reinterpreted to combine modernist design with vernacular traditions of communal life.

A telling example is the San Basilio UNRRA-Casas project on Rome's northeastern periphery, designed and constructed between 1951 and 1955 by Mario Fiorentino and Serena Boselli. Following UNRRA-Casas guidelines, the plan provided 180 dwellings — including ten with shop units and sixteen with artisan workshops. Most homes were terraced houses with independent access and gardens of 150–200 square meters, as well as two-storey apartment blocks containing four flats each.[17] The site plan, organised along a cruciform road system, positioned a central service core — a nursery school and a building for social and health services with facilities like community rooms and a bar — to encourage social interaction while minimising traffic conflicts. The dwellings were arranged into seven clusters; each grouped around a small square and connected to secondary roads. The quarter covered around 84,000 square meters, with a density of about 135 inhabitants per hectare.[18] This careful organisation exemplifies Perry's neighbourhood unit model, with open spaces, pedestrian paths, institutional sites, clustered dwellings, and local amenities all meticulously designed to reflect his six guiding principles.

Local adaptations were evident in both construction techniques and aesthetics. Buildings employed masonry structures, pitched roofs, and Roman-style clay tiles, while facades were enlivened with polychrome surfaces — ochre, yellow, violet, and blue — accented by white trims, green-grey shutters, and black metalwork. These design choices combined modernist clarity with vernacular familiarity, reinforcing a sense of community identity.[19] This approach also exemplifies architectural neorealism in post-war Italy,

13 Clarence Perry, "The neighborhood Unit: A Scheme of Arrangement for the Family Life Community," in *Regional Survey of New York and Its Environs, vol. 7, Neighborhood and Community Planning* (Regional Plan Association of America, 1929); See also Clarence Arthur Perry, *Housing for the Machine Age* (Russell Sage Foundation, 1939).
14 Perry, *The Neighborhood Unit*, 1929.
15 James Dahir, ed., *The Neighborhood Unit Plan: Its Spread and Acceptance: A Selected Bibliography with Interpretative Comments* (Russell Sage Foundation, 1947), 80–82.
16 Donald Leslie Johnson, "Origin of the Neighborhood Unit," *Planning Perspectives* 17, no. 3 (2002): 227–45.
17 Mario Fiorentino, "Relazione tecnica," in *Mario Fiorentino: La casa. Progetti 1946–1981*, ed. Francesco Moschini (Rome: Edizioni Kappa, 1985), 66.
18 INU, *Esperienze urbanistiche in Italia*, 122.
19 See Anna Veronese, "When Architecture Is Not Enough: A Comparison of San Basilio and Corviale," *ADH Journal of Architectural Design and History*, Issue 4 (2025), 208–22.

adopting an architectural language which took its cues from the vernacular architecture and rural tradition, made for an articulated and varied urban environment.

San Basilio thus exemplified how the neighbourhood unit was not transplanted wholesale but reinterpreted to align with Italian social and cultural realities. The very term *vicinato* – implying intimacy, familiarity, and mutual parity – carried meanings absent from the American concept of the neighbourhood. By embedding the model in a discourse of solidarity, family networks, and regional traditions, Italian architects transformed a transnational planning tool into a vehicle for reconstructing democratic community life.

As Ciccarelli points out, 'The myth of the self-sufficient neighborhood – fed by the spread of the British New Towns and Scandinavian neighborhoods – fed urban planning culture in Italy until the mid-1950s [...].'[20] Yet in Italy, this myth was always refracted through contextual reinterpretation, tied to broader political projects such as land reform, anti-fascist reconstruction, and welfare redefinition. In this sense, the *unità di vicinato* was more than a borrowed model: it was a site of negotiation between global ideals and local needs, between modernist design and vernacular continuity, and between the universalising claims of international planning and the particularities of Italian social life.

CONCLUSION

UNRRA-Casas was one of the first post-war housing programmes in Italy, and the Italian government used it as a pilot experiment to test models of low-cost housing and community planning, laying the groundwork for subsequent national housing initiatives. It functioned as a crucial bridge between emergency relief and the development of long-term welfare state policies. In the immediate post-war period, the building sector was widely seen as a driving force for recovery, with housing projects serving to restore dignity, rebuild family life, and reassert civic authority.

Embedded within the geopolitical tensions of the burgeoning Cold War, the UNRRA-Casas programme also functioned as a strategic instrument for both international and domestic political objectives. On one level, it reflected the broader dynamics of American foreign policy. As scholar David Webster notes, international relief organisations like UNRRA possessed a 'colonial pedigree,' inheriting a framework where powerful Western nations guided the development of less powerful ones.[21] This paradigm was repurposed in the Cold War context, transforming humanitarian and economic aid into a form of soft power aimed at ensuring Italy's political alignment with the Western bloc.

Concurrently, for the new Italian government led by the Christian Democrats, the programme was a critical tool wielded on the home front against a formidable domestic Communist Party. The construction of housing, schools, and health clinics served as a tangible demonstration of the new democratic republic's capacity to provide for its citizens, directly countering the communist critique that the state was failing the working class. Beyond simply winning hearts and minds, the programme actively promoted a specific societal vision centred on the nuclear family, private homeownership, and community life organised around the local church and school. This was seen as creating a stable, traditionalist social foundation that would be more resistant to radical politics.

Ultimately, the UNRRA-Casas initiative illustrates how post-war reconstruction in Italy was simultaneously a project of material rebuilding, social engineering, and political negotiation, revealing the deeply intertwined roles of international aid, state authority, and domestic ideology in shaping the early Italian welfare state.

20 Lorenzo Ciccarelli, "On the Wave of the Welfare State: Anglo-Italian Town-Planning Strategies in the Post-War Years," in *Post-War Architecture between Italy and the UK: Exchanges and Transcultural Influences*, ed. Lorenzo Ciccarelli and Clare Melhuish (London: UCL Press, 2021), 26.

21 David Webster, "Development Advisors in Time of Cold War and Decolonization: The United Nations Technical Assistance Administration, 1950–59," *Journal of Global History*, 6 (2011), 250.

Sputnik pharmacy in Semarang in the late 1960s. Courtesy of Izazi Nur Shabina.

Anita Halim Lim (University of Amsterdam)

From Jan to Yankee: Tracing the Jengki Architecture Networks in Post-Independence Indonesia

INTRODUCTION

During the 1950s and 1960s, Indonesia — as a young, independent nation — embarked on a cultural project to define its new outward-looking national identity.[1] This mission was led by Sukarno, Indonesia's first president and a trained architect-engineer, under whose supervision architecture became a vehicle for nation-building.[2] Like in many other newly independent countries, the chief nation building efforts primarily took place in the capital city, Jakarta. As a consequence, scholarship on post-independence modern architecture in Indonesia tends to overlook other regions within the vast archipelago.

Around the same time as Sukarno's nation-building efforts, a distinct architectural style emerged in Jakarta and other Indonesian cities: Jengki architecture. These buildings have playful shapes, characterised by asymmetrical roofs and facades, and tend to use prefabricated concrete blocks and folded concrete plates, which are often more decorative than structural in nature. Most of these structures were houses built by private, small-scale contractors, who experimented with new technologies.

There is no official record of when these houses were first referred to as Jengki, but the word can be traced back to the term 'Yankee', referring to people from the United States. At that time, the proliferation of American culture was not only prevalent in architecture, but also in other aspects of life. The same term is also being used for other Jengki objects, such as Jengki trousers and Jengki furniture.[3]

In this paper, it is argued that Jengki architecture signalled a shift from Dutch colonialism to American influences in Indonesia, in relation to Cold War politics. This shift was symbolised by the US-funded cement factory and the building's reference to American culture. The emergence of Jengki as a nationalistic discourse due to its proliferation by local actors is highlighted first and foremost. However, through research of the

1 Henk Schulte Nordholt. "Modernity and cultural citizenship in the Netherlands Indies: An illustrated hypothesis." *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 42, no. 3 (2011): 435–457.

2 Sukarno was among the first generation of engineer to graduate from Technische Hoogeschool (TH-Bandung) in 1926. The school was the first engineering school set up by the Dutch colonial administration in the 1920s and renamed as Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB) after independence.

3 As an unofficial term used colloquially, the term "Jengki" was also used to describe objects that appear unconventional or have other foreign influences.

network that underlies this particular style, especially in relation to the Gresik cement factory and the networks of Jengki contractors – along with their material culture – more layers were to be discovered and added to Jengki's nationalistic narrative.

CONSTRUCTING A JENGKI NATIONALISM

One of the scholars who brought Jengki to the attention of academia is Josef Prijotomo.[4] In 1992, Prijotomo wrote an article about Jengki architecture in which he traced the appearance of this particular style back to the 1950s. After the Dutch repatriated to the Netherlands in 1957, a vacuum of professionals in the building industry ensued. According to Prijotomo, this gap was quickly filled by the Indonesians, who had some building skills and knowledge. They graduated from the Technical Secondary School (*Sekolah Teknik Menengah* or STM) or had previously worked with the Dutch, either as staffs or contractors. At the time, architecture graduates were scarce: most builders of Jengki architecture possessed knowledge of building forms and typology through the experience of building, but lacked a formal architectural education.[5]

Prijotomo argues that Jengki could be seen as an expression of the anti-colonialist spirit of the builders. His opinion was also shared by another Indonesian scholar, Johan Silas, who speculated that Jengki was an expression of the political spirit of freedom among the Indonesians, made visible in a distinctive formal and material language that differed from the colonial architecture created by Dutch architects.[6] However, the proliferation of Jengki is more nuanced than this proposed nationalist narrative.

In a different light, Budi A. Sukada, another scholar who participated in the discussion about Jengki, viewed this particular style as a continuation of the pre-war architecture built by Dutch architects.[7] Sukada studied the morphology of Jengki architecture and concluded that there had been a shift from the early Jengki to a newer type of Jengki, which occurred in the late 1950s.

The early type of Jengki, he argued, consisted of a pentagonal shape on top of a cube. The most recognisable examples of this category are the Bataafsche Petroleum Maatschappij (BPM) staff houses in Kebayoran, Jakarta, built in 1955.[8] These iconic duplexes were designed by the architecture firm Job en Sprey.[9] The design features an upper floor with an expansive balcony that has a parapet wall tilting forward, covered by a protruding roof. The rear walls protecting the balcony follow the outline of the tilted parapet wall, creating a pentagonal side elevation, a key feature of the early Jengki style. This design was uncommon at that time.

The new type of Jengki is a development of this early type that mimics the mid-century modern houses in the United States, but with a tropical twist. From 1955 to 1958, Oei Tjong An designed and renovated around fifteen mansions and bungalows in Kopeng, a mountainous resort town located just south of Semarang. These houses featured butterfly roofs and tilting beams that were commonly used in mid-century dwellings in America. In the application, Oei skillfully combined these features with large canopies and gabled roofs, giving these houses a tropical appearance.

THE AGGREGATE ACTORS OF JENGKI

The experimental shapes designed by Oei and his peers were only possible due to the increased accessibility of cement for building concrete structures. The establishment of the first national cement factory, the Gresik Cement Plant [Semen Gresik], in 1953 undoubtedly played a significant role in this. Previously, cement had to be partially imported because the Dutch-owned Padang cement factory's capacity was insufficient.[10] Therefore, the initiation of the first state-owned Gresik cement plan served multiple purposes: to boost the role of local actors in the national economy, to provide materials for Sukarno's nation-building project, and to drive the development of accompanying sectors, including housing, trade, education, and healthcare.[11]

Tracing the history of Gresik cement factory reveals the roles of many actors. These are what Łukasz Stanek dubs 'aggregate actors' – lesser-known architects, design institutes and state contractors offering both design and construction services.[12] Together with the local contractors, craftsmen, and workers, they were the aggregate actors that propelled the rise of Jengki architecture. Moreover, their networks were superimposed on and interfered with – and sometimes replaced – previous colonial networks.[13]

4 Abidin Kusno defined Josef Prijotomo as one of the most prolific architectural historian and theorists of Indonesia. Prijotomo's works centered on finding a Nusantara architecture identity through researching traditional Javanese building practices. See Abidin Kusno, et al., eds. *Gunawan Tjahjono & Josef Prijotomo: Postcolonial Traditionality* (TU Delft Open, 2017), 30.

5 Kemas Ridwan Kurniawan. "Identifikasi Tipologi dan Bentuk Arsitektur Jengki di Indonesia Melalui Kajian Sejarah." (1999), 2–3.

6 Josef Prijotomo. "When west meets east: One century of architecture in Indonesia (1890s–1990s)." *Architronic* 5, no. 3 (1996), 6.

7 Kurniawan, *Identifikasi Tipologi dan Bentuk Arsitektur Jengki di Indonesia Melalui Kajian Sejarah*, 4.

8 The BPM staff houses were featured in a popular Indonesian film in 1957, 'Tiga Dara', which might have contributed to the visual propagation of the Kebayoran Jengki house.

9 The architecture firm Job en Sprey was primarily active in Surabaya, where they designed the Javasche Bank staff housing in 1921. This company was later nationalised and became a state enterprise, Yodya Karya, in 1958.

10 The Dutch-owned cement factory, NV Nederlandsch Indische Portland Cement Maatschappij (NV NIPCM) was founded during the colonial period in 1910. This company was later nationalised in 1958.

11 Gugus Irianto, "A critical enquiry into privatisation of state-owned enterprises: the case of PT Semen Gresik (Persero) TBK. Indonesia," (PhD diss., University of Wollongong, 2004), 162–163.

12 Łukasz Stanek, *Architecture in Global Socialism: Eastern Europe, West Africa, and the Middle East in the Cold War* (Princeton University Press, 2020), 17–18.

13 Łukasz Stanek, "Introduction: the 'Second World's' architecture and planning in the 'Third World'," *The Journal of Architecture* 17, no. 3 (2012): 301.

The history of the Gresik cement plant dates back to the colonial era, when L. J. C. van Es from the Bureau of Mines of the Netherland Indies government conducted the first geological survey of the Gresik limestone deposit in 1935. Further action was interrupted however, by the 1942 Japanese occupation. After independence, another survey was made by the White Engineering Company of the United States. Their report served as the basis for negotiations between the Indonesian government and US contractors. The Gresik Cement plant was then established with the help of a twenty-five year loan from the US Export-Import Bank. The cement used in the factory construction was also imported from the United States.[14] As part of the financing requirements, A. J. Anderson and the H. K. Ferguson Company were appointed as independent technical advisors to represent the Indonesian government. Training was also provided to Indonesians, who were to hold top managerial and technical positions.[15]

This type of development aid has been a constant feature of the Cold War's history. During this period, both sides of the bloc offered economic and technical assistance to the newly independent countries. It was a form of diplomacy that boosted the economy of the target country, while exporting ideas of modernity from the global North to the global South. Although technical assistance was frequently presented as detached from political interests, the technical advisors could not escape being entwined with the politics of their host and home countries.[16]

In a similar vein, the infrastructures of Semen Gresik are also intertwined with the previous colonial network. One of the Gresik cement plants was built in the Rembang regency. This exact location was chosen due to its strategic proximity to all the materials needed for cement making – eight kilometres from a limestone mine and three kilometres from a clay mine. The factory was also well connected to the main road: the *Grote Postweg*.[17] Also known as *Jalan Raya Pos* or *Jalan Pantura* in modern-day Indonesia, the Grote Postweg linked Gresik with nearby cities like Surabaya and Semarang, where many Jengki houses can be found.

Seven years after the commencement of cement production, the company inaugurated a public hall known as Wisma Semen Gresik, which exemplifies Jengki architecture. The building, completed in 1964, features several notable elements that contribute to its distinctive Jengki appearance, including multiple waving canopies in the portico, stained glass windows, and a decorative *brise-soleil* screen on the façade. However, little is known about the architect of this building, though.

14 Leonard A. Doyle, *Inter-Economy Comparisons: A Case Study* (University of California Press, 1965), 27.
15 Doyle, *Inter-Economy Comparisons: A Case Study*, 6–7.
16 David Webster, "Development advisors in a time of cold war and decolonization: the United Nations Technical Assistance Administration, 1950–59." *Journal of Global History 6*, no. 2 (2011), 270–272.
17 The Great Post Road is the name of a historical road spanning across the northern coast of Java. It was built during the administration of Herman Willem Daendels (1808–1811), the governor general of the Dutch East Indies at that time. The road was built by forced labour in harsh conditions, which resulted in thousands of casualties.

JENGKI CONTRACTORS AND THE COMPRADOR NETWORKS

Indeed, many actors of Jengki architecture were relatively unknown. Names such as Boen Soeij Tjoe (Boen A Tjit), Boen Joek Sioe, Boen Kwet Kong, Harry Kwee (Kwee Hin Goan), Oei Tjong An, Yo Tjin Bok, Oei Kang Jan (Y.K. Winata), Oen Poo Hauw, and Boen Kiet Lim have rarely been mentioned in Indonesian architectural history.[18] Among these people, some are trained architects and designers, but most of them are contractors or *anemer*.[19]

The emergence of these mainly ethnic Chinese Indonesians as contractors is not coincidental. During the colonial times, a group of people functioned as the 'middlemen' in the colonial enterprise. Lawrence Chua referred to them as the 'comprador networks'. In Southeast Asia, most compradors were migrants from provinces in southern China. In contrast to the Chinese contract labourers, they actively participated in imperial trade networks by negotiating and managing the local supply of labour and resources. This led the compradors to occupy an ambiguous socio-political position within the hierarchy of colonial societies.[20]

Many actors of Jengki architecture belong to or have connections with these comprador networks. Figures like Oei Tjong An came from the family of Oei Tiong Ham, a business mogul from Semarang who ruled the sugar industry. In 1939, Oei Tjong An went to study advertising and industrial design at the École Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Geneva. He stayed abroad for ten years to study and work, returning only in 1949 due to World War II.[21] Back in Semarang, Oei opened an architecture company and immediately received his first commission to design a charity fair that very same year.

Chua argues that the economic activities of the compradors enabled them to establish 'new patterns of consumption and taste'.[22] As businessmen, the comprador networks facilitated cultural and economic exchanges that stimulated the growth of modern cities and brought different colonial regions into the orbit of metropolitan centres as peripheral zones.[23] As architects and *anemer*, they exercised with a diverse vocabulary of transregional architectural forms, materials, and construction techniques. In his practice, Oei Tjong An was dedicated to delivering the most creative designs to his upper-end clientele in Semarang. He often promoted his company in the local press with both English and Indonesian, writing sentences such as

18 Abidin Kusno, "Book Review: Retronesia: The Years of Building Dangerously," Review of *Retronesia: The Years of Building Dangerously*. New Mandala, August 23, 2018, https://www.newmandala.org/book-review/retronesia-years-building-dangerously/.
19 The Dutch word *aannemer* has become a loanword in Indonesian, *anemer.* Although *aannemer* means contractor, the use of *anemer* in the Indonesian context mainly refers to a contractor who also designs the building (design and build practice), particularly in the 1950s and '60s when architects were scarce.
20 Lawrence Chua, "Imperial Negotiations: Introducing Comprador Networks and Comparative Modernities," *Architectural Histories* 8, no. 1 (2020), 1–2.
21 Adeline Gunawan and Krisna Wariyan Pribadi, *Biografi Arsitek Oei Tjong An Bagian 1: Silsilah Keluarga* (Elex Media Komputindo, 2021), 59–64.
22 Chua, "Imperial Negotiations," 1.
23 Chua, "Imperial Negotiations," 1–2.

'…*bukan model Kebajoran*, but our own sources of original design'.[24] Oei was also fluent in the world of the socialites. He was active in the motorbike community and was often found networking in the exclusive resorts in Java.[25]

It was also in his hometown of Semarang that Oei designed one of his most iconic buildings, Apotek Sputnik. The pharmacy was constructed in 1959, two years after the launch of the Soviet Sputnik satellite. The building, however, is not a typical Jengki building – the façade is adorned with curvilinear lines, a rocket above the entrance door, and several amorphous windows. The matching interior features, including counters and benches, were executed in a similar space-themed visual language. Thembisa Waetjen argues that space technology could be invoked as a 'metric of modernity' for signalling a civilisational hierarchy of nations in a decolonising world.[26] Therefore, the use of space race symbolism here not only reflected the integration of Cold War politics into everyday life but also showed how the modern aesthetic was being contested, mediated, and appropriated in the early decades of the young nation.

CONCLUSION

Tracing the local and transnational networks of Jengki's aggregate actors reveals not only its entanglement with the previous colonial network, but also its engagement with Cold War politics, and particularly American influences. However, by examining its material culture, it becomes apparent that Jengki architecture also provides a means for people to claim their modern identities, just like Sukarno's state modernism. Perhaps not as grand and monumental as its official counterpart, the story of Jengki exceeds the borders of the capital and has the potential to represent multiple modernities in post-independence Indonesia.

This aspect of multiple modernities is particularly evident when examining Jengki architecture through its aggregate actors, which highlights the multivocality of this unofficial movement. It brings to the forefront the people who have been rarely included in the conventional historiography of modern Indonesian architecture, while simultaneously signalling that there will always be unknown names – contractors, *anemer*, architects, workers, experts, and craftsmen – that have contributed to our built environment.

24 '… *bukan model Kebajoran*' translates to '… not in the style of Kebajoran', implying that Oei Tjong An offered a new design that is different from the Kebayoran Jengki house model.
25 Khalil, *Retronesia : The Years of Building Dangerously*, 154.
26 Thembisa Waetjen, "Sputnik from Below: Space Age Science and Public Culture in Cold War Southern Africa." *Interventions* 18, no. 5 (2016): 689.

Postcard sent by Brian and Maureen Richardson to Harriet and Colin Ward with annotation on W. R. Lethaby, 1991. Courtesy of Colin and Harriet Ward's personal archive, consulted July 10 2023., permission granted by Harriet Ward.

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Affinity Group as Architectural Practice: Dweller-controlled Urbanism and Anarchist Architects

INTRODUCTION

In the post-war period – particularly between the United Kingdom and Italy – emerged a transnational collaboration between anarchist architects and planners, that functioned not as a formal network, but a prolific affinity group. This paper spotlights affinity groups as architectural practice, tracking how these groups collectively shaped and individually implemented *dweller control* as a guiding principle for re-centring planning around the final user as an emancipated, political subject.

Affinity – as an aspect of professional networks – is practically undocumented in architecture. Within architectural historiography, collaboration is often framed through biographical linkages, formal collectives, manifestos, or institutional or professional partnerships. Groups like Team 10 or CIAM, which documented proceedings, provided a clear and structured narrative.[1] In addition to these groups, authors working in duos – like Rogers and Piano, Sejima and Nishizawa, Herzorg and de Meuron – tend to receive most attention. Following an increased emphasis on the underdocumented role of the women in romantic and professional couples more recently, these are joined by the Aaltos, Eames', Smithsons and Krolls.[2] Nevertheless, in mainstream narratives, informal networks, friendships, and rivalries are portrayed through their anecdotal value. This focus can overlook a more subtle, yet potent form of cooperation: the affinity group. Anyone familiar with architecture's historiography will agree that loose affections, recognition of common interests, and informal cooperation among peers have had an impact over time. Here one such case is explored; one that is perhaps more indicative, as it concerns the architects who considered themselves anarchists, and who were conscious of the tactical value of affinity.

THE ANARCHIST ARCHITECTS

After the end of the Spanish Civil War, the anarchist movement started to revolve around autonomous direct action as a driving principle of the

1 i.e. Sigfried Giedion, Space, Time, and Architecture; the Growth of a New Tradition (Harvard University Press, 1954); Kenneth Frampton, Modern Architecture, with Internet Archive (Oxford University Press, 1980).
2 see Beatriz Colomina, 'Couplings', OASE, no. 51 (1999): 20–33.

'anarchist solutions' to problems of everyday life in cities. Colin Ward's *'anarchism in action'* was of pivotal influence, both in the British Isles and the Apennines.[3] In the 1940s Ward was at the centre of an emerging network of young architects and planners, who developed a critique of the large-scale management and massive bureaucracy probed by the possibility of *citizen-controlled urbanism*. Dweller control, developed explicitly by John F. Turner in the 1960s as the users' involvement in all stages of making the built environment, was evolving as an alternative to expert authority and state patronage.[4] The concept became fundamental among some influential figures of the community architecture movement, like Ward, Turner, Pat Crooke and De Carlo.[5] Over the span of several decades, they met and exchanged ideas, with a focus on intellectual cooperation, such as a triangle between Ward, Walter Segal and Brian Richardson, or the Italian circle, which – beyond De Carlo – included Ludovico Quaroni, Riccardo Mariani and Carlo Doglio. They never made a formal claim of the idea of 'dweller control', nor did they prefigure 'anarchist urbanism' through a collective, or academic network. Still, the diversity of ways in which they collaborated over the years, and the continuous, collective intellectual effort forming the undercurrent of their relevance as individuals, are informative about the importance of affinity group as a form of architectural practice.

Using rural retreats, postcard spams, anarchist and professional journals, translations and editorial efforts, invited lectures, summer-schools, and even large-scale events and occupations, these architects found ways to create theory in the heat of practice.[6] Importantly, they all aligned and detached from the group in various periods of their lives, depending on the recognition of prospect for the radical approaches to their professional practice. In the late 1960s for example, De Carlo loosened these ties and aligned more to formal architectural networks, only to revive his links to anarchism in 1980s. Another example is Ward's 'double career' of anarchist editor and TCPA's Education Unit director, allowing him to publish almost identical articles to two radically different audiences. In contrast to their internationally thriving careers, that implied compromises with academic and professional codes of the time, their imagination was continuously sparked by visits and letters, lengthy discussions of Kropotkin's work or handwritten scepticism for post-'68 community movement. The application of these discussions as practical experiments, such as Doglio's 'slingshot planning' and 'collective spatial meditation' in the 1960s Sicily, De Carlo's participative design in Matteotti residential project from the 1970s, or Ward's Do-it-yourself New Towns in Telford from the 1980s, present a truly diverse proliferation of radical ideas on production of space.[7]

3 Colin Ward, 'Anarchy in Action', (Allen and Unwin, 1973).
4 John F. C. Turner, Freedom to Build: Dweller Control of the Housing Process, with Internet Archive (Macmillan, 1972), http://archive.org/details/freedomtobuild0000unse.
5 Joshua Mardell, '"On How We Ought to Be Anarchists": Pat Crooke, John Turner, and Dweller-Oriented Architecture', Journal of Architecture (London, England) (Abingdon) 24, no. 6 (2019): 829–52, https://doi.org/10.1080/13602365.2019.1686409.
6 Elena Roccaro, '84/24 Anarchia Editoriale: Coreografie Del Dissenso Su Carta' (Master's Thesis, IUAV, 2024).
7 Stefania Proli, 'Carlo Doglio (1914–1995) and the Theory and Practice of Slingshot Planning', Planning Perspectives 32, no. 4 (2017): 533–56.

AUTONOMOUS THREAD IN DISCIPLINE'S GENEALOGY

The connection between anarchist thought, building craft and urban planning – though often neglected in canonical histories – has an established genealogy. It can be traced from nineteenth-century geographers Élisée Reclus and Piotr Kropotkin, who themselves operated in complex networks of ideological and professional affinity, through to pioneering planners Patrick Geddes and Lewis Mumford.[8] They synthesised the territorial models of anarchist decentralism into a regional planning tradition and later influenced the Italian territorial school of Alberto Magnaghi and Carlo Doglio.[9] For all of them, an integrated urban-rural landscape governed as a decentralised 'agro-industrial symbiosis' and run by variety of social bodies like communes, cooperatives and municipal institutions was only possible to be created through *dweller control* and various *grassroots municipal policies*. *Vernacular building* and sociable labour adapted from the Arts and Crafts' radical thread of William Morris and William R. Lethaby were considered important input. This lineage found renewed vigour in the post-Second World War era, shifting from theoretical regionalism to direct action and autonomous organisation in the urban realm.[10] The younger anarchist architects viewed urban planning not as a tool of state control or capitalist forces, but as a potential 'revolutionary weapon' for grassroots social change.[11] This was not a monolithic theory but a shared ethos: the conviction that the built environment should be shaped by dweller control, empowering local communities and individuals to benefit from their *autonomy* and *self-reliance*.

A NETWORK OF AFFINITY: THE ANGLO-ITALIAN NODE

The collaboration between British and Italian advocates of dweller-control is a continuous dialogue of at least fifty-five years long. The connection began on the pages of the London-based anarchist journal *Freedom*, founded by Kropotkin. The year 1948 can be seen as the 'melting-pot' period for these ideas. Turner, then a student, published his first article, 'The Work of Patrick Geddes', after being directed to Ward, the journal's editor, by a London bookseller.[12] In the same year, Ward published article by Italian architecture student and active anarchist, De Carlo. Originally published in the journal *Vólonta* as *'Il problema della casa'* (April 1948), Ward translated it as a two-part piece, '*The Housing Problem in Italy'* (June 1948) and '*The*

8 Federico Ferretti, Anarchy and Geography: Reclus and Kropotkin in the UK (Routledge, 2018).
9 See for example Federico Ferretti, 'The Origins of Regional Planning: The Pattern of the Valley Section of Patrick Geddes (1925)', *Mappemonde* 108, no. 4 (2012); Alberto Magnaghi, Il principio territoriale (Bollati Boringhieri, 2020).
10 José Luis Oyón and Jere Kuzmanić, 'The Anarchist Strain of Planning History: Pursuing Peter Hall's Cities of Tomorrow Thesis through the Geddes Connection, 1866–1976', in European Planning History in the 20th Century (Routledge, 2022).
11 Giancarlo De Carlo, 'The Housing Problem in Italy', *Freedom* 9, no. 12 (1948): 2–3.
12 John F. C. Turner, 'The Work of Patrick Geddes', *Freedom* 9, no. 1 (1948): 2.; Same summer, geographer George Woodcock published a series, 'On the Organic Society', linking Kropotkin and Reclus to Geddes and Mumford, thus reviving the regionalist link among anarchists.

Housing Problem and Planning' (June 1948).[13] De Carlo, who got connected to Ward through Anglo-Italian anarchist circles around Vernon Richards and Marie-Louise Berneri, summarises in the article the speech he gave at the second meeting of Italian anarchists in Canosa di Puglia in February 1948. He went with sociologist and planner Carlo Doglio, his comrade from partisan unit and housemate in affinity group that included their partners and several other figures active in the clandestine movement in Milano.[14] In his speech, De Carlo outlined dweller control as an architectural principle and declares that: 'Urban planning can become a revolutionary weapon if we succeed in rescuing it from the blind monopoly of authority and making it a communal organ of research and investigation into the real problems of social life. (…) If we develop a profound knowledge and understanding of local problems, and work out the technical means of solving them, and then vigilantly and actively see that these plans are put into effect – then town and country planning can be made a most effective instrument of collective direct action'.[15]

This printed exchange encouraged personal encounters. Ward recalled a formative 1952 trip to Italy: 'In Milan I met Giancarlo de Carlo and followed him to Venice, where by chance, he was addressing a group of architectural students which included John Turner, Pat Crooke and others from the AA School. The occasion has stayed in my mind simply because, in retrospect, we discussed the very issues that have preoccupied us ever since: how to change the way in which housing and planning issues are perceived, how to shift the initiative in planning from the bureaucrat to the citizen, how to shift that in housing from passive consumption to active involvement.[16] The bond was strengthened when Doglio moved to London in 1955, with his first address being Ward's house on Ellerby Street.[17] This period affirmed the Anglo-Italian connection, with Ward subsequently writing on Doglio and Danilo Dolci's municipalist experiments in Sicily and De Carlo's evolving participatory practices.

Doglio would publish several works re-examining Howard and Geddes. A book based on these texts, *L'equivoco della città giardino,* became a classic of Italian planning literature.[18] Doglio, Mariani, and De Carlo launched the journal *Spazio e società*, to which Turner would contribute in 1978 and 1980, and Colin Ward in 1978, 1979 and 1997.[19] The journal was among the most important Italian periodicals in architectural history. Still, *the de facto* primary medium for their collaboration were the anarchist periodicals. English *Freedom, Anarchy* (edited by Ward in the 1960s), and *Raven*, or Italian journals, like *Vólonta,* were transnational hubs with culminating activity between the 1960s and 1990s. The 1989 issue *La idea di abitare (volume 43, issue 1–2) of Volontà* for instance, includes articles by Ward, De Carlo, Peter Hall, Brian Richardson, and Turner. The 1992 issue (volume 46, issue 4), *Geografia senza confini*, juxtaposes Ward's with Kropotkin and Reclus' texts on the geography of regions and industrial cities. The 1995 edition (volume 49, issue 2–3), *Città è nuda*, brings together De Carlo, Doglio, Ward, and Alberto Magnaghi to present new perspectives on city as an anarchist subject.[20]

Beyond print, affinity was nurtured through organised visits and events, using formal academic or professional pretexts for deeper, informal exchanges. International conferences, like the one at the IUAV in Venice in September 1979, hosting Leopold Kohr, Bookchin, Doglio, and Turner, or the one on self-built housing in Rimini in 1980, with Doglio, Turner, De Carlo, and Ivan Illich, provided a platform for this. The zenith of this activity was the 1984 International Anarchist Gathering in Venice, a large-scale event that – aside from Bookchin and Cornelius Castoriadis – included a British delegation with Colin and Harriet Ward, David Koven and Phillip Sansom, transforming the city into a temporary autonomous experimentation on anarchist urban discourse. In 1988, 1997 and 2002, the editorial *Eléuthera* organised Ward's trips to Italy to promote his books. He met De Carlo in the basement of Utopia bookshop in Milan during the former, it being their last encounter after fifty-four years of friendship.[21] Articles, special issues, and public lectures would follow all these visits. Finally, the most compelling evidence for the intentionality of this network lies in the personal correspondence, preserved in archives from De Carlo's in IUAV in Venice, Doglio's in BLAB in Castel Bolognese, to Ward's in IISH in Amsterdam, and Turner's archive in Barcelona's Chamber of Architects.

The impact of this informal network is expressed in the remarkable diversity of practical projects its members generated. In Italy, De Carlo applied these principles in the Matteotti neighbourhood in Terni.[22] The extensive participative design process with the future residents resulted in two hundred and fifty-four flats with collaboratively planned services and green areas. Doglio implemented his belief that 'L'urbanistica è anarchia' through regional planning initiatives and collaborations with Dolci in Sicily, organising peasants through a form of 'collective planning' and non-violent direct action to claim communal works and agricultural reform.[23] In the United Kingdom, Colin Ward tirelessly advocated for Do-It-Yourself New Towns, tenant cooperatives, self-build initiatives, and squatting as legitimate forms of dweller control, criticising the UK's bureaucratic housing system.[24] Turner, applying the principle to the global South, used self-built housing in Peru to argue that autonomy and

13 Giancarlo De Carlo, 'The Housing Problem in Italy', *Freedom* 9, no. 12 (1948): 2–3.
14 Alberto Franchini, Il Villaggio Matteotti a Terni : Giancarlo De Carlo e l'abitare Collettivo (L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2020).
15 De Carlo, 'The Housing Problem in Italy', (1948): 2.
16 Colin Ward, Housing: An Anarchist Approach (Freedom Press, 1976), 11.
17 Details of Doglio's life with De Carlo as well as Doglio and Ward's friendship can be found in the correspondence among the three in Colin Ward papers in Amsterdam's International Institute of Social History and in Doglio's archive in Bibilioteca Libertaria Armando Borghi in Castel Bolognese, Italy. Both are consulted by the author between 2023 and 2025.
18 Carlo Doglio, L'equivoco della città giardino (RL edizioni, 1953).
19 Franco Bunčuga and Giancarlo De Carlo, Conversazioni Su Architettura e Libertà (Eleúthera, 2000).
20 Dario Bernardi and Luciano Lanza, 'Cinquant'anni di Volontà Indici 1946–1996 a cura di Dario Bernardi e Luciano Lanza', Elèuthera, n.d.
21 Based on correspondence and photos from Ward´s personal archive in Debenham, UK. Consulted in 2022.
22 Franchini, Il Villaggio Matteotti a Terni : Giancarlo De Carlo e l'abitare Collettivo.
23 Stefania Proli, 'Carlo Doglio (1914–1995) and the Theory and Practice of Slingshot Planning', *Planning Perspectives* 32, no. 4 (2017): 533–56.
24 Peter Hall and Colin Ward, Sociable Cities: The Legacy of Ebenezer Howard (J. Wiley, 1998).

self-management in urban development were not signs of ‘underdevelopment’ but the seeds of an alternative to state and market provision.[25]

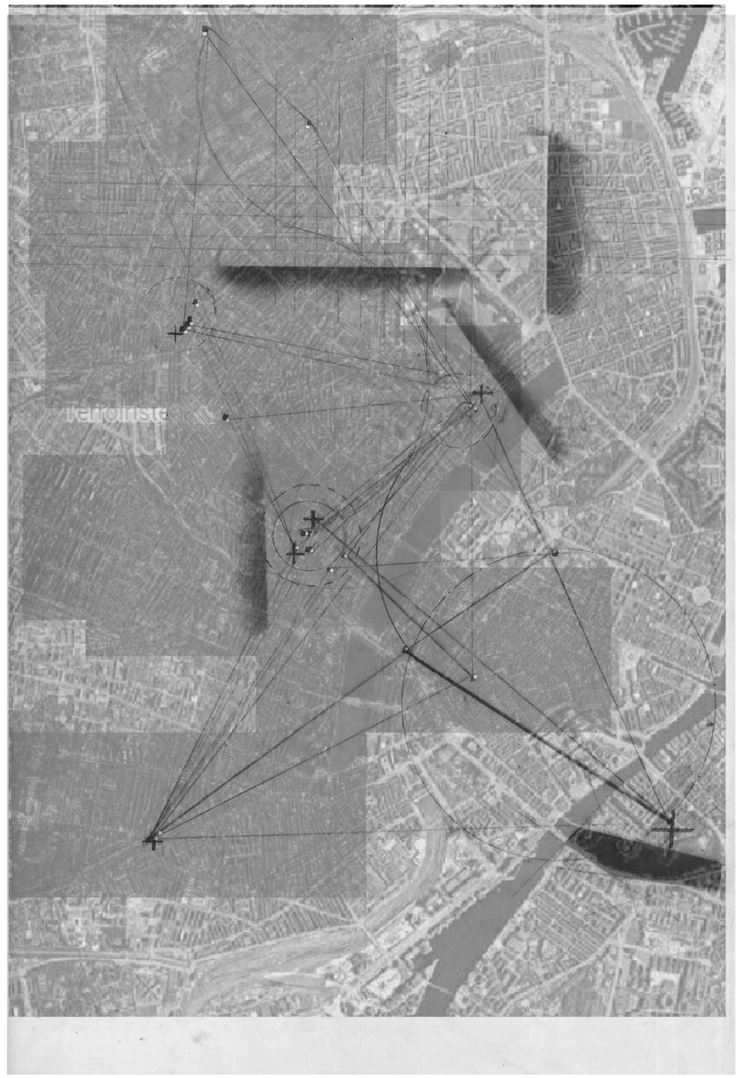
CONCLUSION

What then makes the affinity group different from other forms of collaboration in architecture, following the example of this — as Italian circle member Rosella di Leo calls it — affinity network?

Affinity, often diminished and unnoticed in historical accounts, is a potent factor of sociability based on emotional connection and shared ideological conviction rather than fixed identificatory markers. It establishes social care as a root of emotional care, often being practiced based on recognition of common ideological, religious, cultural values that overcome particularities in other parts of inter-personal (mis)recognition, existing ‘only through conscious, committed, and voluntary participation’.[26] In the historiography of architecture, collaboration is often framed through formal interactions where role of recognition is externally aimed. The architects discussed here, like De Carlo, also active in CIAM and Team 10, moved between these formal networks and their own ideology-shaped circles. Their primary ‘affinity’ was a shared belief in autonomous action as a revolutionary principle that, in the built environment, required dweller control. They differed in their aim, that changed the way of operating: a conscious preference for informal, personal, and often tactical exchanges that allowed internal recognition and development of collective theory for the individual practice.

From the first post-war exchanges in *Freedom* to the final meetings between Ward and De Carlo in a Milano in the early 2000s, this transnational collaboration sustained a conversation. Never giving their band a name, they cultivated a shared ideological field remixing formal and informal means. The scope of these collaborations would not fit the paper’s format, but there is sufficient evidence of a coordinated intellectual project. Finally, the recognition of some of these figures in a wider architectural milieu is undoubtedly a consequence of individual skills, but the contemporary relevance of their projects is a result of the collective effort.

25 Kathrin Golda-Pongratz, ‘John FC Turner (1927–2023)’, *The Architectural Review*, January 2021.
26 Kirstin Hotelling and Alexandra Schulteis, ‘Affinity, Collaboration, and the Politics of Classroom Speaking’, *Feminist Teacher* 11, no. 2 (1997), 1.



Map compiled from oral-history interviews (2022); locations are selectively generalised for privacy. Courtesy of the author.

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Archipelagos of Appropriation: Squatting and the Dissemination of Spatial Knowledge

CONTESTED SPACES, DISPERSED ARCHIVES, ENDURING NETWORKS

In June 2013, at Art Basel, Japanese artist Tadashi Kawamata erected Favela Caféa cluster of makeshift huts recalling the aesthetics of Brazilian informal settlements. On opening day, photographs of champagne-sipping collectors framed against stylised poverty sparked immediate backlash. Within hours, the site was reappropriated by protesters: local squatting networks (notably *Basel wird besetzt*), Brazilian migrants, and — allegedly — even some of the builders who had assisted Kawamata. They erected additional shacks, unfurled banners reading 'Respect Favelas', and collectively reclaimed the square as a contested site — until Swiss police responded with tear gas, rubber bullets, and mass eviction.[1]A decade on, the protest lingers only in fragments while official images remain. The structures erected by the protesters are absent from any archive at all. What remains visible is the artwork, not the contestation it provoked.

Starting from that afterimage, this paper probes the networks that rendered the counter-occupation possible and thinkable, asking who produces spatial knowledge, which archives persist or vanish, and how illegitimated, informal, or criminalised practices consolidate as networked architectures of meaning. These questions are increasingly central to architectural research. In recent years, scholarship has expanded what is considered 'spatial knowledge' — from architectures of appropriation and dispossession, to feminist and migration-oriented frameworks.[2]

At the core of this redefinition lies squatting: a spatial tactic, a political claim, and — crucially — an infrastructure of networking. By *infrastru*cture, the ensemble of supports that allow collective spatial practice to circulate across time and place is meant — teach-ins and workshops, agit-prop and street

1 Marco Krebs, '"Ich weiss um den provokativen Gehalt meiner Arbeiten": Interview mit Tadashi Kawamata', TagesWoche, 20 June 2013; Matthias Oppliger, 'Ein Eselchen auf dem Messeplatz', TagesWoche, 14 June 2013; Gabriel Vetter, 'Wem gehört Basel? Party in der Favela', WOZ Die Wochenzeitung, 20 June 2013; Matthias Oppliger and Hans-Jörg Walter, 'Video: Gewaltsame Polizeiräumung am Messeplatz', TagesWoche, 14 June 2013; 'Police vs. "Favela Café": Occupation at Art Basel (Switzerland)', ArtLeaks, 17 June 2013, https://art-leaks.org/2013/06/17/police-v-s-favela-cafe-occupation-at-art-basel-switzerland/ (accessed 28 August 2025). See also Freia Anders and Alexander Sedlmaier, eds., *Public Goods versus Economic Interests*, 0 ed. (Routledge, 2016),

2 René Boer et al., *Architecture of Appropriation: On Squatting as Spatial Practice* (Het Nieuwe Instituut, 2019); Gupta Huma, 'The Architecture of Dispossession: Migrant Sarifa Settlements and State-Building in Iraq' (MIT, 2020); Anooradha Iyer Siddiqi and Rachel Lee, 'On Collaborations: Feminist Architectural Histories of Migration', *Aggregate*, 2022, https://doi.org/10.53965/mdcb1441.

theatre, zines and manuals, community radio and encrypted channels, kitchens, childcare, legal aid. These infrastructures don't just move information; they stage publics, enact political time, and prototype alternative urbanities – assembling with, and through, the city to reinvent it.[3] These networks of spatial knowledge remain understudied in architectural history. Often deliberately opaque, they draw on what Édouard Glissant calls a right to opacity, resisting legibility to avoid surveillance and criminalisation.[4] Their documentation is precarious – scattered across personal archives, oral retellings, forgotten blogs, and encrypted channels. Meanwhile, architectural history continues to privilege the permanence of institutions, the authority of professional actors, and the global narratives of technocratic modernism.

Against this backdrop, the networks themselves are turned to – not merely as logistical frameworks or social formations, but as sites of epistemic significance. What follows is not a chronological account, but a cartography of entanglements: tracing how squatting practices generate, transmit, and protect spatial knowledge in ways that are fugitive yet enduring.

MAPPING ARCHIPELAGOS: A NONLINEAR HISTORY OF SQUATTING NETWORKS

This paper does not offer a linear history, but a cartography of exchange – mapping how squatted spaces and their associated networks circulate knowledge trans locally; across time, language, and media. The time frame serves not to fix a chronology, but to indicate how different formats of networking – tactical, affective, infrastructural – emerge, overlap, and reconfigure across decades.

Before squatting coalesced into an identifiable movement, spatial knowledge moved through informal, embodied routes – via social gatherings, student circles, grassroots cultural venues, and sheer proximity. Within cities, squatting-like arrangements often arose not from ideology but from necessity: housing shortages, deteriorating inner-city fabric, and shared cultural or educational milieus generated local solidarities. These were not only shelters, but sites of care, maintenance, and collective refusal.

Sofiegården in Copenhagen exemplifies this dynamic. Its early occupation was not planned as a political act, but emerged through neighbourhood ties, grassroots cultural events, and a shared desire to preserve it, amidst looming demolition under urban renewal schemes.[5] The story of Sofiegården was shared and circulated: a poster exhibition about the squat was shown not only in Copenhagen's Strøget but also at the Stadsmuseet in Stockholm, the Studenterhuset in Helsinki, and Askov Højskole in Denmark. Public lectures about Sofiegården were held at Båring and Askov Højskole, where residents of the squat often formed the speaker teams. These events transformed Sofiegården into more than a localised act of resistance: it became a mobile pedagogical node, a transmitter of situated spatial knowledge.

Transnationally, cultural exchange served as an unspoken connector across geographies. Touring theatre groups, jazz musicians, and performance collectives brought more than art. They carried tacit knowledge about inhabiting and transforming urban space. Another notable example is Zürich's Platte 27, whose founders were inspired by a jazz trip to Copenhagen in the late 1960s and returned home with the idea of appropriating a space for cultural experimentation and community-making.[6]

These encounters may have been incidental, but they were rooted in shared urban crises: rising rents, fractured communities, and disillusionment with top-down housing policy – amid widespread neglect of inner-city neighbourhoods, deteriorating housing stock, and white/middle-class flight to the suburbs.

From the 1970s through the early 1990s, squatting networks did not merely expand, they entangled. What began as dispersed housing struggles evolved into a network of networks: squatting as a practice that braided together otherwise separate movements – feminist, pacifist, anti-nuclear, anti-capitalist – while the squatted spaces themselves served as physical interfaces where those networks met, rehearsed tactics, and co-organised. Squatting became more than a shelter strategy: it was both a spatial tactic and a political language, used to claim space, assert rights, and rehearse alternative modes of collective life.

As squats multiplied across European cities, they became key nodal points in broader countercultural and activist ecologies. Activists travelled between Amsterdam, Berlin, Zurich, and Barcelona. Sometimes to offer support, other times to learn, document, or co-organise. Speaking tours, protest caravans, film exchanges, and DIY workshops created a dynamic landscape of trans local circulation. Squatting allowed for the transmission of spatial tactics and the deepening of solidarity across borders.

At the organisational level, new trans-European platforms emerged. Hubs such as the Interchurch Peace Council (IKV) in the Netherlands provided logistical and ideological support. Other actors – European Nuclear Disarmament (END), Intercontinental Peace Campaign (IPCC), Disabled Peoples' International (DPI) – though not focused on squatting, often intersected with its spatial practices, providing overlapping networks of decentralised coordination. Cultural production played an equally powerful role in these formations. Music festivals, like Jarocin in Poland and DIY

3 For *alternative/repairing infrastructures* in occupations, see Suraya Scheba and Nate Millington, "Occupations as Reparative Urban Infrastructure: Thinking with Cissie Gool House," *City* 27, no. 5–6 (2023): 715–739. For early European movement infrastructures and performative tactics (agitprop, happenings, teach-ins, street theatre) as world-making supports, see Alexander Vasudevan, *Metropolitan Preoccupations: The Spatial Politics of Squatting in Berlin* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2015), esp. chap. 3, pp. 63–64.

4 Édouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, trans. Betsy Wing (University of Michigan Press, 1997), esp. 'For Opacity'.

5 'Slumstormerne og Sofiegården', *Hovedstadshistorie*; University of Copenhagen, IGN, 'Stories from Sofiegården'.

6 Bazillus-Archiv (Zürich), and 'Platte 27', https://bazillusarchive.ch/stories/platte-27 (accessed 28 August 2025).

circuits in Yugoslavia, acted as temporary convergence zones, where aesthetic resistance mingled with political imagination. Symbols circulated too — like the Solidarność logo, later adapted by SOS Racisme in France — highlighting how visual and linguistic strategies travelled across causes and contexts.[7]

In many cities, squatted buildings became more than homes. They were convergence centres — hosting banner-making, skill-sharing, and campaign meetings, that refused state or market control. In this sense, architecture was never a neutral backdrop; it was an active participant in network formation.[8]

A telling example is Fort van Sjakoo in Amsterdam, which opened in 1977 and was legalised in 1988. Originating as a bookshop in a squatted live-work building on the route of a planned motorway through Nieuwmarkt, Fort van Sjakoo did more than just distributing manuals and pamphlets. It hosted information evenings, connected visitors to housing groups and action committees, and maintained a living archive of tactics, thereby stabilising the everyday infrastructures that sustained the city's squat scene. Here, architecture is not backdrop but agent: the space itself orchestrates encounters, stores memory, and conditions what can be learned and done.

This era of squatting was thus not only about occupation — it was about articulation: of movements, tactics, and knowledges. Squatting provided the spatial anchor for a wide array of struggles, forming the connective tissue that sustained an oppositional common across Europe.

With the emergence of the internet from the 1990s onward, squatting acquired new tools for networking, documentation, archiving, and solidarity. Forums like Squat!net and projects like Squatting Europe Kollective (SqEK) created multi-lingual archives, discussion boards, and live action alerts, expanding the range and speed of transnational coordination.[9]

This same period saw increased criminalisation, gentrification, and historiographical revision. As formal squat movements declined or became fragmented, new media terrains emerged for contesting representation and reclaiming memory. Counter-archives formed not just to document the past but to defend it.

An example is the Danish BZ movement. In response to the publication of a controversial book, which portrayed the BZ scene through a lens

7 Freia Anders and Alexander Sedlmaier, eds., *Public Goods versus Economic Interests*, (Routledge, 2016),; Knud Andresen and Bart Van Der Steen, eds., *A European Youth Revolt: European Perspectives on Youth Protest and Social Movements in the 1980s*, Palgrave Studies in the History of Social Movements (Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2016),; Bart Van der Steen et al., *The City Is Ours, Squatting and Autonomous Movements in Europe from the 1970s to the Present* (PM Press, 2014).

8 *Alexander Vasudevan, The Autonomous City: A History of Urban Squatting* (Verso, 2017), especially on 1970s–1990s entanglements with feminist, pacifist, anti-nuclear, and anti-capitalist movements; see the chapters on Amsterdam, Berlin, and Copenhagen

9 Squatting Europe Kollective (SqEK), The Squatters' Movement in Europe: Commons and Autonomy as Alternatives to Capitalism, ed. Claudio Cattaneo and Miguel A. Martínez (Pluto Press, 2014). Squat!net, 'About', https://en.squat.net/about/; maps.squat.net (SqEK-associated interactive city database), https://maps.squat.net/

of pathology and sensationalism, former activists reactivated dormant ties to build digital repositories and oral-history projects — re-producing spatial knowledge in the very act of contesting its erasure.[10] Here, photos, videos, zines, timelines, annotated maps, and legal toolkits crystallised tactics for future use. At the same time, the city itself operates as an archive and a memory apparatus, claiming authority by delimiting what can be remembered in public space: 'The city claims an authority over its territory, constructing limits, exclusions, and silences, but also possibilities'.[11]

Digital struggle folds back into urban governance: institutional actors command SEO, servers, and media partnerships, while squat archives depend on volunteer labour, fragile hosting, and broken links. Cyberspace, therefore, is not a neutral repository but a battleground where competing narratives of squatting — radical resistance, criminal trespass, subcultural nostalgia — collide, and where the endurance of insurgent spatial knowledge remains uneven and contingent.

NETWORKS AS SITES AND VEHICLES OF SPATIAL KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION

The first dynamic we traced, is the reciprocal relationship between spatial practices and the networks that sustain them. In squatting movements, networks do not merely support knowledge, they produce it. To occupy space is to produce situated knowledge; to maintain space is to build infrastructures of care; to protect space is to mobilise collective memory and legal acumen; and even when space is lost, networks remain as the afterlives of space, acting as safety nets, storekeepers, and pedagogical platforms.

Following Henri Lefebvre's notion of lived space and Michel de Certeau's spatial practices, we might say that: to maintain a space is to make a network; to inhabit a space is to expand it; to lose a space is not to lose the network.[12]

The reciprocity between network and knowledge means that squatting is never just about shelter — it is about the invention of fugitive infrastructures: ephemeral, mobile, and often invisible, but no less architectural. These knowledge formations are not individualist, nor authored by architects in the modernist sense. They are collectively composed through refusal, repair, and interdependence.

In this sense, squatting networks challenge the heroic narrative of modern architecture. Their spatial knowledge is not formed within institutions, but against, despite, or outside them — through occupations, negotiations,

10 Peter Øvig Knudsen, *BZ: Du har ikke en chance — tag den! Et familiedrama* (Gyldendal, 2016);

11 Burgum, S. (2020). This City Is An Archive: Squatting History and Urban Authority. Journal of Urban History, 48(3), 504–522. https://doi-org.ep.fjernadgang.kb.dk/10.1177/0096144220955165 (Original work published 2022)

12 Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Blackwell, 1991); Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (University of California Press, 1984).

and fugitive alliances. This is not merely a tactic of survival, but a political epistemology: architecture not as artefact, but as strategy.

FRONTSTAGE AND BACKSTAGE: THE POLITICS OF OPACITY AND GENEROUS ILLEGIBILITY

As urban geographers and theorists like Ananya Roy and Alex Vasudevan have shown, Squatting is often played out through dual registers: what might be called the 'frontstage' and the 'backstage'.[13]

On the front stage, networks often appear illegible – deliberately so. Following thinkers like Édouard Glissant, Saidiya Hartman, and Fred Moten, this opacity may be understood not as a deficiency, but as a form of protection: an epistemological shield that shelters insurgent worlds from extraction, commodification, or repression.

Yet, behind this protective opacity, the backstage is dense with infrastructural labour. Knowledge circulates: how to locate disused buildings, gather materials, organise collective renovations, navigate legal loopholes, and run kitchens, childcare, or libraries. This internal knowledge is often coded, multilingual, and transdisciplinary, transmitted through embodied practice, oral memory, informal gatherings, and affective ties. The network mobilises every available medium: hand-drawn maps, encrypted chats, zines, blogs, shared toolkits, parties.

There is, in other words, a generous illegibility at work. The front protects through strategic opacity; the back constructs and educates through situated, often ephemeral, forms of transmission.

The tension arises when dominant institutional frameworks – particularly archival ones – insist on clarity, classification, and extractive documentation. In doing so, they risk misreading or erasing the very backstage practices that sustain squatting as a spatial, social, and epistemic form. This duality also raises methodological and ethical challenges for researchers: how to engage with informal archives without violating their opacity? These questions demand not only reflexivity, but new tactics of witnessing, narrating, and archiving.

ON ENDURANCE: NETWORKS AS HISTORICAL AGENTS IN THE PRESENT

The third insight returns us to where we began – with a protest that disappeared from institutional record, but not from networked memory. What endures is not always the architecture, nor even the archive – but the networked capacity to mobilise, resist, remember. In the context of late capitalism, where even memory is monetised and narratives are rapidly institutionalised, the resilience of squatting networks becomes ever more crucial – not only as social movements, but as epistemic actors. They sustain a radically different model of architectural knowledge: one that refuses to centre ownership, profit, or professional authorship.

To squat is to refuse the regime of property.

To network is to assemble a different common of spatial knowledge. Despite demolition, criminalisation, or digital erasure, squatting endures – not just as a tactic, but as a world-making practice.

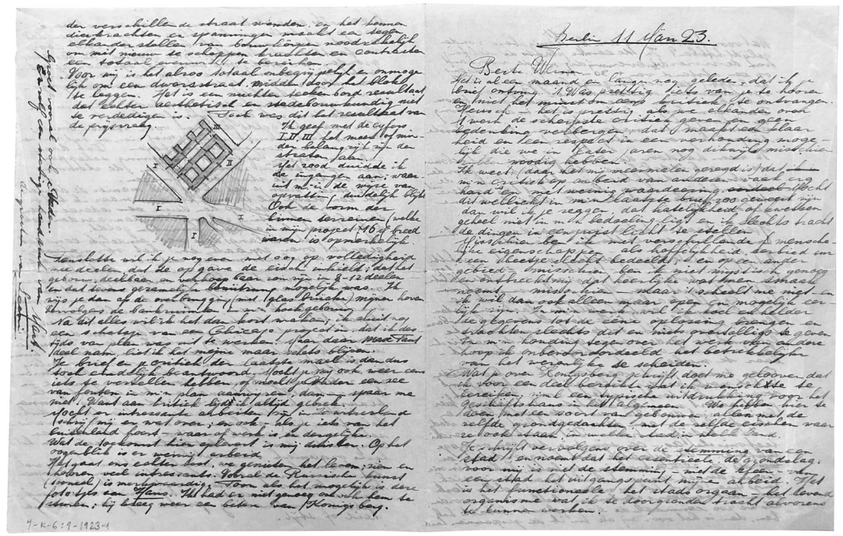
This paper does not seek to build another canon. It seeks to cartograph a set of discontinuous solidarities – what we might call epistemic archipelagos – that link past and present through dispersed resistance. These networks do not scale up into master narratives; they scale sideways into solidarity.

In tracing them, we also trace the limits of architectural historiography itself. Its discomfort with informality, its fetish for authorship, its deep unease with the unruly, and its reliance on institutions for memory.

Yet in the cracks of that edifice, these networks persist. Not just as subcultures, but as carriers of spatial knowledge, whose endurance is a call to imagine otherwise.

13 On 'frontstage/backstage': Vasudevan, *Autonomous City* (2023), 336; Nazima Kadir, *The Autonomous Life? Paradoxes of Hierarchy and Authority in the Squatters Movement in Amsterdam* (Manchester University Press, 2016);

Networks and Actors



Letter from Mart Stam to Werner Moser, Berlin, 11 March 1923. Courtesy of gta Archive, bequest Werner Moser, 4-K-6:9.

Ludo Groen (ETH Zurich)

The Friendship and Archives of Werner Moser and Mart Stam

It was on a September day in 1921, in the rooms of a stately home on the Kruiskade in Rotterdam, when two young draftsmen by the name of Mart Stam and Werner Moser, first met.[1] Eager to learn from the modern ideas emerging in the Netherlands, the young Swiss architect arrived in what was then still a brick-and-mortar city. ‘The best place you could possibly find,’ his friend Hans Schmidt had written him that summer, ‘is the office of Molière and Verhagen (…) [they] have a very artistic and free spirit that you will not find anywhere in Switzerland.’[2] Werner’s father, the notable professor and architect Karl Moser, must have endorsed his son’s adventure to the lowlands. ‘Travelling abroad is very necessary,’ father Moser noted, as many offices, including his own, struggled to make ends meet in the years after the First World War.[3] His long-time acquaintance Hendrik Petrus Berlage also spoke highly of the office of Granpré Molière, Verhagen & Kok in Rotterdam, calling Granpré Molière ‘one of our most promising young architects,’ and entrusting him with the development of Vreewijk, one of the first garden cities in the Netherlands.[4] That project was under construction when young Moser stood at the doorstep of the equally young and ambitious six-person architecture office headed by Granpré Molière. As the most junior staff member, in his first apprenticeship, Mart Stam might have even opened the door for Werner that day, or at least introduced him into the ins and outs of the office during his first weeks in Rotterdam. Sooner rather than later, Stam and Moser became friends, and together with Hans Schmidt (who worked then at the local office of Michiel Brinkman), they became known as the Three Musketeers.[5] Werner Moser would later admit in a letter to Granpré Molière that he ‘learned many essential things in Rotterdam, more unconsciously than consciously, under your intellectual guidance,’ even though his time in the office was limited to six months, when Granpré Molière was forced to let go some of his employees.[6]

1 On the office of Granpré Molière, Verhagen & Kok in Rotterdam see H. Bruins, “M.J. Granpré Molière. Architectuur en stedenbouw als beroep en als culturele opdracht in de 20ste eeuw,” thesis, University of Amsterdam, 2020, 139–41.

2 Schmidt had applied for a position there himself that year, but failed as the office had no work for him. See Ursula Suter, “Kritischer Werkkatalog,” in *Hans Schmidt 1938–1972. Architekt in Basel, Moskau, Berlin-Ost* (gta Verlag, 1993), 120.

3 Hubertus Adam, “In Holland: Karl Mosers sukzessive Annäherungen an das Neue Bauen,” in *Karl Moser, Architektur für eine neue Zeit 1880 bis 1936,* eds. Werner Oechslin and Sonja Hildebrand (gta Verlag, 2010), 219.

4 Bruins, “M.J. Granpré Molière,” 54. The acquaintance between Karl Moser and Hendrik Petrus Berlage dated back to their overlapping studies at ETH Zurich in the late 1880s, see Max van Rooy, *Heb ik dat gemaakt? De vormende jaren van H.P. Berlage, bouwmeester* (Prometheus, 2022), 95, 130–2. By the 1920s, both Moser and Berlage were father figures of a new generation of architects. Sigfried Giedion, when referring to Berlage’s lecture at the opening congress of CIAM said ‘one feels connected to the actual fathers, even if development continues.’ See Adam, “In Holland,” 229.

5 Sima Ingberman, *ABC: international constructivist architecture, 1922–1939* (MIT Press, 1994), 29.

6 Letter from Werner Moser to Granpré Molière, 21 October 1954. Nieuwe Instituut, GRAN1x1.9.

PAPER TRAILS

It is at this time that the written correspondence between the new friends Mart Stam and Werner Moser begins, which would continue and intensify for years. Stam first leaves for Berlin to work in the offices of Hans Poelzig and Max Taut, before moving to Switzerland to work first for Werner's father in Zurich, followed by a job at the office of Arnold Itten in Thun at the foot of the Swiss Alps, a half-day's travel away from Switzerland's intellectual centres at the time.[7] Werner, in turn, sets sail for Chicago, to take up a position in Frank Lloyd Wright's studio in his even more remote Taliesin. After their short-lived encounters in Rotterdam, in the following decade the friends never again lived in the same country, nor were they fluent in the same language (Stam kept writing Moser in Dutch until 1926, while by then, he had been living in German-speaking countries for four years). Yet, they kept up a prolific intellectual exchange, discussing and criticising each other's work remotely, establishing the avant-garde magazine *ABC*, together with Schmidt, Emil Roth and El Lissitzky, and at some point even establishing an office together. Such a detailed written record of their relationship would likely not have survived in the archives, had they lived in the same country.

Likewise, because Mart Stam consecutively lived and worked in the Netherlands, Switzerland, Germany and the Soviet Union between 1922 and 1934, he left behind a paper trail from Rotterdam to Zurich and from Frankfurt to Los Angeles.[8] When constantly on the move, living out of a few suitcases, one can only bring along very limited number of one's past paper records like letters and postcards, and has to leave behind bulky rolls of architectural drawings or models.[9] As a result, the letters from Mart Stam that have survived, are kept because Werner Moser received them, while vice versa, almost none of Moser's letters to Stam have been preserved. In addition, Stam's continued moving between political regimes and contexts meant that, for instance, 'after Hitler came to power, it was almost impossible to take urban design plans out of the Soviet Union for reasons of state security.'[10] On top of this, Mart Stam's eventful personal life, remarrying twice, further contributed to a fragmentation of his records. For instance, the estate of his second wife Lotte Stam-Beese kept at the Nieuwe Instituut includes a photograph with both Lotte and Mart on a steamboat on the Volga, while one half of the same photograph is cut off in the version

7 Biography based on Simone Rümmele, *Mart Stam* (Artemis & Winkler Verlag, 1991), 11; J. Christoph Bürkle, "Mart Stam – Wege zur Elementaren Architektur," in *Mart Stam: Eine Reise in die Schweiz 1923–1925,* ed. Werner Oechslin (Zurich: gta Verlag, 1991), 43–5; and Stef Jacobs, *Mart Stam. Dichter van staal en glas*, University of Amsterdam, 2016, 40–7.

8 The most substantial archival records pertaining to the scope of this paper are currently held by the Nieuwe Instituut (Rotterdam, the Netherlands), Deutsches Architektur Museum (Frankfurt, Germany), gta Archive (Zurich, Switzerland), and Getty Research Institute (Los Angeles, United States). The archive in Zurich concerns the bequests of Werner Moser, Karl Moser, and Arnold Itten, the archive in Rotterdam relates mainly to Stam's time in the Netherlands and his second wife Lotte Stam-Beese and the archive in Frankfurt is built from the estate of his third wife Olga Stam-Heller.

9 As Werner Möller described, Mart Stam's archive kept in Frankfurt 'consists of objects that could be taken from place to place, as well as those that Mart Stam and his third wife Olga considered worth keeping during their life together.' See Werner Möller's *Mart Stam. Architekt – Visionär – Gestalter* (Wasmuth, 1997), 10.

10 Möller, *Mart Stam,* 10.

that is kept in the estate that his third wife, Olga Stam-Heller, handed over to the Deutsches Architekturmuseum in Frankfurt.[11]

The result of all of these professional and personal travels is that, paradoxically, the well-connected architect Mart Stam left behind a rather disconnected archive. The proto-international architects Stam and Moser left behind historical records that are particularly local. Their eagerness to work across nations and cultures resulted in their legacy being isolated in various archives, each with their own archival management systems, metadata languages, access regimes, funding streams, heritage policies, and digitisation protocols. In turn, the monographs describing Mart Stam's legacy have been published in various countries and languages, with most of them using one of these archival bequests as a point of departure.[12] While these different cultural interpretations have enriched the scholarship on this enigmatic figure, they have also given rise to archival and knowledge gaps. For instance, some figures have been neglected in the writing of history, because their records are based elsewhere.

MACHINE LEARNING IN THE ARCHIVE

Today, more than hundred years after the friendship between Mart Stam and Werner Moser unfolded, these gaps can be addressed by connecting geographically disparate archives with each other through protocols such as Linked Open Data.[13] For such systems to be productive, archival materials should not only be digitised and shared with each other, but also indexed with rich, accurate levels of metadata, an incredibly labour- and resource-intensive task. Recently, a dozen machine learning tools have been developed to assist archivists with this process.[14] Taking the letters between Stam and Moser as case study, this paper will experiment with a few of these tools, evaluate their accuracy and consider how they could advance historical academic research in the near future. The corpus for this investigation are around fifty-four letters currently held in archives in Rotterdam, Frankfurt and Zurich, which together provide evidence of how the private and professional friendship between both figures emerged, developed, professionalised, sustained and finally watered down.

The first step in bringing order to this disparate correspondence is to digitise the handwritten records and transcribe them using handwritten

11 As pointed out in Möller, *Mart Stam*, 11.

12 Werner Oechslin's edited volume *Mart Stam: Eine Reise in die Schweiz 1923–1925* (gta Verlag, 1991) departed from the gta Archive and Werner Möller's *Mart Stam. Architekt – Visionär – Gestalter* (Wasmuth, 1997) from the DAM archive. A more recent dissertation by Stef Jacobs draws from all these archives, see Jacobs, *Mart Stam*, 2016.

13 The Nieuwe Instituut is currently experimenting with linked open data and other ways of visualising and narrating the collection through the project 'The Other Interface,' see https://nieuweinstituut.nl/en/articles/other-interface-ontwerp-nieuw-collectieplatform

14 For a discussion of the various applications of machine-learning in archives see Jonas Arnold, Martin Lüpold, Lorenz Theilkäs, and Lambert Kansy, "Machine learning in the archive: depth indexing in the service of access to archives," *Whitepaper* (June 2024).

text recognition (HTR) software.[15] While with printed documents high levels of accuracy can be achieved without machine learning, for recognising handwritten texts it is worth training a model on a person's specific handwriting.[16] In order to do so, the first twenty pages of Stam and Moser's letters were transcribed accurately by myself, and used as training data for the open-source model, improving its accuracy significantly to approximately ninety-one per cent. Using the new model, the full batch of fifty-four letters was transcribed and exported as text files.

The next step is to enrich their metadata, by instructing the application DataSheep to extract this content from the original files, and assign to each letter a creation date, place (city/country) sender, place (city/country) receiver, name sender, mentioned other people, and a summary of the discussed content. The application uses the large language model of ChatGPT to compensate for the often incomplete data on the letters. For instance, people are referred to by only their first name (e.g. Mart Stam's first wife, 'Leni,' and Werner's sister, Herta), only by their second name (e.g. Roth, which can lead to confusion between the cousins, Emil and Alfred Roth), or as a spouse, child, or friend (e.g. Werner Moser's wife, Silva Moser-Schindler). Also designations of places often lack the specific names of cities and countries, and include spelling mistakes, which the application can correct (e.g. Thun is automatically labelled as a town in Switzerland).

In addition to extracting metadata, Datasheep can provide useful summaries of documents or highlight themes such as 'work approach,' 'formulating and outlining ideas,' or 'critique of formal approaches.' This process is called automated depth-indexing and can generate a greater quantity of, and more precise keywords than a regular Control-F search, as some topics may be referred to only implicitly, through words that contain spelling mistakes, or that are no longer in use today.[17] In the context of an architecture archive, such as that of the Nieuwe Instituut, or, more specifically, the bequests of all CIAM members, a separate indexation model could be trained on specific themes, terms and names of people.[18] This model can then be used to generate keywords with a much higher level of precision and completeness of keywords when also applied to the digitised items of other architects.[19]

15 There are a dozen software packages around which can perform this, and for this occasion, the artificial intelligence-powered Transkribus is used, a tool developed during two EU-funded research projects.

16 Tobias Hodel, "Konsequenzen der Handschriftenerkennung und des maschinellen Lernens für die Geschichtswissenschaft. Anwendung, Einordnung und Methodenkritik," *Historische Zeitschrift* 316 (2023): 151–80.

17 Another technique can be to make use of lexicon expansion systems, as illustrated by Giovanni Colavizza in the case of a study of the digitised inheritance records of the Dutch East India Company. See Giovanni Colavizza, "Using AI to broaden access to historical archives," lecture Department of Digital Humanities of King's College London, 21 November 2023. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DmI4tww9_O4

18 For instance, by making use of more advanced depth-indexation software, such as the open-access application Annif, developed by the National Library of Finland. See Osma Suominen, "Annif: DIY automated subject indexing using multiple algorithms," *LIBER Quarterly: The Journal of the Association of European Research Libraries* 29 (2019): 1–25. For a reflection on an experiment with Annif at the KB, National Library of the Netherlands, see C. Annemieke Romein, Sara Veldhoen, Michel de Gruijter, "The Datafication of Early Modern Ordinances," *DH Benelux Journal* 2 (2020), http://dx.doi.org/10.17613/80sx-m116

19 An example of an unexpected keyword generated through the exercise was "masculinity," which can be related to Mart Stam's remark that in the forthcoming age of functionalism, "the effeminate coquetry with forms will be followed by the beauty and clarity of masculine thinking." Letter from Mart Stam to Werner Moser, 17 May 1924. gta Archive, bequest Werner Moser, 4-K-6:9. Translation by Deepl Translate.

For this, it is necessary not only to exchange digitised materials among different archives, but also to share the training data and machine learning models, so that algorithms transcribing handwriting, enriching metadata, and indexing keywords can become more precise, and can reconnect the materials and people that were once so intertwined.[20]

RECONSTRUCTING NETWORKS OF EXCHANGE

On 8 August 1928, two months after Mart Stam and Werner Moser reunited in-person at the inaugural meeting of the International Congresses of Modern Architecture (CIAM) at Château de la Sarraz in Switzerland, Stam wrote from Rotterdam to Moser and his wife Silva in Zurich:

> As you may have heard from Herta or your father, we are moving to Frankfurt. I have a substantial commission there for the time being and have been promised more for the future (…) I would like to ask you if you could perhaps assist me for a few months. I would very much like that, as I believe we could achieve much more with this task – precisely through the continuous exchange of ideas and discussing the possibilities together.[21]

The two friends immediately put the international collaboration propagated at Château de la Sarraz into practice by founding *Stam und Moser Architekten* for a housing project at Hellerhof, part of Ernest May's (another CIAM-member) initiative for a new Frankfurt. In many ways, the project embodied the friendship between Stam and Moser. It made visible the influences of Granpré Molière's urban planning ideas like the north-south orientation and integration of green strips and terraced housing.[22] But also, because the design process was emblematic of their remote intellectual exchange. While Moser remained based in Zurich, the project was developed through postal correspondence of which around forty-three letters which are now in archives in Frankfurt, Zurich, and Rotterdam.

But there's something else remarkable about above letter excerpt. When automatically indexed, the application also connected Herta Moser, Werner's sister, to the project in Frankfurt. Stam's phrasing, 'as you may have heard from Herta or your father,' suggests that not only Karl Moser, but also Herta Moser was a contact point between the two friends.[23] This relation started in 1923, upon his arrival in Zurich, when Mart Stam started his letter to Werner

20 Scholars previously pointed towards the importance of mapping the network of CIAM across archives, see for instance Tamara Bjažić Klarin and Nikola Bojić, "CIAM Network Visualisation – Detecting Ideological Ruptures in the CIAM Discourse," in *Modern and Contemporary Artists' Networks. An Inquiry into Digital History of Art and Architecture*, edited by Ljiljana Kolešnik and Sanja Horvatinčić (Institute of Art History, 2018), 64–82.

21 Letter from Mart Stam to Werner Moser, August 8, 1928. gta Archive, bequest Werner Moser, 4-K-6:9. Translation by Deepl Translate.

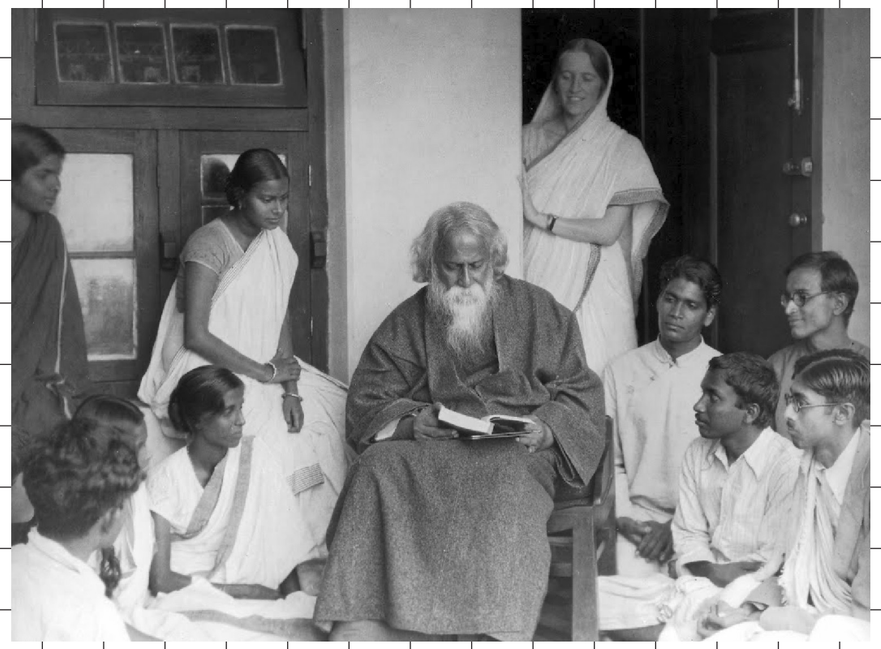
22 For the influence of Granpré Molière on Hellerhof, see Bruins, "M.J. Granpré Molière," 16.

23 Letter from Mart Stam to Werner Moser, August 8, 1928. gta Archive, bequest Werner Moser, 4-K-6:9. Translation by Deepl Translate.

saying ‘this time, I would like to accompany Herta’s letter with something of my own.’[24] A few weeks later, father Moser writes to his daughter-in-law Silva ‘you can tell your husband that the Dutchman [Stam] is comfortable and happy in our home,’ and that ‘Herta found an understanding friend in Ms. [Leni] Stam.’[25] While Moser’s other daughter, Doris, is not often mentioned in the letters, Herta’s name keeps reappearing. In the summer of 1928, Karl and Herta made an architectural tour to the Netherlands, meeting up with Stam, Berlage, and Cornelis van Eesteren while visiting projects like J.J.P. Oud’s housing in Hoek van Holland.[26] That year father and daughter also visited the Bauhaus in Dessau together, and according to their host Hans Wittwer, Herta spoke enthusiastically to him about Le Corbusier.[27] Herta’s liking for Le Corbusier’s work also becomes clear from an earlier letter of Werner to his father, in which he admits that he began to ‘better like Corbusier, you can tell Herta that I became characterless.’[28] And when Stam shared with Werner a draft list of plants for the gardens of Hellerhof in Frankfurt, he wrote that ‘it would be very important to me that you go through everything once with Silva and Herta, as I feel very uncertain with all these Latin names.’[29]

Despite these archival traces, in the hefty monographs and anthologies written in the past decades about these figures, there is hardly any mention of Herta.[30] The tools discussed in this paper can, by more precisely recognising handwriting and indexing mentioned people, provide more insight into her role (and that of others), especially when the corpus would be scaled up to include the correspondence of more CIAM-protagonists. A hundred years after these letters were penned, linking the networks back to each other with the help of machine learning tools, can help researchers around the world to shed light on other narratives and figures that, until now were overseen, or even neglected, in the writings of history.

24 Letter from Mart Stam to Werner Moser, Zurich, November 26, 1923. gta Archive, bequest Werner Moser, 4-K-6:9. Translation by Deepl Translate.
25 Letter from Karl Moser to Silva Moser-Schindler, Zurich, December 15, 1923. gta Archive, bequest Werner Moser. Translation by Deepl Translate.
26 Werner Oechslin and Sonja Hildebrand, *Karl Moser,* 407, 410.
27 Letter from Hans Wittwer to Jula Wittwer-Rieder, from Dessau, 5 April 1928. gta Archive, bequest Hans Wittwer, 35-K-7-8.
28 Letter from Werner Moser to Karl Moser from Chicago, February 8, 1924. gta Archive, bequest Werner Moser. Translation by Deepl Translate.
29 Letter from Mart Stam to Werner Moser, February 25, 1929. gta Archive, bequest Werner Moser, 4-K-6:9. Translation by Deepl Translate.
30 The edited volume devoted to the legacy of Karl Moser, only mentions Herta as travel companion during Karl Moser’s second trip to the Netherlands in the summer of 1928, see Werner Oechslin and Sonja Hildebrand, *Karl Moser,* 407, 410. Also the monograph of Haefeli Moser Steiger makes no mention of Herta Moser, see Sonja Hildebrand, Bruno Maurer, Werner Oechslin, eds, *Haefeli Moser Steiger Die Architekten der Schweizer Moderne* (gta Verlag, 2007).



Nobel Prize winning (1913) Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore reading to others, 1925. Courtesy of the Mansell collection of LIFE Photo(s).

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Intertwined Avant-Gardes: Bauhaus Dialogues with Tagore, Shantiniketan, and Indian Modernism

RABINDRANATH TAGORE AND HIS NETWORKS

Within the emergent histories of transnational knowledge exchanges in the early decades of the twentieth century, the Bauhaus served as an unprecedented space-time continuum connecting Germany with pre–independence India. Yet the dissemination of its influence and concomitant networks between the First and Second World Wars has remained only partially researched. How did these networks connect vastly differing cultural worlds, combining global and local modalities?

This paper positions the Indian polymath Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941) as agential to the ideation of a rich, two-way, cross-cultural dialogue in trans-continental space. Tagore or *Gurudev* (revered teacher) as he was endearingly addressed by students and followers, remains best known to the Anglophone and European worlds as the 1913 Nobel Laureate for his *Gitanjali* poetry collection. Beyond this, he also established the Visva-Bharati University in 1921 at Shantiniketan in West Bengal, India. As an experimental institution in colonial India, Shantiniketan combined tradition and modernity, innovatively positioning India's rich history alongside that of Europe. In Tagore's own description, this was a place 'where the world makes home in a single nest'.[1] Within this purview, we suggest that Tagore articulated a subaltern voice that provoked a global design discourse, spawning new institutions, ideologies and networks. In effect, the Bauhaus dialogues with Tagore, Shantiniketan, and Indian Modernism were intertwined avant-gardes – two distant yet different worlds pushing their boundaries and expressions.

Framing the interactions of the two cultural worlds, two events highlighted the trans-continental networks of exchange supported by Tagore's interlocutors. The first was a landmark exhibition held at Calcutta (now Kolkata) in 1922 which underscored Tagore's activist building on modernist practices at Shantiniketan. As the first ever presentation of works from the Bengal School alongside Bauhaus exemplars, while this forum established future trajectories for deeper intercultural engagements, it also catalysed Tagore's own prolific artistic journey, which began in 1928. Thereafter, exhibitions

1 "Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore: The Founder of Visva-Bharati," Visva-Bharati, accessed September 30, 2025, https://www.visvabharati.ac.in/RabindranathTagore.html

of Tagore's paintings across Europe exemplified the artistic exchanges between distant geographies, mutually shaping and shared modernities.

Following up on this Calcutta exhibition, the Bauhaus also mounted its first large-scale exhibition in Weimar in 1923, establishing a definitive meeting place for the international avant-garde.[2] While the artworks shown in Calcutta had been returned to Germany, these were not displayed as a distinct segment in Weimar. Archival evidence and the official catalogue confirm that the 1923 Weimar exhibition focused on Bauhaus works and European – American modern architecture, with no Indian artists formally included.[3] Instead, Tagore's presence was felt indirectly – through his prior visit to Weimar in 1921, his purchase of a Bauhaus student work in Calcutta, and the broader awareness of the Bauhaus's Indian outreach. In parallel, however, 1923 also saw exhibitions of modern Indian art in Berlin and Hamburg, including works by Gaganendranath Tagore (Rabindranath Tagore's nephew and an acclaimed artist in his own right), which extended the dialogue to German audiences, albeit outside Weimar.[4]

TAGORE & SHANTINIKETAN

Tagore's Shantiniketan actively engaged with pre-independence Indian modernity – a 'global modernity' that was still a colonial modernity and one that had to be contested. Scholars note that this 'global modernity' accelerated with the consolidation of British rule in the nineteenth century.[5] Yet this 'modernity' was not identical to the paradigm-shifting, radical formalist language of modernism that artists like Jamini Roy would rework as tools of anti-colonial cultural critique by the 1920s.[6] Building on Partha Mitter account and naming the interlocutor explicitly, Elise Coquereau frames 'modernity' as the socio-political horizon towards which 'modernism' as an aesthetic formation is directed – with plural, non-linear relations between them in different world contexts.[7] In this sense, 'modernity' in India operated as a double reflection – on indigenous values and on responses to globally circulating forms – rather than a simple importation of European norms.[8]

Within this context, Tagore's originality lay in refusing both extremes: neither a totalising Westernist 'modernisation' that accepted colonial institutions, nor a nativist rejection of the West in the name of a sealed nationalism. As the 1940s approached, and independence drew nearer, these tensions intensified; for Tagore, 'true modernism' was best realised through a harmonious encounter between East and West, rather than the mere imitation of Western forms.

Tagore and Shantiniketan, therefore, functioned as counter-exemplars, moving beyond the 'virtual,' mediated exchanges that typically positioned colonial modernity against indigenous traditions in early twentieth-century India. In Anshuman Dasgupta's words, Shantiniketan was removed from the *gumor* or seeming suffocation of colonial culture and its oppressive play of power emanating from institutions and their insidious networks.[9] For one, the design of pedagogical experiments in Shantiniketan spaces embodied a diverse set of traditions within a modernist framework, while providing for maximum interactivity between indoor and outdoor spaces. Ecological and humanistic philosophy also shaped Shantiniketan's educational pedagogy, whereby methods closely dialogued with nature. Examples included open-air classes at the school for primary and secondary education (Patha Bhavana, 1901); the Institute of Rural Reconstruction (Sriniketan, 1922) enabling community-based, hands-on learning; and seasonal festivals such as *Briksharopana* (tree-planting) and *Halakarshana* (ploughing) used as environmental pedagogy.[10]

The intertwined *shishu-sharodiya* bond between child and nature also provided a model that inspired later experimental schools across India, and even if indirectly, embedded Tagore's broad educational vision within a larger discourse on cultural revival.[11] Uma Dasgupta suggests that Tagore may be viewed as the "builder of a national ideology for cultural revival that would transcend [the narrow definitions of] nationalism", while Calcutta could be identified as the locus of intersection between the local and global, the traditional and modern, the colonial and indigenous, of Bengali and English speakers, and of the international with the national.[12] Therefore, Tagore's ethical–ecological horizon articulates why he refused both a totalising Westernist 'modernisation' and a sealed nativist rejection: his vision sought a reciprocal modernism – an East –West dialogue without imitation.

2 Walter Gropius, ed., *Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar 1919–1923* (Bauhaus, 1923), exhibition catalogue; see also Anja Baumhoff, *The Bauhaus and the Weimar Republic* (Routledge, 2001), 56–61.

3 Bauhaus-Archiv (Berlin), "Participation of the Bauhaus in the Weimar Exhibition 1923," archival file; Rustom Bharucha, *"Reclaiming the National: Against Nationalism," Bauhaus Kooperation* (online journal), April 2019.

4 Martin Kämpchen, "Tagore in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland," in *Rabindranath Tagore in Germany* (IIAS, 1999), 33–47; Bauhaus-Archiv, Berlin, March 1923; Tapati Guha-Thakurta, "When Was Modernism in Indian Art?" (New Delhi: OUP, 1997), 134–38; see also Debashish Banerji, *The Alternate Nation of Abanindranath Tagore* (Sage, 2010), 212.

5 Partha Mitter, *The Triumph of Modernism: India's Artists and the Avant-Garde, 1922–1947* (Reaktion Books, 2007), 10.

6 *Ibid.*, 10; see also *Elise Coquereau*, "Modernism and Modernity in Rabindranath Tagore," *Planeta Literatur: Journal of Global Literary Studies* 3 (2014): 83–100.

7 Ibid.

8 Geeta Kapur, *When Was Modernism: Essays on Contemporary Cultural Practice in India* (Tulika, 2000). *This work discusses modernity's postcolonial specificity and plural trajectories.*

9 Anshuman Dasgupta, "Santiniketan Architecture and Its Discursive Orientations," *Seminar* 722 (October 2019), accessed September 24, 2025, https://www.india-seminar.com/2019/722.htm.

10 Christine Kupfer, *Rabindranath Tagore's Philosophy of Education: Pedagogy as Sadhana* (Routledge, 2012), chs. 3–4 (*"Patha Bhavana" and "Sriniketan"*); Sabyasachi Bhattacharya, ed., *The Oxford India Tagore: Selected Writings on Education and Nationalism* (Oxford University Press, 2009), *which includes Tagore's essays on campus festivals and experiential learning.*

11 *shishu-sharodiya* (Bengali) is literally translated as child-autumn implying a child's connection with nature and the environment thereby promoting observational learnings through nature.

12 Uma Dasgupta, *Visva-Bharati and Rabindranath Tagore* (Niyogi Books, 2006).; Coquereau, "Modernism and Modernity in Rabindranath Tagore," 84; see also Mohammad A. Quayum, "One World: Rabindranath Tagore's Critique of Nationalism," *Interdisciplinary Literary Studies* 7, no. 2 (2006): 33–52.

CALCUTTA, SHANTINIKETAN, AND THE BAUHAUS: EXPERIMENTAL CENTRES

The ‘Bauhaus in Calcutta’ display opened in December 1922 as the International Section of the Fourteenth Annual Exhibition of the Indian Society of Oriental Art, curated by Stella Kramrisch.[13] It exhibited roughly two hundred and fifty works by Bauhaus teachers and students — including Itten, Kandinsky, Klee, Feininger, Téry-Adler, and Körner — alongside works by Bengali artists including Abanindranath Tagore, Nandalal Bose, Gaganendranath Tagore, and Sunayani Devi.[14] Although intended as a sale exhibition, only a single work sold (a watercolour by Körner purchased by Rabindranath Tagore); the remainder were shipped back to Germany at the close of the show. Kramrisch’s catalogue essay framed the encounter in terms of formal transformation rather than exoticism, underscoring resonances between European and Indian experiments.[15]

By contrast, the Bauhaus’s first large exhibition in Weimar (15 August – 30 September 1923) showcased the new Haus am Horn, together with an international — primarily European and American — architecture section.[16] While Indian works were not presented, there was an implicit recognition of a world beyond Germany and Europe — much like Kramrisch’s outward-looking, transcontinental exhibition of Bauhaus works in Calcutta, 1922. Instead, the transnational dialogue with India continued elsewhere in Germany in 1923: a documented exhibition of modern Indian (Bengali) art was held in Berlin, while secondary sources noted a companion presentation in Hamburg displaing Gaganendranath Tagore’s work to German audiences outside Weimar.[17]

Meanwhile, Shantiniketan functioned as a socio-cultural condenser; merging art, craft, education, rural renewal, and modernist impulses in a single campus ecosystem. Tagore’s *Kala Bhavana* (Institute of Fine Arts, founded 1919) championed an arts-led curriculum that integrated fine and applied arts, while *Sriniketan* (Institute of Rural Reconstruction, founded 1922) embedded action-learning with village communities in agriculture, crafts, health, and cooperation, physically and philosophically linked to the arts school. This fusion mirrored the Bauhaus ambition to bridge art and design yet remained rooted in local context and rural ethos.[18]

Beyond these exhibitions, the Indo-German exchange can also be read through its paper trail. In May 1922, Kramrisch wrote from Shantiniketan to Itten in Weimar proposing a Bauhaus section within the Indian Society of Oriental Art’s annual show; their ensuing letters coordinated the loan list and shipping to Calcutta.[19] When the crates reached the port, the Society’s assistant secretary notified Weimar on 22 October 1922 that heavy customs duties were blocking release; subsequent correspondence records how the consignment was treated as an art-society exhibition so the works could be cleared and the show opened in December.[20] In parallel, Tagore’s German network shows up in business exchanges with the Munich publisher Kurt Wolff (1914–24) covering translation rights, lecture scheduling for the 1921 tour, dedicating royalties from *Flüstern der Seele* to the Deutsche Kinderhilfe, and the acquisition of German books for Visva-Bharati. This correspondence situates the Shantiniketan–Bauhaus moment within a wider matrix of Indo-German documentation.[21]

In the short window around 1922, affinities between Shantiniketan’s *Kala Bhavana* and the early, expressionist-leaning Bauhaus were tangible — including craft-centred studios, integration of arts with life, and an ethical-aesthetic pedagogy. Yet the Weimar exhibition year also marked a strategic pivot: soon after the Calcutta exchange, Itten departed and Gropius consolidated the Bauhaus’s programme under the watchword *‘Art and Technology — A New Unity’.* This shift prioritised prototyping, standardisation, and industrial collaboration, narrowing the institutional space for the kind of spiritual-humanist dialogue that had provocatively animated the Shantiniketan encounter.[22]

Accordingly, the Indo–German dialogue continued less inside the Weimar programme than alongside it: in 1923 a reciprocal exhibition of modern Indian (Bengal School) art was mounted in Berlin — drawing attention to Gaganendranath Tagore’s experiments — while Tagore’s own German engagements extended through subsequent visits in 1926 and 1930, besides translations, performances, and correspondence with cultural intermediaries. Read together with the 1921 Berlin recording preserved at the HU *Lautarchiv*, these traces situate the Santiniketan–Bauhaus moment within a wider network that outlived the exhibitions themselves.[23]

In growing influence emerging from Tagore’s visits and activites in Germany over 1921, 1926, and 1930 provoked substantial interest.[24] His intellectual image in Europe was reinforced through association with prominent thinkers such as Stefan Zweig, who described meeting Tagore as a profoundly

13 Elizabeth Otto, “*Bauhaus and India*,” Google Arts & Culture, accessed September 24, 2025, https://artsandculture.google.com/story/bauhaus-and-india/cAXBuNF0R1tPNw.
14 Ibid.
15 “*Bauhaus Weimar International*,” *bauhaus imaginista* (online journal), accessed September 24, 2025, https://www.bauhaus-imaginista.org/articles/2241/bauhaus-weimar-international
16 Ibid.
17 Otto, “*Bauhaus and India*.”
18 Visva-Bharati, “Kala Bhavana: Institute of Fine Arts,” accessed September 24, 2025, https://www.visvabharati.ac.in/kalabhavana.html; and “Sriniketan,” accessed September 24, 2025, https://www.visvabharati.ac.in/Sriniketan.html
19 Otto, “*Bauhaus and India*.”
20 *“Corresponding With,” bauhaus imaginista*, accessed September 24, 2025, https://www.bauhaus-imaginista.org/articles/1327/bauhaus-imaginista-corresponding-with; and *“Weimar ~ The legend of the Bauhaus,”Mulled Ink* (blog), March 29, 2012, https://mulledink.blogspot.com/2012/03/weimar-legend-of-bauhaus.html.
21 Scottish Centre of Tagore Studies (ScoTs), “Rabindranath Tagore — his German publisher Kurt Wolff,” accessed September 24, 2025, https://scotstagore.org/rabindranath-tagore-kurt-wolff/
22 *“The First Bauhaus Book: The 1923 Exhibition Catalog,” Letterform Archive*, accessed September 24, 2025, https://letterformarchive.org/news/the-first-bauhaus-book-the-1923-exhibition-catalog/.
23 Kämpchen, *Tagore in Germany*, 15–38; Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Lautarchiv, “Rabindranath Tagore — Famous People,” accessed September 24, 2025, https://www.lautarchiv.hu-berlin.de/collections-and-catalog/examples/famous-people-rabindranath-tagore/. (Wolff–Tagore correspondence topics; 1921 Berlin recording.)
24 Krishna Dutta and Andrew Robinson, *Rabindranath Tagore: The Myriad-Minded Man* (St. Martin’s Press, 1995).

moving encounter.[25] These interactions, combined with the circulation of German translations, dramatic stagings of his plays, and the archival presence of recordings and letters, facilitated a systematic diffusion of his ideas. Moreover, as explored in Martin Kämpchen's chapter *Tagore in Germany, Austria and Switzerland: Translation, Archives and Histories*, (Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 1999) this diffusion occurred across cultural registers – translation, performance, correspondence – and institutional frames, embedding Tagore within German intellectual and archival landscapes.[26]

NETWORKS, SUBALTERN MODERNITIES, AND ARCHITECTURAL TRANSITIONS

The Bauhaus–Shantiniketan encounter is therefore best understood as a networked, two-way traffic of ideas versus a simple story of influence. As cultural interlocutor, Tagore articulated a universalist yet anti-colonial modernism, redirecting attention from metropolitan centres to dialogic peripheries. Placed against the factual record that the 1923 Weimar exhibition did *not* include a distinct Indian segment, the force of the connection lies instead in pedagogy, correspondence, and a reciprocal public sphere (Calcutta 1922; Weimar 1923), which make visible a transcontinental 'assemblage' of people, texts, objects, and institutions.

Shantiniketan's educational and architectural experiments – open-air classes, arts-led curricula, and environmental humanism that shaped campus life – offered a counter-script to colonial modernity and a foil to the post-1922 industrial pivot at the Bauhaus. Following these earlier affinities, the slogan *'Art and Technology – A New Unity'* signalled the narrowing of conceptual space for the spiritual-humanist dialogue that had animated the Calcutta exchange; yet the intellectual bridge persisted through translation, touring, and archives, sustaining an Indo–German conversation beyond the exhibitionary moment.

The Bauhaus-Shantiniketan network followed trajectories of India's negotiations with modernism outside dominant colonial narratives – this universal modernism residing beyond the rigid realism propagated by British academic curricula. Shantiniketan and Visva-Bharati were responses to Tagore's criticism of the educational system from his 1892 article titled *Siksar Herpher* ('Our Education and its Incongruities'). His vision of education as personal and incorporating intellectual growth, nurturing creativity and critical thinking, while blending Eastern and Western philosophies, also applied to his prolific literary works. Meanwhile, Shantiniketan's architecture too engaged with both tradition and the transformative forces of context, locality, and global society. Tagore's residences at Shantiniketan – the Udayan and Shyamali – drew from diverse historical design precedents, however avoiding a revivalist syntax in favour of a synthesis of historical elements and modernist design.[27]

25 Stefan Zweig, *The World of Yesterday: An Autobiography*, trans. Anthea Bell (University of Nebraska Press, 2013), 273–75.
26 Kämpchen, *Tagore in Germany*, 15–38
27 Melanie R. Clark, "*Design without Borders: Universalism in the Architecture of Rabindranath Tagore's 'World Nest' at Santiniketan"* (master's thesis, Department of Comparative Arts and Letters, Brigham Young University, 2020), 75.

Meanwhile, in distant Hyderabad-India, the phrase *German Circle* also appeared in historical accounts as an informal cultural group – likely an informal precursor or local counterpart to later institutional ties, such as those fostered by the Goethe-Institut or other outreach initiatives.[28] Consequently, such expressions of Indo-German architectural and cultural interaction during 1900–1940 were characterised by institutional networks and German-trained architects influencing Indian contexts. Thus, even though the Bauhaus was institutionally located in Germany, its influence far transcended national boundaries, finding resonance in India and across the globe through hybrid pedagogies, artistic dialogues, and institutional frameworks. And while later institutions such as CEPT (Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology, Ahmedabad, established 1962) did not directly borrow from Shantiniketan, their emphasis on contextual learning, inspiration from nature, and an integrative 'wheel of knowledge' curriculum echoed the earlier foundations of Tagore's pedagogical experiments, underscoring the diffuse impact of his vision.[29]

CONCLUSIONS

Several decades past the Calcutta and Weimar exhibitions, the networks of knowledge initiated by Rabindranath Tagore continue to spin across the variegated Indian educational landscape, as the complex nation transforms quite unlike Europe and North America. While many Indian schools teaching architecture and the arts have increasingly focused on prescriptive governmental directives, a handful continue to strategically – and valiantly – evolve their curricula, aligning with Tagore's aspirations and Shantiniketan's innovations. Shantiniketan continues to thrive as a living institution, carrying forward Tagore's vision through its evolving programme(s), vibrant campus life, and expanding student cohort. The Bauhaus, by contrast, has receded into the realm of curated heritage and cultural memory, its once-radical projections now appearing far-fetched when viewed against Shantiniketan's enduring dynamism.

28 *The Hindu*, "German Circle: Revisiting Cultural Ties in Hyderabad," March 12, 2010 *(Hyderabad edition.)*
29 Rahul Mehrotra, *Architecture in India Since 1990* (Pictor, 2011), 42–47.

Group photo during the CIAM I congress party, La Sarraz, 1928. Standing at the centre: Hélène de Mandrot together with Hendrik P. Berlage (left) and Gabriel Guevrekian (right); Gerrit Rietveld (standing to the right); back row: Victor Bourgeois, Juan de Zavala, André Lurçat, and Henri-Robert von der Mühll (with a lampion on his head); front row: Alberto Sartoris (with a glass in hand), Nelly Weber (dressed in white), and Fernando García Mercadal, sitting in front: Huib Hoste. Courtesy of the Gabriel Guevrekian Family Archive.

Hamed Khosravi (Architectural Association)

The Modernist Socialite: Gabriel Guevrekian, from Parisian Salons to American Universities

'Architecture is stifled by custom', as Le Corbusier famously wrote in *Towards a New Architecture*.[1] In 1927, the same year these words first appeared in English, he unleashed perhaps his most polemical project to date: a competition entry for the League of Nations headquarters. The proposal was selected among the winners but was then disqualified on the grounds that it broke competition rules. The French and Swiss avant-gardes were outraged by this turn of events, accusing the jury of sabotage, and retreated to their ateliers and the homes of their rich patrons to plan a counterattack.

The form that this response might take became clear one morning in January 1928, when the young Iranian architect Gabriel Guevrekian showed up at Le Corbusier's rue de Sévres studio in the company of Swiss art collector and designer Madame Hélène de Mandrot, a committed patron of the modernist avant-garde. As the *corbeau* later recounted:

> I can see her there now, with Guevrekian, saying, 'I want to gather together at my country house the most go-ahead architects of 20 countries.'
> 'What for?' I asked.
> 'To talk.'
> 'To talk about what?'
> 'We shall see when the time comes', was her reply. 'I have come to ask for your participation.'
> 'No thank you', I responded, 'I have too much of a horror of palavering!' A fortnight later she was there again. 'No!' once again. After another fortnight she again reappeared.
> 'You are coming', she said.[2]

Le Corbusier's eventual acceptance and the foundation of *Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne* (CIAM) in La Sarraz later that year are well known.[3] This was Le Corbusier's interpretation of the beginning of CIAM though. Forty-eight years later, as Guevrekian looked back to his early works as the secretary general of CIAM, he recalled how Madame de

1 Le Corbusier, *Towards a New Architecture*, trans. Frederick Etchells (J. Rodker, 1931): 3.
2 Le Corbusier, "To the Memory of Hélène de Mandrot," *The Architectural Review* 105, no. 628 (April 1949): 194.
3 See Eric Mumford, *The CIAM Discourse on Urbanism, 1928–1960* (MIT Press, 2000).

Mandrot had approached him with the idea of organising a group of avant-garde architects to discuss the crucial issues of the discipline:

> 'I knew Madame de Mandrot quite well for many years. She had a nice apartment in the same building in avenue Champaubert in Paris where my brother-in-law, the historian Carl Einstein, lived. So, I met her occasionally. At our first meeting with Le Corbusier at her place – it must have been sometime in 1927 – the overall aims and objectives of the La Sarraz meeting were discussed and Madame de Mandrot with agreement of Le Corbusier insisted that I take care, secure, and carry out the necessary preparations and the secretarial job of the La Sarraz convention. Although at that time I had a very small office and, as a matter of fact, no help whatsoever, I accepted it with pleasure.'[4]

If CIAM was shaped initially through an opposition to the mainstream 'customs' and to rescue the profession from, what they called, an 'academic impasse', it grew and was sustained through the personal networks of its founding members.[5] In fact, a close reading of the preparatory correspondence and invitations to the first CIAM congress reveals that most of the guests were contacted through Guevrekian's extensive professional and personal network.[6] As the co-founder of CIAM and the only non-European member of the founding circle, Guevrekian managed to stand outside any of the internal politics, and mediated between key figures, institutions, and universities. One of the key sources for tracing Guevrekian's network are dispersed collections of letters, which indicate his connection to each of the invited members. For example, a group of letters held at the gta CIAM Archive which shed light on the first CIAM correspondences. These include Guevrekian's letters to a diverse group of architects, such as Tony Garnier, J.J.P. Oud (De Stijl), Hugo Häring (Secretary of Der Ring), Joseph Hoffmann, Adolf Loos, Mies van der Rohe, as well as Moisei Ginzburg and El Lissitzky, whose visas were denied by the Swiss authorities.7 Besides architects, Guevrekian turned the first CIAM into a successful campaign by bringing together media figures such as Jean Badovici of L'Architecture vivante and Christian Zervos of Cahiers d'Art, politicians, bankers and industrialists. While the inaugural CIAM meeting could be seen as an ambitious and – to some extent – exceptional event in the history of the organisation, the contribution of Guevrekian, as the first Secretary General that brought together such diverse group of practitioners, patrons, industrialists, and media personalities, is undeniable. He had the clear intention of not promoting himself as the front figure of the organisation. A rather humble attitude that cost him, and some others, an involuntary marginalisation by Le Corbusier in the years after that.[8]

4 Gabriel Guevrekian, interview with Martin Steinmann, Paris, June 3, 1970, transcribed by the author, ETH Zurich, gta CIAM Archiv (42-ST-1-11-A).
5 CIAM I, preparatory program, 1928. ETH Zurich, gta CIAM Archiv (42-01-2-1-2-2a.1).
6 See *CIAM: Dokumente 1928–1939* (Birkhaüser Verlag, 1979).
7 See ETH Zurich, gta 42 | Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne CIAM Archiv.
8 In his letter to Le Corbusier Guevrekian wrote: 'I would like to remind you that I don't want my name to be circulated with the program. Why don't we put only "the secretariat," at Madame de Mandrot's address, but nameless?' Gabriel Guevrekian's letter to Le Corbusier, April 2, 1928, Fondation Le Corbusier.

THE PARISIAN AVANT-GARDE

Born in Istanbul in an Armenian family, Guevrekian grew up in Tehran and then moved to Vienna to study architecture at the Kunstgewerbeschule. In Vienna and Paris, he collaborated with Oskar Strnad, Josef Hoffmann, Adolf Loos, Henri Sauvage, and Robert Mallet-Stevens, before establishing his own office in Paris in 1926.[9] Such a cosmopolitan character could be revisited through both forces and choices that shaped his nomadic form of life; from Hamidian massacres of Armenians and Assyrians during the late-Ottoman period – which forced Guevrekian's family to flee to Iran – to the two World Wars, and the Great Depression – that triggered an exodus of European architects to the US and different corners of the world in search of new commissions. At the same time, Guevrekian's social ease and political *savoi-faire* made settling in any new city, or joining any social group, effortless.

Guevrekian was a multi-lingual socialite.[10] In Vienna he became close friends of Adolf Loos, while in Paris he had his regular Thursday basketball game night with Le Corbusier, Tristan Tzara and Pierre Jeanneret. His social circle was tightly linked to his sister Lyda's, as they moved together from Tehran to Vienna and then Paris. They were well-received among the Parisian avant-garde circle that included Robert and Sonia Delaunay, Pablo Picasso, the art historian Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, the American photographer Thérèse Bonney, and later Carl Einstein; the art critic who married Lyda in 1932.

In 1924, while working on Doucet's villa, Guevrekian was approached by a key member of this younger generation – the artist Sonia Delaunay, who was in the process of opening her own fashion studio. To generate publicity, Delaunay wanted to have a faux storefront installed at that year's Salon d'Automne. Her 'Simultanée' boutique, as designed by Guevrekian, attracted both professionals and the general public, which ultimately motivated Delaunay to exhibit her collection at the 1925 *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes*, collaborating with Jacques Heim.[11]

A few months later, Jacques Heim invited Guevrekian to design his family home in Paris. Guevrekian responded to the largesse of the brief with a total design that extended to the details of the interior, the furniture, and the garden. Though the Villa Heim was well received in modernist circles, it was attacked by the public, who viewed its flat roof and bare façade as a calculated assault on one of the city's more affluent neighbourhoods. The chorus of critics included relatives of Jacques Heim, which Guevrekian found particularly discouraging: 'it was a tragedy', Guevrekian later recalled.[12] More reassuring, though, was the appreciation of his friends from the

9 Adolf Loos and Robert Mallet-Stevens had also been invited but did not attend. See Mumford, *ibid.*
10 He was fluent in German, French and English, while he was native in Farsi and Armenian. Such communication skills secured him his first academic job in 1946 at the Saarbrücken School of Arts and Crafts. See Guevrekian letter to Morton-Shand, 3 February 1948, University of Dundee Archives.
11 Guevrekian was commissioned independently to design a second temporary storefront, which was installed on Pont Alexandre III.
12 David Hanser, "Tribute to a Radical," *The Ricker Reader* (March 1966): 3.

fashion world, as his work continued to be promoted and find in numerous style magazines of the period, including most famously *Vogue*. Villa Heim extended Guevrekian's network to the flourishing world of Parisian Salons and high society in Europe. In 1933 he married Henriette-Aimee Creed: the youngest daughter of the English fashion designer Henry Creed.[13]

Guevrekian's professional network had already been expanded to the UK before his connection to the Creed family though. Philip Morton Shand, the English journalist and architectural critic, had been commissioned to write a review of the planning and preparation of the 1925 Art Deco Exhibition in Paris for the *Architectural Association Journal*.[14] There he met with Guevrekian, the vice-president of the music section, and a jury member of the architecture section, who, at the same time, was invited to design a garden installation. Titled *Jardin d'Eau et de Lumiére* [Garden of Water and Light], Guevrekian's project had immediately become one of the most noticed and debated installations in the exhibition and ultimately won him the jurors' Grand Prix. Guevrekian and Morton Shand's friendship was instrumental in shaping the MARS group in Britain (1933) and further resulted in Guevrekian's relocation and practice in London.[15]

THE AMERICAN PROFESSOR

Not yet forty, Guevrekian was recognised as one of the protagonists of the European avant-garde by the time World War II broke out, but other roles awaited him. Before another decade was out, Guevrekian had sought refuge and travelled across continents to take on his final guise, as a genial professor in the United States.[16] Along with his European colleagues and friends in the United States – such as Gropius, Breuer, and Sert at Harvard University, Van der Rohe and Hilberseimer at the Illinois Institute of Technology, Vetter at the Carnegie Institute, and Papadaki at City University in New York – Guevrekian developed more than just an approach to teaching architecture during these years. He rather spearheaded a radical, pedagogical project, driven by an unconditional faith in modernism.[17] In comparison to his peers' however, it was the roles he took at the University of Illinois – the largest faculty of architecture in the country at the time – what made Guevrekian's academic experience in America unique. From the first year of his arrival in Urbana, Illinois, Guevrekian sought to establish a US CIAM network there. In his lengthy letter to Giedion on 15 November 1949 he wrote:

> 'Two months ago, we had the school year opening meeting with all faculty members, at the Château which was donated by a wealthy patron to the University of Illinois. This Castle is used for large meetings, congresses, etc. etc. Seeing these huge party rooms, meeting rooms, library, bedroom suites, I had the vision of the next CIAM Congress. There! – My dear friend, this can become a reality if the CIAM Executive Committee agrees in principle to make the next Congress in the United States'.[18]

In fact, this could have been a strategic move not only to take CIAM out of Europe, but also to let Guevrekian reclaim his position within the executive committee. He was already unhappy with the schism in the French group after the formation of ASCORAL, as some of the founding members of the congress – such as André Lurçat, Auguste Perret, and Guevrekian himself – had been left out and abandoned by Le Corbusier. To turn this around, hosting a congress in Urbana seemed to be the right choice:

> 'Neither should the South [of the United States], South America, and Canada be overlooked, which can contribute immensely to a CIAM Congress in the Western Hemisphere. Urbana would be convenient for those coming from the East and West Coast, South America, or Canada and Europe, since they will come to the US geographical centre and will be able to have a journey through the country, if they want to do it after the Congress …The is the heart of the United States.'[19]

Giedion, however, responded to such a proposal bluntly:

> 'Above all you should get in touch with Sert, who should give his opinion on this matter. As far as I can see, the next Congress will probably be held in London on the occasion of the Festival of Britain. … For certain reasons which are deeply grounded in the American way of life it was not possible up to now. In spite of great endeavours of Gropius, Sert, myself, and others to set up groups in the form of CIAM working teams in the United States.'[20]

A CIAM Congress in the US never took place. In 1956, Dubrovnik in Croatia became the most 'off-centred' venue to host the meeting. It was also the last congress attended by organised by the steering committee and attended by Guevrekian. Nonetheless, Guevrekian used all his means to bridge the gap between his European avant-garde circle and his new American networks. His first attempt was to bring the works of European modernists to the US. In October 1952 he curated a travelling exhibition of the works by the Union des Artistes Modernes (UAM) members at the University of Illinois. In exchange,

13 Ninette posed occasionally as a model for Creed's suits and jackets. She must have met Gabriel at one of the Villa Heim gatherings of young models and designers from the fashion industry.
14 Philip Morton Shand, "The Exhibition of Decorative Art in Paris, 1925," *Architectural Association Journal*40 (July 1924): 30–32.
15 Guevrekian introduced Morton Shand to Giedion and Le Corbusier and encouraged him to form the British section of CIAM. Morton Shand letter to Giedion, January 1929. MARS Folder, AA Archives. Between 1937–39 Guevrekian moved to London and collaborated with Connell, Lucas, and Ward.
16 He became a naturalised American citizen in 1955 and remained at the University of Illinois for a total of twenty years until his retirement in 1969.
17 Gabriel Guevrekian, "Enseignement de l'Architecture et Conditions de Travail des Jeunes aux Etats-Unis," *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* 73 (September 1957): 72–95.
18 Guevrekian, letter to Giedion, November 15, 1949, translated by the author. ETH Zurich, gta CIAM Archiv (42-SG-33–185).
19 Ibid.
20 Giedion to Guevrekian, December 5, 1949, translated by the author. ETH Zurich, gta CIAM Archiv (42-SG-33–184).

he brought the works of the University of Illinois to Europe. He set up an exchange programme and a summer school between the University of Illinois, the Carnegie Institute, and the Salzburg School of Architecture.[21]

All his various pursuits, and the homes and nationalities he held in Iran, Europe, and the United States, led to a serial adoption of personae. As an architect, urban designer, artist, writer, educator, and a curator, Guevrekian relentlessly campaigned for the mission of modernism through every possible means. While being marginalised in the official histories of the profession, by dint of his own very tangible engagement, Guevrekian made every discipline meaningful, every city central, and every period epochal. He managed to establish and sustain influential international networks of architects, artists, and activists for five decades. His legacy could potentially challenge some of the CIAM's historical assumptions and narratives and revalidating the ethos of the Congress and its spinoff networks through the agencies of one of its key figures. Being an architect — as Guevrekian ably demonstrated — was now no longer simply about designing buildings; it was a matter of cultivating a political persona, proselytising an ideology, and keeping a shared spirit alive.

21 The programme was developed together with Hans Vetter, Guevrekian's lifelong friend, and lasted for at least two years, from June to September in 1953 and 1954.

Photography and Architecture: 1839–1938 (inaugural exhibition of the CCA), opening at the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, February 1984. Left to right: Gilles H.J. Duguay, Minister for Public Affairs at the Canadian Embassy in Paris; Jack Lang, Minister of State for Culture, Government of the French Republic; The Honourable Francis Fox, Minister of Communication of Canada; Phyllis Lambert, Director, Canadian Centre for Architecture; Clément Richard, Minister of Cultural Affairs of Quebec; and Richard Pare, Curator of Photographs. Courtesy of the Canadian Centre for Architecture.

Lea-Catherine Szacka, University of Manchester

Phyllis Lambert and the Canadian Centre for Architecture: Towards the Creation of a Global Network of Exchange

> ‘Buildings are both structures and icons.’
> – Phyllis Lambert, 1981

In 1979, architect and philanthropist Phyllis Lambert (1927–) founded the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA), envisioning it as a new kind of international research institution and museum grounded in the belief that architecture is a matter of public concern. Since then, the CCA has evolved into a transnational hub for architectural literacy, advancing its mission through exhibitions, publications, a shared collection, research initiatives, and public programmes. Physically anchored in Montreal, in a building designed by Canadian architect Peter Rose and inaugurated in 1989, the CCA now operates within a global network of influence that extends well beyond Canada’s borders.

Phyllis Lambert began collecting architectural drawings in the 1950s, while managing the construction of the Seagram Building designed by architect Mies van der Rohe in New York.[1] Over time, she broadened her scope to include photographs, archival fonds, books, and other artifacts, ultimately assembling one of the world’s most significant architecture collections. In a 1971 letter to her brother, Charles Bronfman, she reflected: ‘My conviction has always been that buildings have a profound effect on society. And as buildings are necessarily of the society – its best part, hopefully, but also its worst part – reflection guides future actions.’[2] Guided by this belief and driven by a lifelong passion for collecting, Lambert dedicated herself to fostering a global network for architectural exchange, with the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA) at its core.

This paper investigates Phyllis Lambert’s foundational vision for the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA), with particular attention to the conceptual models, curatorial methods, and intellectual community she endeavoured to cultivate, as well as to the evolving networks through which the institution has operated over time. Drawing upon oral histories and materials from the

1 Phyllis Lambert is the second (out of four) children of Samuel (1889–1971) and Saydie (born Rosner) Bronfman (1896–1995). Her father Samuel was born in Russia, but soon after his birth, his family fled the anti-Semitic pogroms in Czarist Russia and settled in Wapella, Saskatchewan, before moving to Brandon, Manitoba. Samule later moved to Montreal and, in 1924, founded the *Distillers Corporation* specializing in cheap whisky, and concurrently taking advantage of the U.S. prohibition on alcoholic beverage. Following this, Phyllis was born in Montreal in 1927 she was raised in a traditional Jewish family.

2 Letter from Phyllis Lambert to Charles Bronfman, 23 September 1971. Archives CCA

CCA's institutional archive, the study underscores the Centre's pivotal role in the production and circulation of architectural discourse. By examining three interrelated scales of connection — local, national, and global — it contends that the CCA functions as a critical 'node' within the emergence of a global, though initially Western, network of architectural exchange. In doing so, the paper positions the CCA as a distinctly postmodern institution — one that operates simultaneously as a material infrastructure and as a site of discursive practice.

LOCAL: MONTREAL GREYSTONE BUILDING RESEARCH GROUP

In the early 1970s, after years spent living in France and the United States, Phyllis Lambert began returning frequently to her native Montréal.[3] During this period, together with British photographer Richard Pare, she embarked on a mission to document the city's iconic greystone buildings. Lambert regarded photography as a powerful historical record, capable of capturing the relationship between a society and its built environment, while fostering public engagement with architecture and urban preservation. Through the camera's lens, she became acutely aware of the alarming pace at which Montréal's historic structures were being demolished — a phenomenon shared by many North American cities at the time. Her growing commitment to architectural conservation soon earned her public recognition as a tireless advocate and the affectionate epithets 'Our Lady of Restoration' and the 'Joan of Architecture'.

In 1975, following her initial photographic survey, Lambert founded and directed the *Groupe de recherche sur les bâtiments en pierre grise de Montréal* (GRBPGM, or Montréal Greystone Building Research Group), a collective that systematically documented the city's architectural development.[4] The group of approximately eighteen members studied greystone buildings as material evidence of Montréal's growth between 1760 and 1915 — preceding the establishment of formal archival research programmes on the city's architecture.[5] The group's analysis of greystone structures thus served as a means to uncover the diverse topographical, geological, political, economic, and ethnic factors that had shaped the city over time. Its work was later integrated into the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA), forming the nucleus of a major collection on property and building practices in early Montréal.[6]

3 It is important to note that Lambert's gradual return to her homecity also followed the death of her father, the prominent businessman and philanthropist Samuel Bronfman. Indeed, Lambert once said that she could not envisoned living in Montreal while her powerful father was still alive. Also, important is the fact that before returning to Montreal more permanently, Lambert had, in the mid-1960s designed the Saidye Bronfman Centre (1967) (today the Seagal centre for Performing Arts) — a Miesian structure serving as performing arts centre and located in Montreal's borough of Côte-des-Neiges-Notre-Dame-de-Grâce.

4 In Montréal, which possesses the highest concentration of stone buildings in North America, the use of this material extended from the early eighteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth

5 For example, in 1977, the GRBPGM produced the first inventories of the city's minor heritage of the city, based on darchive and investigative work in the field. See Pierre Chabard, "Founding CCA. L'architecture comme objet de collection, d'exposition et de recherche", *Cahiers de la recherche architecturale et urbaine.* March 2025.

6 This led to three important CCA exhibitions and publication projects "Opening the Gates of Eighteenth Century Montreal (1992–1993)" which Lambert curated in 1992; Montreal Metropolis, 1880–1930 (in 1998) and "Greystone: Tools for Understanding the City" (2017–2018).

Although Lambert — who had earned a master's degree in architecture from the Illinois Institute of Technology in 1963 — did not identify as an academic scholar, through the GRBPGM she surrounded herself with heritage specialists, notably the historian Robert Lemire, and cultivated a rigorous research ethos.[7] Rooted in a local network of exchange, the group engaged in systematic cataloguing, presentation, and publication, gradually building a body of specialised knowledge. In doing so, it laid the intellectual and methodological groundwork for what would eventually evolve into the CCA.

NATIONAL: THE CANADIAN ARCHITECTURAL RECORDS SURVEY

In early September 1978, Phyllis Lambert met with the American art historian and critic Daniel Robbins (1932–1995) and his wife, Eugenia Robbins, to discuss her intention to establish an Architectural Study Centre (A.S.C.) in Canada. Subsequently, in January 1979, the Robbinses submitted a seventy-nine-page report clearly delineating four core functions envisioned for the A.S.C.: collections, exhibitions, an archival clearinghouse, and a study programme.[8] In the introduction, the Robbinses emphasised the significance of situating the proposed centre within a national framework — one that, at the time, was not yet explicitly identified as 'Canadian'. They wrote: 'It is the donor's hope to establish the study centre in Canada, which does not presently have any major resource for the serious study or expansion of the popular understanding of architectural history or its significance.'[9]

That same year, the first conference of the International Confederation of Architectural Museums (ICAM) was held in Helsinki, bringing together libraries, academies, technical universities, documentation centres, professional architectural organisations, and schools of architecture.[10] As the French historian Pierre Chabard has observed, the establishment of ICAM — and, soon after, the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA) — occurred at a pivotal historical juncture: following the emergence of architecture museums as independent institutions in the latter half of the twentieth century and during a period when architecture itself was increasingly valorised as part of the expanding cultural industry.[11]

As one of seven members of ICAM's executive bureau, Lambert strategically positioned herself on the international stage, engaging with a network of institutions dedicated to the exhibition and study of

7 "I was'nt a scholar!" Phyllis Lambert, interview with the author, 11 September 2025.

8 Now commonly called "The Robbins report", this document is conserved in the Phyllis Lambert found at the CCA. Eugenia and Daniel Robbins, "On Founding an Architectural Study Center. A Report Prepared for Phyllis B. Lambert", January 1979, 79 p. (archives CCA ARCON198800340003).

9 Robbins report, 1.

10 The ICAM1 conference took place in the fortified island of Suomenlinna, off the South harbor of the city, on 20–25 August, 1979. In his speach fort the inauguration of the CCA, John Harris (RIBA) said "Our growth is a phenomenon. In 1979, we had 28 representatives from 12 countries. But today, we have 62 in 25 countries and ICAM is fast growing." Speach by Mr. John Harris on the occasion of the CCA inaugural ceremony, May 13, 1985. (Archives CCA AI2012-RG1-2).

11 Pierre Chabard, "Founding CCA. L'architecture comme objet de collection, d'exposition et de recherche", *Cahiers de la recherche architecturale et urbaine.* March 2025.

architecture.[12] However, in order to consolidate her international presence and establish an architectural study centre in Canada, she first needed to strengthen her national network of exchange. In 1981, two years after its founding, the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA) received a governmental grant to survey the architectural holdings of public and private institutions. Coordinated by Pierre Goad, the *Canadian Architectural Records Survey* (CARS/RDAC) was 'the first CCA program to actively involve people outside the Centre', with the principal objective of collecting information regarding the location and content of architectural collections across Canada.[13]

The survey was distributed to approximately two thousand libraries, museums, historical societies, government agencies, and architectural offices — both public and private — that held architectural records in the broadest sense, including drawings, renderings, blueprints, photographic materials, personal and business papers, books, and other printed documentation. The project had two primary aims: first, to 'lay the groundwork for the eventual establishment of a national clearinghouse for information regarding architectural resources'; and second, to 'allow for the publication of a reference guide similar in style and structure to the Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records, Inc.'[14] By around 1983, the CCA had published the *Union List of Architectural Records in Canadian Public Collections*, representing a significant step in consolidating knowledge of the nation's architectural heritage.

In the early 1980s, the institution — housed in temporary spaces dispersed across five locations in Montréal and one in New York — was still in the process of defining its identity. Officially recognised as a museum in 1984, the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA) positioned itself as a new type of national institution with an international scope. Beyond the acts of collecting, exhibiting, and documenting, the CCA sought to advance knowledge of architectural art, promote its study and understanding, and serve as a center for scholarly exchange. This mission was facilitated through the creation of a study programme designed to provide researchers with the facilities and resources necessary to support their work.[15]

12 Other members were: John Harris (RIBA, Chair), Juhani Pallassma et Asko Salokorpi (Suomen arkkitehtuurimuseo, Helsinki), Henrik O. Andersson (Arkitektur-och designcentrum, Stockholm), Viktor Baldin (Schusev Museum, Moscou), and Olgierd Czerner (Museum of Architecture, Wrocław). See Pierre Chabard, "Founding CCA", 4.

13 The CARS/RDAC survey was part of a worldwide survey of architecturaal records initiated by the Internationaal Confederation of Architectural Museums (ICAM) at it's second conference help in London on April 26 to 30, 1981. It followed a recent interest in architectural history in Canda. — creation of heritage Canada, the formation of the Society ofr the study of Architecture in Canada the establishment of local architectural conservation advisory committee in Ontario, the creation of the Canadian Architectural, etc.

14 Notes on CARS/RDAC in CCA CARS correspondence, union list, ARCON1988_0033_0038.

15 "Rapport pour une demande d'aide finaincière au Ministère des affaires culturelles du Québec, programme d'aide financière aux equipements culturels", 29 novembre 1984, In CCA Institutional Archives AI2012-RG1-2

GLOBAL: IMAGINING A NEW KIND OF INSTITUTION

In July 1986, Daniel Robbins produced a second report on the establishment of a study centre for what had by then evolved into the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA).[16] In the preamble, Robbins observed: 'Some kind of advanced study center has always been envisioned as part of the Canadian Centre for Architecture.'[17] Although the advancement of architectural knowledge had long been among the institution's principal objectives, many critical questions regarding the organisation and function of the research centre remained under discussion. Robbins asked: "Precisely what should a research center be in a specialized center where the substantive ongoing activity must always involves research into diverse and growing collections? What degree of autonomy should such a center enjoy? […]What levels of scholarship should the center serve? Should they work together around a particular theme? Should an effort be made to promote interaction with a wider clientele, other scholars (the University and Museum community), the professional community (architects, designers, buildiers), the public?"[18] These and many related questions framed Robbins's inquiry into the nature and purpose of the CCA's proposed study centre.[19] To address these questions, the report examined various examples of study centres in the United States, drawing lessons from their organisational structures, modes of scholarship, and engagement with broader professional and public audiences.

Phyllis Lambert has stated that her principal inspiration in creating the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA) was the Warburg Institute in London.[20] She recalled: 'The first time I was really interested in an institution was when I went to the Warburg Institute in London. I love the way it was organised; it wasn't according to some dates… it was about ideas. And loads of ideas. And this is what I found very exciting. I had no idea I was going to start an institution by then, but it was always in my head.' Founded in 1900 by the art historian Aby Warburg (1866–1929) and originally located in Hamburg before relocating to England in 1933, the Warburg Institute was dedicated to the study of global cultural history and the role of images in society.[21] Although Lambert was neither an art historian nor a professional scholar, she may have identified with Warburg's deep passion for collecting books and drawings.

Another key objective of the Centre was to ensure 'verticality', encompassing a range of participants from distinguished senior historians to promising emerging scholars.[22] As Robbins emphasised in his report, it was equally important to address the needs of both specialists and novices: 'The

16 Daniel Robbins, "A Study Center fort the Canadian Center for Architecture", 29 July 1986. In CCA Institutional Archives AI2012-RG1-2.

17 Ibid., 1.

18 Ibid., 5.

19 Ibid., 4–5.

20 Phyllis Lambert, interview with the author, 11 September 2025.

21 And became officially part of the University College London in 1944.

22 Phyllis Lambert, *Centre Canadien D'Architecture/ Canadian Centre for Architecture, Les Debuts/The First Five* Years, 1979–1984, CCA, 1988, 109.

purview of the CCA,' he wrote, 'is to examine with equal attention all aspects of architecture and create environment and to do this for all people; for the many with little or no awareness of the meaning of building arts, and for those few who are most instrumental in shaping knowledge of the past through active research.'[23]

It is ten years later – in 1996 – that the new Study Centre of the Canadian Centre for Architecture is finally inaugurated, under the directorship of Montreal scholar Rejean Legault. Over the next five years Legault planned, implemented, and directed the Study Centre's Visiting Scholars Program, while co-editing the book *Anxious Modernisms: Experimentation in Postwar Architecture Cul*ture (MIT Press, 2000).

CONCLUSION: THE CCA AS AN EMBODIMENT OF POSTMODERN PRINCIPLES

Over the years, Phyllis Lambert deployed her resources, influence, and energy to establish a network of exchange that extended from local to national and ultimately global dissemination of architectural knowledge. From its inception in 1979, the Canadian Centre for Architecture was conceived as a new type of cultural institution, encompassing a comprehensive set of interconnected activities – research, exhibitions, publications, and the acquisition of relevant archival collections – each reinforcing the others.[24] The CCA was thus specifically designed as a 'centre', a gathering place that activated networks of varying kinds and scales, providing a site from which architecture could be observed, analysed, and evaluated as a social practice.[25] What distinguishes the CCA from contemporaneous institutions is its alignment with Lambert's personal vision and leadership. Despite changes in directorship,[26] Lambert has consistently remained actively involved in the Centre's strategic and curatorial decisions.

As is well known, in *La condition postmoderne* (1979), the French philosopher Jean-François Lyotard offered one of the most influential definitions of postmodernism in contemporary theory.[27] The postmodern condition, as articulated by Lyotard, is characterised by an 'incredulity toward metanarratives'. Rejecting singular and universalising frameworks, the CCA embodies this postmodern sensibility through its simultaneous operation as research centre, archive, exhibition space, and site of scholarly exchange, activating networks at local, national, and global scales. It also functions not only as a repository of material objects but also as a forum for critical discussion, research, and the production of knowledge. This multiplicitous role reflects the postmodern understanding that knowledge is constructed through discourse and context, rather than discovered as a fixed or universal truth.

Moreover, the CCA's engagement with diverse audiences – ranging from specialised scholars to the general public – demonstrates a sustained commitment to multiplicity, dialogue, and the co-construction of knowledge across disciplinary and social boundaries. In this sense, the CCA may be understood not merely as an institutional infrastructure for architecture but as a living embodiment of postmodern principles, fostering critical inquiry, interdisciplinary exchange, and the decentralisation of architectural authority. Through these activities, the CCA cultivates a dynamic, open-ended understanding of architecture as a social and cultural practice. Its programmes thus operate in the postmodern spirit of Lyotard's 'incredulity toward metanarratives', foregrounding plurality, contingency, and the coexistence of divergent perspectives as central to the production and dissemination of architectural knowledge.

23 Robbins, *Idem*, 1.
24 Rafico Ruiz, Archives du bâti – entretien #5: Centre Canadien d'Architecture à Montréal, Ezpazium, https://www.espazium.ch/fr/actualites/archives-du-bati-entretien-5-centre-canadien-darchitecture-montreal
25 Ibid.
26 After Phyllis Lambert, directors of the CCA Kurt W. Forster (1999–2001), Nicholas Olsberg (2001–2005), Mirko Zardini (2005–2020), and Giovanna Borasi (2020–present).
27 See Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition : A Report on Knowledge* (In French: *La contition postmoderne: Raport sur le savoir*), 1984 (1979). It is interesting to note that *La condition Postmoderne* was initially a report commissioned by the Council of Universities of Quebec to Lyotard as a reflection on the legitimacy of the existing social order as well as the formation and usefulness of knowledge in contemporary society.

Special Contributions

Students' visit at the Norman Foster Foundation in Madrid, photo by Albena Yaneva.

Albena Yaneva (Politecnico di Torino)

The Orbits of Archiving: A Pragmatist Perspective

The past two decades have seen architects actively engaging in rethinking the role of archives, arranging valuations of their drawings, donating fonds to collecting institutions, and setting up foundations with the aim of preserving, exhibiting and promoting the legacy of their work for posterity. This lecture pays attention to the situated practices of compiling living archives with the aim to investigate the specific connections between archival manipulation and the flow of information in design firms.

Unpacking how two leading Foundations work – Fondazione Renzo Piano in Genova (2007) and the Norman Foster Foundation in Madrid (2015) – I analyse how their material and social practices facilitate specific archivisation tactics that feed back into the design workflow. Scrutinising the archival strategies of active design firms related to the Foundations, I argue that the living archives gain the agency to shape versatile networks between architectural studios and archival institutions that speak about the current conditions of design practice.

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Bouwcentrum, Map of international network, in *Jaarverslag*, 1967.
Courtesy of Nieuwe Instituut, NIROV50N7-1967.

Setareh Noorani (Nieuwe Instituut)

Architecture of Development: The Bouwcentrum as International Broker of Dutch Building Knowledge

INTRODUCTION

Shortly after the Second World War, Joop van der Wal and Jan van Ettinger founded the Bouwcentrum in Rotterdam as a meeting place and research centre for professionals concerning themselves with the built environment. Van der Wal had served as director of the construction company BAM and Van Ettinger was a statistician with the state-run Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS); together they had written and advocated for a flourishing building economy in the Netherlands.[1] To this aim, the Bouwcentrum's international ambitions grew when Van Ettinger channelled his post-war analyses of a new world economy – one that sought to incorporate building as a professional practice – into the establishment of the International Council for Building Documentation (Conseil International de Documentation du Bâtiment, CIDB), which was later renamed the International Council for Research and Innovation in Building and Construction (CIB).[2] The CIDB and CIB were founded following the advice of the November 1950 Conference on Building Research, convened by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). In this post-war period, the aim of the CIB stated the need 'to encourage, facilitate and develop international co-operation in building research, studies and documentation covering at once the technical and the economic and social aspects of building'.[3] In the first years of the Bouwcentrum, these exchanges remained constrained to the countries of the CIDB, CIB, and the European Economic Community (EEC), with the Bouwcentrum taking a leading role from 1957 until 1959, due to the CIB presidency of Van Ettinger. [4] For decades, the General Secretariat of the CIB was located in the building of the Bouwcentrum.

It was only in the 1960s that the mission of the Bouwcentrum expanded from research, exhibitions, and consultancy, to the active export of building knowledge. In his 1966 retrospective on the founding ideas of the

1 Bouwcentrum Rotterdam, "Ir. Jan van Ettinger, grondlegger van het Bouwcentrum, in 1981 overleden," in *Bouwcentrum*, 1981. Collectie Nieuwe Instituut
2 "Bloeiperiode," Bouwcentrum Rotterdam, accessed September 30, 2025, https://bouwcentrumrotterdam.nl/?page_id=1197; Jan van Ettinger, "Bouwcentrum: Idee, realisatie, perspectieven," 1966. Collection Nieuwe Instituut
3 Andreas Kalpakci, "Beyond Rotterdam: The Bouwcentrum in International Perspective, 1950–1976," lecture presented at the Open Bouwcentrum Workshop, Delft University of Technology, Delft, 2021
4 United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, "ECE: The First Ten Years 1947–1957," (United Nations, 1957), 24 (II–3). https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/ECE_the_first_ten_years_ENG.pdf

Bouwcentrum, Van Ettinger described international development and aid as the culmination of a global education — framed through efficiency and the notion of building as an industry — intended to keep the world habitable in times of immense growth.[5] After successfully establishing the Bouwcentrum network in Europe, it turned its activities to rapidly developing nations such as Egypt, Indonesia, and Colombia. This was facilitated by an international network of Building Information Centres initiated by the Bouwcentrum, with support from the Dutch government, as well as Nuffic and the United Nations, particularly through the commissions of the Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), UNECE and UN-Habitat.[6] With such entanglements in international governmental bodies — whose complex and often competing missions and subcommittees anchored geopolitical influence — it becomes difficult not to question the ethics of this form of knowledge exchange. This is especially evident in the CIB's focus on economic cooperation and its leadership's close ties to construction and material technology firms.

This paper examines how, from the 1960s onwards, the Bouwcentrum brokered the export of Dutch housing and construction expertise to newly developing countries in Africa and Asia; while embodying a non-profit organisation and downplaying their involvements.[7] It explores the ways the Bouwcentrum and its collaborating architects, planners, and contractors positioned themselves not only as knowledge partners, exchanging practices for the better, but as drivers of a permanent economic influence in these post-colonial nations. Drawing on primary sources from the National Collection for Architecture and Urban Planning — including the archives of Van Embden and Habraken — as well as a 1981 study by the Centre for Research on Multinational Corporations (SOMO) on Dutch consultancy and construction firms and their export of technology and knowledge to the Global South, this paper argues that the Bouwcentrum primarily served the interests of certain architects, planners, and construction companies. It did so by acting as a broker of foreign access at strategic geopolitical moments. By examining the specific topics, methods, and practices it mobilised, we can trace how the Bouwcentrum's mission evolved to align with post-colonial political realities — much as it had adapted to the reconstruction period following the Second World War. Finally, the paper questions how the Bouwcentrum reflected the Netherlands' broader effort — as a former colonial power — to reinstate, reshape, or sustain its influence at a time when global economies were opening and attention was shifting toward a newly emancipated global majority. From 'international collaboration' to 'development aid'.

5 Jan van Ettinger, "Ontwikkelingswerk als sluitstuk" in *Bouwcentrum: Idee, realisatie, perspectieven*, 1966, fig. 12. Collection Nieuwe Instituut

6 UPEC, "Cooperación Técnica Bilateral A Colombia Proveniente Del Gobierno De Los Países Bajos," (República de Colombia: Departamento Nacional de Planeación, 1972), https://colaboracion.dnp.gov.co/CDT/Conpes/Econ%C3%B3micos/977.pdf; Jan van Ettinger, "An international chain of building information centres," in *Beyond Rotterdam: The Bouwcentrum in International Perspective, 1950–1976*, Andreas Kalpakci, lecture presented at the Open Bouwcentrum Workshop, Delft University of Technology, Delft, 2021; Bouwcentrum Rotterdam, "Doel, Werkwijze en Activiteiten van het Bouwcentrum," *Bouwcentrum Magazine*, 1978, 6. Archive E.F. Groosman. Collection Nieuwe Instituut / GROS242

7 Bouwcentrum Rotterdam, "Doel, Werkwijze en Activiteiten van het Bouwcentrum," *Bouwcentrum Magazine*, 1978, 2, 6. Archive E.F. Groosman. Collection Nieuwe Instituut / GROS242

In the early years of the UNECE, following the Second World War, the 'European Housing Problem' remained high on the agenda. It was closely tied to material shortages, insecure labour provision, the recovery of European production, disparities in industrialisation rates among European countries, and the persistent housing backlog for a growing population dating from before the war.[8] Solutions were primarily sought through the strengthening of economic and technological cooperation — or rather — dependency, among European countries 'irrespective of their economic and social systems'.[9] This approach manifested in the prioritisation of business development in construction, the pursuit of building material efficiency and housing standardisation, and the formulation of favourable financial policies. It is particularly important to consider these dynamics in relation to the influence of European and American agendas on the Bouwcentrum in the Netherlands, shaped through extensive United Nations collaborations and Dutch development initiatives under the Marshall Plan. Under the Marshall Plan, capitalist economic development, multilateral material aid and knowledge exchange was beset by a paternalistic attitude.[10] The Bouwcentrum offered courses, workshops and other exchanges of expertise, leaning into Europe's rapidly developing planning and building technologies.

The presence of Dutch architects in the Bouwcentrum, like Van Eesteren and Wissing, grew larger in the mid-1950s as the institution began to fully establish its breadth in building and construction advice.[11] Testament to this is the many subcommittees linking to exchanges in Europe, via off-shoot building centres established in various countries. Dutch architects largely saw themselves as designing for a model nation — defined by rationality, maakbaarheid (make-ability), and a business-oriented building culture; a stance reflected in the Bouwcentrum wanting to fulfil a 'guiding role in the Dutch building industry (and beyond)'.[12] Simultaneously, the Netherlands' paternalistic attitude as a former coloniser bled into postcolonial development policy and UN-aid missions. As Dutch historians Leon van Damme and Mari Smits note, 'the founding fathers of development aid hoped to re-enter the former colony of Indonesia through the back door of the UN programme,' which had an additional financial motive of offering work opportunities to Dutch experts: researchers, planners, and engineers.[13] The Bouwcentrum, too, maintained two parallel attitudes toward its 'guiding role,' both informed by a paternalistic viewpoint: one directed at what it — and the Dutch government — considered peer countries, framed as 'international

8 United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, "ECE: The First Ten Years 1947–1957," (United Nations, 1957). https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/ECE_the_first_ten_years_ENG.pdf

9 Ibid.

10 Andere Tijden, "Met geld en idealen naar het buitenland: Nederland en Ontwikkelingssamenwerking," last updated March 23, 2017, at https://anderetijden.nl/artikel/6687/Met-geld-en-idealen-naar-het-buitenland

11 Bouwcentrum Rotterdam, "International Course on Building," 1958. Archive W.C. van Gelderen. Collection Nieuwe Instituut / GLEXd21

12 "Bloeiperiode," Bouwcentrum Rotterdam, accessed September 30, 2025, https://bouwcentrumrotterdam.nl/?page_id=1197

13 M.G.M. Smits en L.J. van Damme, "Het Nederlandse ontwikkelingsbeleid, 1949–1989," in *Voor de ontwikkeling van de Derde Wereld. Politici en ambtenaren over de Nederlandse ontwikkelingssamenwerking, 1949–1989*, ed. L.J. van Damme and M.G.M. Smits (Boom, 2009), 11.

collaboration'; and another toward newly decolonised nations, where its efforts were cast as 'development aid.'[14]

FROM KNOWLEDGE EXPORT TO 'BOUWEXPORTCENTRUM'

As the 1960s began, many design and planning challenges were considered to have been mastered — such as rural-to-urban migration, the demand for high-density and low-cost housing, suburbanisation and urban sprawl, and the balance between soil and land use. It was now deemed time to export Dutch building knowledge to countries around the world that faced the pressures of population growth and rapid urban development.[15] Within the two aforementioned parallel attitudes to foreign cooperation, we can distinguish again two main methods of exporting knowledge abroad: educational curricula, later recast in trade missions and international activities of the 'Bouwexportcentrum'[16]. Both knowledge export methods relied on the international channels of the Bouwcentrum and marked a convergence of a superiority complex in design, planning, aid and trade. And, both methods served to probe the grounds for the reception of ideas, investigate possibilities for international missions, and lead to project lobbying.

Regarding the first method of the educational programme, the notion of 'export' reflects the Bouwcentrum's realisation that its focus needed to shift outward: to develop programmes for an international audience ready to be introduced to Dutch expertise. One early example is the *Asian Development Cycle*, a methodology deployed to teach a method of building 'cheaply and better' over a series of situated workshops. The Asian Development Cycle was established in 1968 after Van Ettinger's mission to India a year earlier, where 'needs for cooperation in the field of housing building and planning were assessed'.[17] The pilot of the course was made possible by the governments of both India and the Netherlands, where the Indian government selected a case (Masjid Moth neighbourhood) and the experts to be trained, while the Dutch government funded the course via the Bouwcentrum. The main goal of the training was to establish a pilot housing project focused on cost reduction, and solving the housing shortage via technical innovation in plans and construction methods.[18] The insight was that solutions can only be gained after studying the respective context, but interestingly the report on the Masjid Moth case states that 'the idea of the Development Cycle can be applied to every country'.[19] The pilot got further institutionalised through the *Colombian Development Cycle*, deployed via the Bouwcentrum offshoot *Bouwcentrum de Colombia*.[20]

14 Bouwcentrum Rotterdam, "1972", 1972. Archive W. Wissing. Collection Nieuwe Instituut / WISSd257
15 S. J. van Embden, "Planning in the Netherlands," lecture presented at the Singapore Institute of Planners, April 15 1974. Archive S.J. van Embden. Collection Nieuwe Instituut / ODEEd2124
16 Bouwcentrum Rotterdam, "Buitenlandactiviteiten in teken van Bouwexportcentrum," Bouwcentrum, 1984, 20. Collection Nieuwe Instituut
17 S.C. Kapoor et al. "Pilot housing project for India according to the Development cycle", Bouwcentrum, 1968, 4. Archive J.A. Harms. Collection Nieuwe Instituut.
18 Ibid., 5.
19 Ibid., 4.
20 Bouwcentrum, "Samenvatting Verslag 2e kwartaal 1971", 1971. Archive W. Wissing. Collection Nieuwe Instituut / WISSd257

In 1972, the Bouwcentrum consolidated its international curriculum into Bouwcentrum International Education (BIE), with a sizable staff abroad that was able to recruit local knowledge, partake in foreign consultancy work — from India to Uruguay — and published their findings regularly.[21] The BIE collaborated with Dutch architects and planners to test and deploy their knowledge, such as Habraken's SAR-method and Open Building-principles.[22] In the 1972 year report, the BIE is signalled to follow the Dutch trend in development cooperation, and combine the educational aim of the courses with a focus on economic development and job creation. Through the BIE, the Bouwcentrum strengthens its relationship with various governments and UN commissions, such as the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) — to establish capacity building courses for designers, and, interestingly, contractors.[23]

The second method builds on this undercurrent of European economic development, reframing it through the pursuit of market partnerships and the valorisation of knowledge via trade missions. Connections to the United Nations and government embassies helped in acquiring projects abroad. These missions, in turn, established the network needed for private contracts and consortium bids for Dutch architects and contractors. The Bouwcentrum, with its international network of building centres, nourished such networks; its staff remained brokers through their presence at missions, workshops, and courses. In the mid-1980s, the Bouwcentrum tellingly rebranded its international activities under the name Bouwexportcentrum, established in collaboration with the Dutch Ministries of Housing (VROM) and Economic Affairs (Economische Zaken).[24] The archives of architects such as Groosman, John Habraken, and Samuel van Embden offer revealing insights into the workings of such projects.

After a prominent post-war career, Samuel van Embden re-established his practice as OD205 in 1969, a year marking the renewal of his international engagements through emerging professional networks. Earlier, in 1948, Van Embden made an attempt to work abroad in newly liberated Indonesia, which he soon ended following the launch of the Dutch military offensive Operatie Kraai.[25] He did not stop maintaining international connections though, and in 1954 he co-founded a subcommittee within the International

21 Bouwcentrum "1972", 1972. Archive W. Wissing. Collection Nieuwe Instituut / WISSd257; Raúl di Lullo, "Evolutionary housing design: an instrumental contribution". Bouwcentrum International Education: Argentina and Rotterdam, 1981. Archive Stichting Architecten Research (SAR). Collection Nieuwe Instituut / SARE700.16
22 Corp, Dekker, De Jong, Spanraft, "Verslag gesprek SAR-Bouwcentrum" in Stukken betr. de samenwerking met de Stichting Bouwcentrum, onder meer inzake export bouwkennis, 26 June 1986. Archive Stichting Architecten Research (SAR). Collection Nieuwe Instituut / SARE430
23 Governments of Colombia, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Tanzania, and Thailand are mentioned in this short review. Bouwcentrum Rotterdam,"Levering van deskundigheid voor regionale projecten" in Bouwcentrum Magazine, 1978, 15. Archive E.F. Groosman. Collection Nieuwe Instituut / GROS242
24 Bouwcentrum Rotterdam, "Buitenlandactiviteiten in teken van Bouwexportcentrum," Bouwcentrum, 1984, 20. Collection Nieuwe Instituut
25 During the violent repression of decolonial movements, after the first Bersiap. Lonneke Bakkeren, "Biografische Schets van S.J. van Embden (1904–2000)" *in Inventaris van het geselecteerde archief van S.J. van Embden*, Nederlands Architectuur Instituut, 2004.

Federation for Housing and Planning (IFHP).[26] From 1960 onwards, Van Embden was an active member of the Bouwcentrum, where he lectured and served on its research committee, supposedly gaining additional connections to international governmental organisations, like the United Nations.[27] Van Embden participated in various projects with UNESCO and the World Bank. Most notably the 1964 design of the University of Caracas and the 1969 Kent Ridge Campus of the National University of Singapore (NUS), for which he was 'recommended to UNESCO for the role of consultant and master planner'.[28] Later, as part of the joint consultancy firm Consultants for City, Urban and Regional Planning (CONCARPLAN) with consultancy- and engineering firm Haskoning (precursor of Haskoning DHV), he advised on numerous city and campus planning projects in Indonesia, Singapore, and Malaysia from the early 1970s up until 1981.[29] This specific period and convergence of ventures is important to highlight, as this decade marks a key moment in Van Embden's international career while coinciding with a broader shift in Dutch governmental policy on development cooperation from aid to trade: doing away with solely delivering financial aid and explicitly advancing the integration of long-term development structures that could benefit the Dutch economy in return.[30]

As governments of developing countries typically lacked the additional labour-power and expertise required to scope, set up, and implement multilateral development operations, consortiums including research institutions (like TNO), consultants, universities, and design and engineering firms stepped in; each with their own incentives.[31] With still-present 'neocolonial motives', these international aid projects promoted high-capital ventures, creating so-called 'spinoff-effect[s] […] where an engineering firm, once integrated in a developing country secures one project after another'. [32] Companies and offices that haven't yet established such ties use ministry representatives, embassy workers, and organisations such as Bouwcentrum to express the wish to do so.[33] TNO, CONCARPLAN, and the umbrella consortium Netherlands Engineering Consultants (NEDECO) surface in SOMO's 1981 inventory of Dutch consultancy and engineering firms, revealing this dense web of proliferating practices and entangled operations in developing countries.[34] Following a successful first exchange in 1977, when a Bouwcentrum expert travelled to Egypt to develop a socio-economic strategy for a new city to be built in an 'untouched desert area,' for a tender with Euroconsult (a subsidiary of the Nederlandse Heidemaatschappij), the Bouwcentrum led a Netherlands Engineering and Construction mission to Egypt in 1979.[35] This mission sought to capitalise on strategic opportunities related to port development, dredging and land reclamation, sea defence works, and city planning.[36] Participating firms included Groosman Partners, Volker Stevin, Ballast-Nedam, Boskalis, and Haskoning, the latter companies operating under the umbrella of NEDECO.[37] Through this mission, the Bouwcentrum's dual methods of brokering were brought into alignment, as 'to investigate the possibilities of increasing the export of Dutch capital goods and engineering experience to Egypt'.[38]

CONCLUSION

Seeing that alongside frameworks of knowledge exchange (such as the BIE), a second and more assertive mode of export emerged, one driven by financial interests through trade missions, both of which are highly networked endeavours. Through such activities, the influence of the Netherlands, and, in a wider sense, other Western countries connected in the EEG and UN, remained in a post-colonial reality, politically, epistemologically, and financially.

In reviewing archival material, there was a considerable challenge of reconstructing fragmented sources, to gain a more complete image of the scope of the Bouwcentrum's international activities. There is thus a need to establish a networked approach, translating findings in a 'trans-institutional supra-archive', and linking this through shared platforms such as those of Nieuwe Instituut, for a more comprehensive analysis surrounding these entanglements.

26 Founded by Ebenezer Howard in 1913 to spread the ideals of the Garden-city movement

27 S.J. van Embden, Lezing over 'Hoogbouw' in het Bouwcentrum te Rotterdam op 10 maart 1960, 1960. Archive S.J. van Embden. Collection Nieuwe Instituut / ODEEd2803.

28 S.J. van Embden, CONCARPLAN Singapore, n.d. Archive S.J. van Embden. Collection Nieuwe Instituut / ODEEd2353; E.H. Gramsbergen, & Y. Söylev (2024). 'What Holland Can Offer': Samuel van Embden and the Knowledge Exchange on University Campus Designs, 1947–1976. In D. van den Heuvel, A. Campos Uribe, S. Dingen, & W. van de Sande (Eds.), Staying with Modernity?: (Dis)Entangling Coloniality and Architecture (Vol. XI, 109–114). TU Delft and Het Nieuwe Instituut, 112.

29 S. J. van Embden, Werkenlijsten, ODEE.110605547. Archive S.J. van Embden. Collection Nieuwe Instituut.

30 M.G.M. Smits en L.J. van Damme, 'Het Nederlandse ontwikkelingsbeleid, 1949–1989', in: L.J. van Damme en M.G.M. Smits (red.), Voor de ontwikkeling van de Derde Wereld. Politici en ambtenaren over de Nederlandse ontwikkelingssamenwerking, 1949–1989 (Amsterdam: Boom, 2009), 20.

31 Bouwcentrum Rotterdam, "Doel, Werkwijze en Activiteiten van het Bouwcentrum" in Bouwcentrum Magazine, 1978, 2. Archive E.F. Groosman. Collection Nieuwe Instituut / GROS242; Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal, "Bilaterale ontwikkelingssamenwerking: Om de kwaliteit van de Nederlandse hulp", zitting 1976–1977 14 700 hoofdstuk V, nr. 3, 29–30. https://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/ontwikkelingssamenwerking

32 Marc Dierikx, "Ontwikkelingssamenwerking was spagaat tussen moraliteit en handel", 7 jun 2022, Historisch Nieuwsblad https://www.historischnieuwsblad.nl/ontwikkelingssamenwerking-spagaat-tussen-moraliteit-en-handel/ ; Stichting Onderzoek Multinationale Ondernemingen (SOMO), Nederlands Advieswerk in Derde Wereld Landen; een Vooronderzoek, 1981, 3. https://www.somo.nl/nl/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2023/06/3491_Nederlands-advieswerk-in-derde-wereldlanden-een-vooronderzoek.pdf

33 Stichting Onderzoek Multinationale Ondernemingen (SOMO), Nederlands Advieswerk in Derde Wereld Landen; een Vooronderzoek, 1981, 96. https://www.somo.nl/nl/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2023/06/3491_Nederlands-advieswerk-in-derde-wereldlanden-een-vooronderzoek.pdf

34 Ibid., 23. Outside of the UNESCO, UNECE, and UN Habitat partnerships, the Bouwcentrum for instance had a joint research mission to Kenya with TNO on Building Materials (1971). Bouwcentrum, "Samenvatting Verslag 2e kwartaal 1971", 1971. Archive W. Wissing. Collection Nieuwe Instituut / WISSd257

35 Additional detail to illustrate Bouwcentrum's entanglement: 'Not one consultancy office in the Netherlands carries such multitude of disciplines in their ranks, and that is why Bouwcentrum was asked to make this socio-economic plan, with financial translation'. Bouwcentrum Rotterdam, "Computermodel voor bouw nieuwe stad in Egypte", in Bouwcentrum Magazine, 1978, 10. Archive E.F. Groosman. Collection Nieuwe Instituut / GROS242

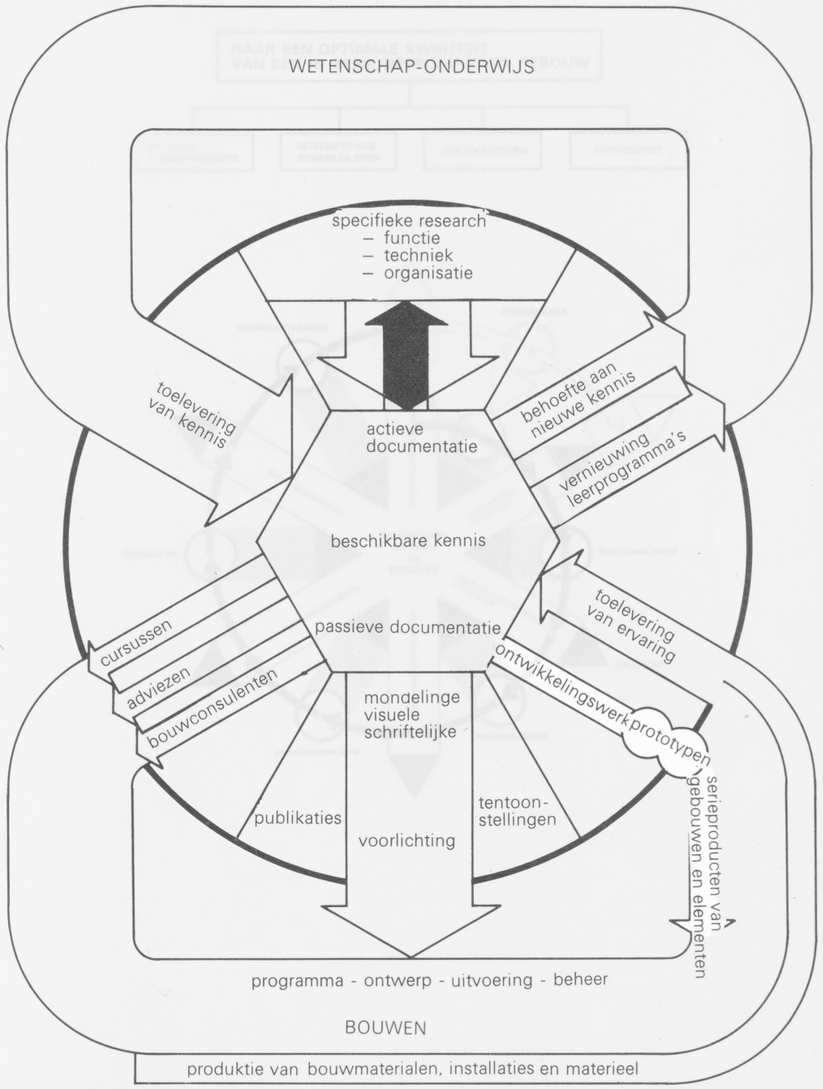
36 Peter Roosekrans, "Missie gaf visitekaartje af: Voor Nederlandse bouwers volop kansen in Egypte, maar wel geld meebrengen" in CM, 1 February 1980, 12–16. Archive E.F. Groosman. Collection Nieuwe Instituut / GROS242

37 Bouwcentrum Rotterdam, "Netherlands Engineering And Construction Mission to Egypt, 8–19 October 1979", 1979. Archive E.F. Groosman. Collection Nieuwe Instituut / GROS242

38 Botman: 'To investigate the possibilities for consultancy […] in connection with the structure of the building industry', and, 'to the training aspects for construction workers and supervising staff'. Bouwcentrum Rotterdam, 'Netherlands Engineering And Construction Mission to Egypt, 8–19 October 1979", 1979. Archive E.F. Groosman. Collection Nieuwe Instituut / GROS242

Fig. 12

Ontwikkelingswerk als sluitstuk



Jan van Ettinger, "Ontwikkelingswerk als sluitstuk" in Bouwcentrum: Idee, realisatie, perspectieven, 1966, fig. 12.
Courtesy of Nieuwe Instituut, B-129237.

NETHERLANDS ENGINEERING AND CONSTRUCTION MISSION

to

EGYPT

The purpose of the mission is:

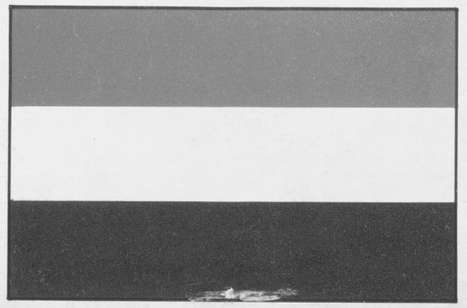
- To demonstrate the specific interest of the Dutch engineering and construction sector in intensifying the economic relations with Egypt to the benefit of both countries.
- To seek opportunities for all forms of technical and industrial co-operation as well as in the field of services such as consultancy, joint ventures, know-how contracts, licenses, etc.
- To investigate the possibilities of increasing the export of Dutch capital goods and engineering experience to Egypt.
- To identify in general the potentialities for the Dutch engineering and construction sector within the framework of the current Five Year Plan of Egypt.

NETHERLANDS ENGINEERING AND CONSTRUCTION MISSION

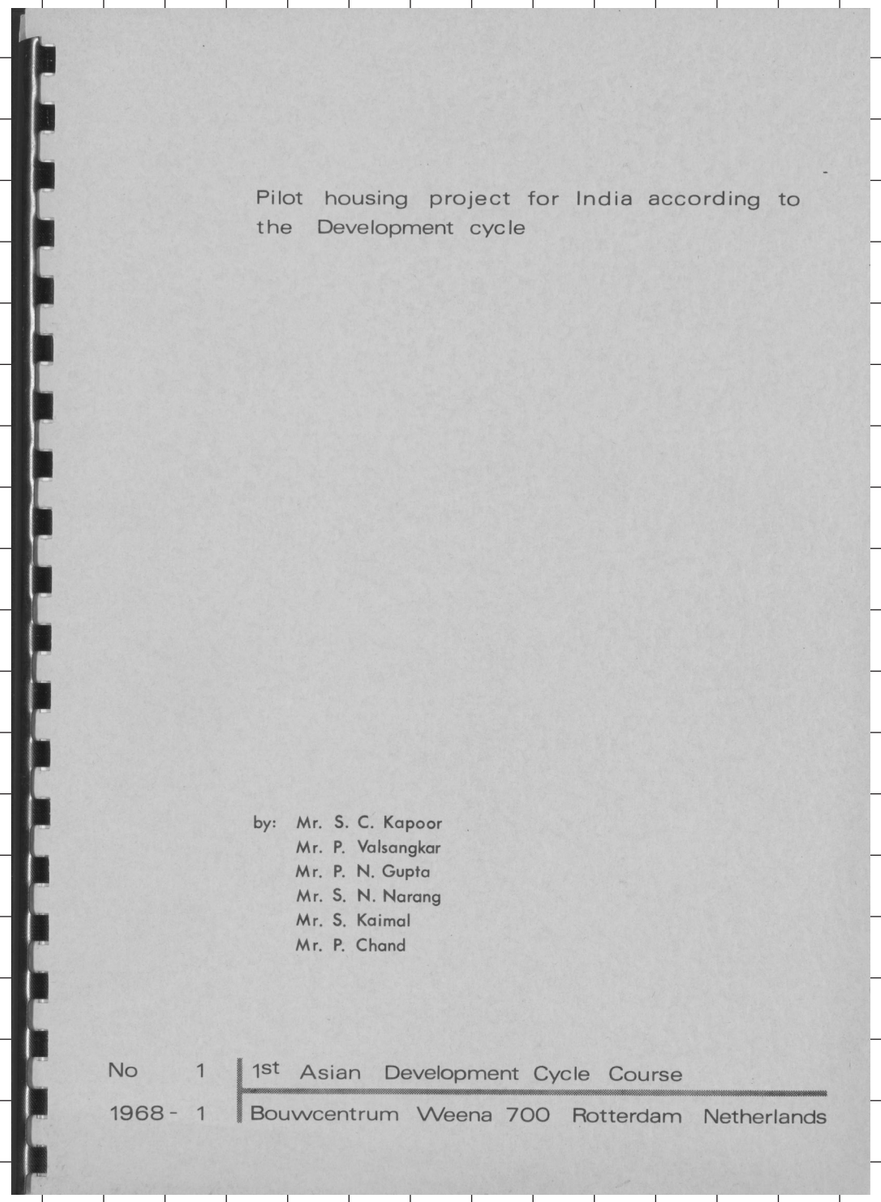
to

EGYPT

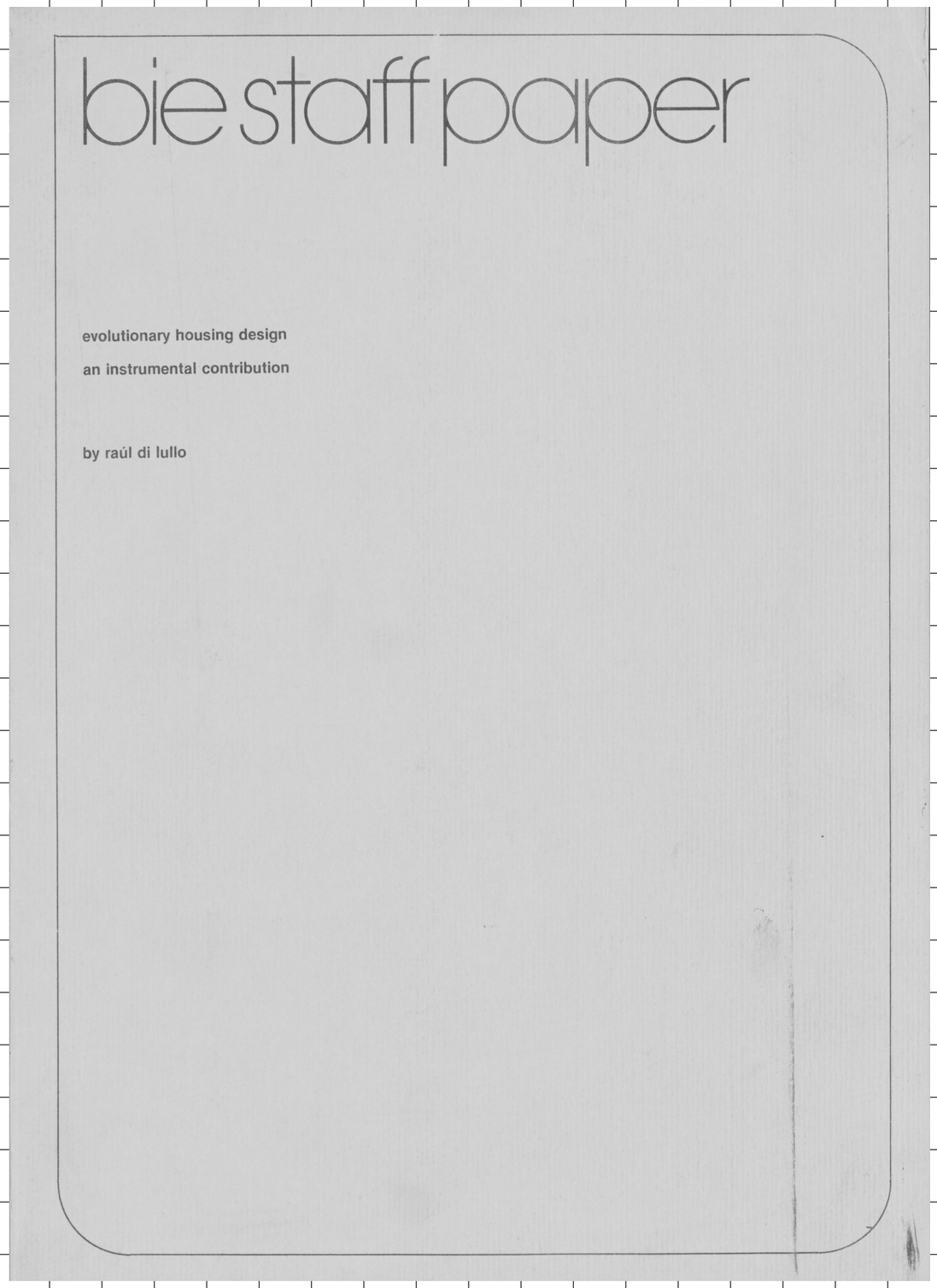
8 - 19 OCTOBER 1979



"Netherlands Engineering And Construction Mission to Egypt, 8–19 October 1979," 1979. Archive E.F. Grodsman.
Courtesy of Nieuwe Instituut, GROS242.

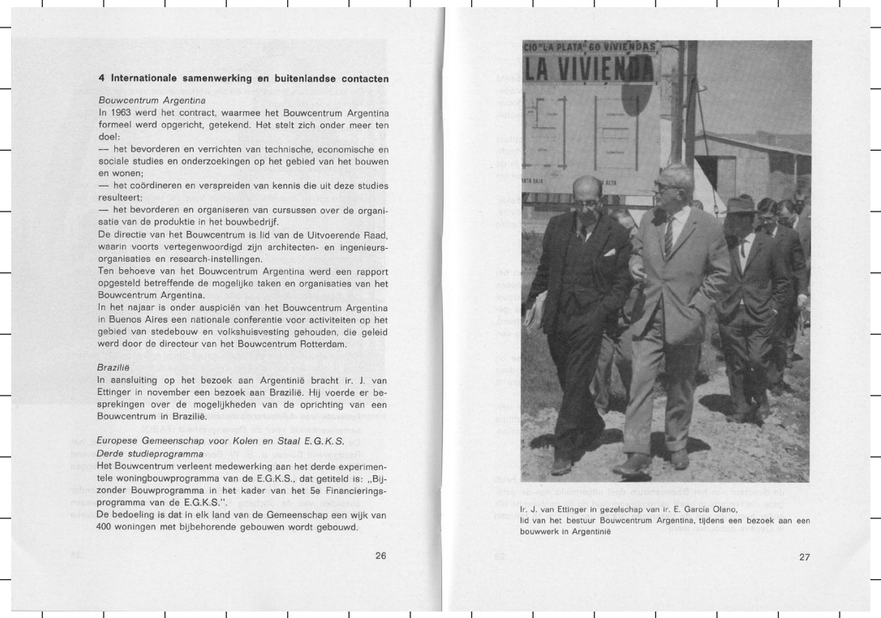


Jan van Ettinger, "Ontwikkelingswerk als sluitstuk" in Bouwcentrum: Idee, realisatie, perspectieven, 1966, fig. 12. Courtesy of Nieuwe Instituut, B-129237.



Raúl di Lullo, "Evolutionary Housing Design: An Instrumental Contribution," Rotterdam: Bouwcentum International Education, 1981. Archive Stichting Architecten Research. Courtesy of Nieuwe Instituut, SARE700.16.

Bouwcentrum, “Mr. Gardiner, executive secretary van de Economic Commission for Africa of the United Nations[…],” in *Jaarverslag*, 1967. Courtesy of Nieuwe Instituut, NIROV50N7-1967.



4 Internationale samenwerking en buitenlandse contacten

Bouwcentrum Argentina
In 1963 werd het contract, waarmee het Bouwcentrum Argentina formeel werd opgericht, getekend. Het stelt zich onder meer ten doel:
— het bevorderen en verrichten van technische, economische en sociale studies en onderzoekingen op het gebied van het bouwen en wonen;
— het coördineren en verspreiden van kennis die uit deze studies resulteert;
— het bevorderen en organiseren van cursussen over de organisatie van de produktie in het bouwbedrijf.
De directie van het Bouwcentrum is lid van de Uitvoerende Raad, waarin voorts vertegenwoordigd zijn architecten- en ingenieursorganisaties en research-instellingen.
Ten behoeve van het Bouwcentrum Argentina werd een rapport opgesteld betreffende de mogelijke taken en organisaties van het Bouwcentrum Argentina.
In het najaar is onder auspiciën van het Bouwcentrum Argentina in Buenos Aires een nationale conferentie voor activiteiten op het gebied van stedebouw en volkshuisvesting gehouden, die geleid werd door de directeur van het Bouwcentrum Rotterdam.

Brazilië
In aansluiting op het bezoek aan Argentinië bracht ir. J. van Ettinger in november een bezoek aan Brazilië. Hij voerde er besprekingen over de mogelijkheden van de oprichting van een Bouwcentrum in Brazilië.

Europese Gemeenschap voor Kolen en Staal E.G.K.S.
Derde studieprogramma
Het Bouwcentrum verleent medewerking aan het derde experimentele woningbouwprogramma van de E.G.K.S., dat getiteld is: „Bijzonder Bouwprogramma in het kader van het 5e Financieringsprogramma van de E.G.K.S.".
De bedoeling is dat in elk land van de Gemeenschap een wijk van 400 woningen met bijbehorende gebouwen wordt gebouwd.

26

Ir. J. van Ettinger in gezelschap van ir. E. Garcia Olano, lid van het bestuur Bouwcentrum Argentina, tijdens een bezoek aan een bouwwerk in Argentinië

27

Bouwcentrum, “ir. J. van Ettinger in gezelschap van ir. E. Olano, lid van het bestuur van Bouwcentrum Argentinië,” in Jaarverslag, 1963. Courtesy of Nieuwe Instituut, NIROV50N7-1963.

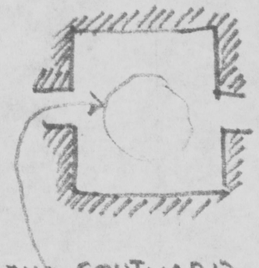
Beschouwingen bij een maquette door cursisten van de International Course on Housing, Planning and Building.

16

Bouwcentrum, "Beschouwingen bij een maquette door cursisten van de International Course on Housing, Planning, and Building," in Jaarverslag, 1969. Courtesy of Nieuwe Instituut, NIROV50N7-1969.

THE CULTURAL BACKGROUND.

"EL PATIO DE VECINDARIO"
THE COURTYARD - ~~NON~~ THENATIC - OPEN SPACE [1]



THE COUTYARD.

NOT MORE THAN 30 FAMILIES USE # A COMMUNAL OPEN SPACE LIKE ACCESS TO THEIR DEPARTAMENTS THIS IS ~~THE~~ IN LATIN AMERICA THE SPATIAL ELEMENT THAT GIVES THE NEIGHBORHOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN THE FAMILIES, LIKE "EL COMPADRE" "EL PADRINO" ETC.
THIS SPACE HAS A MULTIPLE FUNCTION, AND IT IS A SEMI-PUBLIC DOMAIN.

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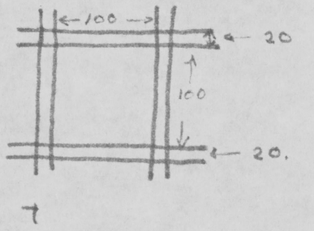
IC-0-101 form. A4

THE DESIGN METHOD.-

WE CARRY OUT THE PROJECT AT THREE LEVELS : THE UNIT, THE CLUSTER AND THE NEIGHBORHOOD. AND WE USE IN ALL THEM THE S.A.R DESIGN METHOD.

THE PRINCIPALS POINTS THAT WE USE OF THE S.A.R ARE THE FOLLOWS.

0.- THE S.A.R. MODULAR COORDINATION. WE USE THE 1.20 x 1.20 M MODULE AS A BASIC ~~STRUCTURE~~. MODULAR STRUCTURE



THIS MODULE IT WAS USED AT THE THREE LEVELS OF THE PROJECT.

THE UNIT LEVEL.

IN THE UNIT LEVEL (DESIGN OF THE SUPPORT STRUCTURE FOR THE DWELLING) WE CHOOSE ONE OF THE SCHEMES THAT HAD BEEN DEVELOPED IN THE FIRST

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IC-0-101 form. A4

Jorge Andrade, Enrique Westrup, “An alternative for developing housing schemes in Mexico (Special Case Monterrey). Uitgave bij de '22th International Course of Housing, Planning and Building 1973'," Rotterdam: Bouwcentrum Rotterdam, 1973. Archive Stichting Architecten Research. Courtesy of Nieuwe Instituut, SARE500.169.

Jorge Andrade, Enrique Westrup, “An alternative for developing housing schemes in Mexico (Special Case Monterrey). Uitgave bij de '22th International Course of Housing, Planning and Building 1973'," Rotterdam: Bouwcentrum Rotterdam, 1973. Archive Stichting Architecten Research. Courtesy of Nieuwe Instituut, SARE500.169.

Biographies

ANDREAS KALPAKCI is an architectural historian researching the intersections of architecture, international organisations, and media in the 20th century. He is Lecturer and Head of Research at the Chair of the Theory of Architecture at ETH Zurich. Building on his dissertation, *Making CIAM: The Organisational Techniques of the Moderns, 1928–1959* (ETH Zurich, 2017), his research on architectural networks has appeared in *East West Central* (2017), *Radical Pedagogies* (2022), and *Grey Room* (2023). His current project, recognised with an MSCA Seal of Excellence (2022), examines postwar building industrialisation initiatives linking the United Nations, UIA, CIB, and Rotterdam's Bouwcentrum.

ANITA HALIM LIM is a researcher, curator, and architectural designer. She studied architecture at Universitas Tarumanagara Jakarta and then received her MA in Heritage Studies from Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. Her previous experience includes working as a project architect in the conservation of Jakarta Old Town. She was the co-curator for the exhibition 'Indonesia and the Amsterdam School' at Museum het Schip Amsterdam (2022–2023) and Erasmus Huis Jakarta (2024–2025). Anita is also part of the curatorial team at Museum Arsitektur Indonesia. Since March 2025, she is a PhD candidate at Universiteit van Amsterdam as part of research project 'Concrete Colonialism: Architecture and Heritage in Indonesia around Independence'.

ALBENA YANEVA is a theorist of architecture whose work traverses the fields of architectural theory, anthropology, philosophy, science and technology studies, and sociology. Currently Full Professor of Architectural Theory at the Politecnico di Torino and Adjunct Professor at Columbia's GSAPP, Yaneva was previously based at the University of Manchester, where she led the Manchester Architecture Research Group (MARG) for nearly two decades. She holds a DEA from the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales and a PhD from Mines ParisTech, where she studied under Bruno Latour.

CATHELIJNE NUIJSINK is a Senior Lecturer at the Institute for the History and Theory of Architecture (gta) at ETH Zurich, where she teaches the two core theory courses for master's students in architecture. In 2022, while serving as a Postgraduate Associate in the History, Theory, and Criticism of Architecture and Art (HTC) program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), she launched her SNSF-funded research project 'Unlocking the "Contact Zone": Toward a New Historiography of Architecture', using the Any Conferences as a case study. She is currently an SNSF Return Grantee at ETH Zurich, where she is preparing her Habilitation and developing a monograph based on the project.

CHINMAY GHEWARE (he/him) is an architect and a historian, with a master's degree in architectural

history and theory from CEPT University, India. His academic work and research are focussed on topics surrounding 20th century architecture and memory studies. He has recently co-edited ‘Building a State: 75 Years of Architecture and Engineering in Gujarat’ (2022, GICEA). He co-runs a curatorial practice and is currently visiting faculty at CEPT University, where he conducts studio and seminar-based courses for graduate programmes in Architectural History and Research along with Conservation and Regeneration, discussing methods in research and public scholarship.

DIRK VAN DEN HEUVEL is an Associate Professor with the Department of Architecture at TU Delft and the head and co-founder of the Jaap Bakema Study Centre, a collaboration between TU Delft and Nieuwe Instituut. His expertise is in modern architecture, welfare state policies, housing and planning, and their related fields of cultural studies and discourse analysis with a special interest in archives and exhibitions. Van den Heuvel is in charge of the Architecture Archives of the Future group, which positions itself at the intersections of advanced architectural design and research, history and theory, archival studies and museology. The group aims to develop innovative methods of architectural knowledge production based on the new opportunities presented by digital technologies. Van den Heuvel was previously a visiting scholar at Monash University, received the Richard Rogers Fellowship from Harvard GSD and was the curator of the Dutch Pavilion for the 2014 Venice Biennale.

ELLA MÜLLER is a first-year doctoral researcher in the Department of History at the European University Institute, Florence, pursuing a PhD on the history of urban renewal and building obsolescence in interwar Europe. The topic is based on her master’s thesis in architecture, which approached the history of modern architecture from the point of view of critical waste studies (Aalto University, 2022). Previously, Müller has worked for several years in restorations and building history research at the Helsinki architecture company Talli Architects and as an editorial assistant in the Finnish Architectural Review.

EYTAN MANN is an architect, computational designer, and Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment of TU Delft, part of the Architecture Archives of the Future research group. His work examines modes of transmedial historiography by mixing archival materials with digital modelling. In his research projects, he leverages computation to augment sites and archives, and designs new interfaces with architectural history. Through design research, Eytan seeks to rethink epistemic gaps between the physical and virtual, past and present, and between the object and subject. His research focuses on conflicted built heritage sites in Israel-Palestine and exposes multiple historical narratives. Eytan holds an S.MarchS degree from MIT School of Architecture and a PhD in Architecture from the Technion Faculty of Architecture and Town Planning.

HAMED KHOSRAVI is an architect, researcher and educator. He studied architecture in Tehran, holds Master’s degrees from TU Delft and IUAV, and gained his PhD from ‘The City as a Project’ programme at the Berlage Institute and TU Delft. He is co-director of the Projective Cities MPhil programme at the Architectural Association School of Architecture, and is a visiting professor at EPFL. His practice develops research-led curatorial projects, such as ‘Zoe Zenghelis: Fields, Fragments, Fictions’ for Carnegie Museum of Art (2022), ‘Revolution Begins at Home’ for Sharjah Architecture Triennial (2019), and ‘The Architecture of Fulfilment’ for the Venice Biennale (2014). His books include ‘Do You Remember How Perfect Everything Was? The Work of Zoe Zenghelis’ (2022), ‘The Elusive Modernist: Gabriel Guevrekian’ (2020), ‘Tehran-Life Within Walls’ (2017).

IRINA DAVIDOVICI is an architect and historian and the director of the gta Archive at ETH Zurich. Since the Institute for the History and Theory of Architecture (gta) was founded at ETH Zurich in 1967, the gta Archive has been collecting and archiving original documents on architecture, urbanism, civil engineering, design and landscape design from the mid-19th century to the present. Davidovici’s research focuses on housing studies and Swiss architecture. She is the author of ‘Forms of Practice. German-Swiss Architecture 1980–2000’ (gta Verlag 2012 and 2018) and ‘The Autonomy of Theory: Ticino Architecture and Its Critical Reception’ (gta Verlag 2024). Her book ‘Common Grounds: Comparative Studies of Early Housing Estates’ will be published in 2025.

JERE KUZMANIĆ is a PhD candidate at the Polytechnic University of Catalonia (UPC), where he is also a department member at Urbanism, Territory and Landscape. He currently studies radical histories of urban planning culture(s) with a broader interest for social and environmental justice, direct action and cooperation in urbanism and urban degrowth. His work is published in various journals and books. Amongst others, he contributed a chapter in European Planning History in the 20th Century A Continent of Urban Planning (Routledge, 2023).

JIAYAO JIANG is a PhD candidate at the University of Cambridge, funded by the Open-Oxford-Cambridge AHRC DTP. She holds degrees in Architectural Conservation from Sapienza University of Rome, and in History of Architecture from Nanjing University. Her doctoral research investigates transnational influences and the making of national heritage in post-war Rome, bridging cultural heritage, architectural history, and Italian cultural history. Jiayao has contributed to conservation projects across China, Europe, and the Middle East, and has conducted research at leading institutions, including the Palace Museum in Beijing, the Bibliotheca Hertziana-Max Planck Institute, and the British School at Rome. She is a research fellow at the Huntington Library and the Library of Congress, and has also worked with ICCROM and UNESCO on World Heritage management.

JOY BURGESS is a lecturer in landscape studies at the University of Liverpool where she is currently carrying out her PhD in collaboration with Historic England. Her PhD looks to tell the histories of female landscape architects in post-war Britain. Joy also works on the editorial team for the Women’s History Network Journal and has

recently been a research assistant alongside Professor Luca Csepely-Knorr on the AHRC projects ‘IFLA 75: Uncovering Hidden Histories in Landscape Architecture’ and ‘Women of the Welfare Landscape’.

JULIANA KEI is a Senior Lecturer (Assistant Professor) at the University of Liverpool. She is interested in the intersections of architecture, planning, and environmental debates in the late 20th century. She has recently published ‘Inventing the Built Environment: Planning, Science, and Control in British Architecture’ (Routledge, 2024), which examines the ebbs and flows in British planning by retrieving the little-known origin of the now ubiquitous term ‘built environment’.

LÉA-CATHERINE SZACKA is Associate Professor in Architectural Studies at the University of Manchester, Director of the Manchester Architecture Research Group (MARG), and vice-president of the European Architectural History Network (EAHN). Szacka has published many books including ‘Exhibiting the Postmodern: The 1980 Venice Architecture Biennale’ (2016), ‘Biennials/Triennials: Conversations on the Geography of Itinerant Display’ (2019), ‘Paolo Portoghesi: Architecture Between History, Politics and Media’ (2023), and, ‘Its About Time: The Architecture of Change’ (2024). She co-curated the 10th International Architecture Biennale of Rotterdam (2022), and the exhibition ‘Crossed Histories: Gae Aulenti, Ada Louise Huxtable and Phyllis Lambert, on Architecture and the City’ (2025).

LEONARDO ZUCCARO MARCHI is an architect and Assistant Professor in Architecture and Urban Studies at Politecnico di Milano (PoliMi), Department of Architecture and Urban Studies (DAStU). He holds a joint PhD from the IUAV University of Venice and TU Delft, and a joint Master of Architecture degree from Milano Politecnico and Torino Politecnico. He is author of ‘The Heart of the City’ (Routledge 2018), and he is cofounder of CoPE_ Collective of Projects in Equipoise.

LUCA CSEPELY-KNORR Research Chair in Architecture at the University of Liverpool School of Architecture. Her research focuses on the intersections of gender, architectural and landscape history in the 20th century. Since 2022, she has been leading the Arts and Humanities Research Council (UK) funded projects, ‘Women of the Welfare Landscape’, and ‘IFLA 75: Uncovering Hidden Histories in Landscape Architecture’.

LUDO GROEN is a postdoctoral researcher and lecturer at ETH Zurich’s Institute for the History and Theory of Architecture (gta), where he defended his doctorate in 2024. He previously worked at The Berlage at Delft University of Technology and the Nieuwe Instituut in Rotterdam. His writings are published by the Journal of Contemporary History, OASE Journal for Architecture, Drawing Matter, Kunst + Architektur in der Schweiz, and the gta Verlag.

MANU P. SOBTI is Director of International Engagement and Senior Lecturer at the School of Architecture, Design & Planning, University of Queensland. Previously Associate Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, his research examines ‘deep place’ histories of the natural environment and its eco-centric actors across the Eurasian Silk Road and the Indian Subcontinent, with a focus on Land as Archive. He is the author of ‘Chandigarh Re- think’ (ORO Publishers, 2017), with two books forthcoming: ‘Space and Collective Identity in South Asia’ (Bloomsbury, Oct. 2025) and ‘Riverine Landscapes, Urbanity and Conflict’ (Routledge, March 2026). His current project explores the Pierre Jeanneret and Aditya Prakash Archives at the CCA, Montreal.

MARIA PASZKIEWICZ is an independent curator with a Master’s degree in Curatorial Studies from the University of Navarra, Spain. She is an architect from the University of La Plata (2008) and holds a Master’s degree in History of Architecture from Torcuato Di Tella University (2019) Argentina. She has taught Architecture, History, and Theory at UNLP and also served as an Art History professor at private universities. Between 2020–2023, she worked as Editorial Coordinator at FAU UNLP. Since 2024, she is a PhD candidate at the School of Architecture, University of Navarra, interested in innovation and creativity applied to architectural design education.

MOE OMIYA is an academic assistant and PhD candidate at Global History Chair at the University of Zurich. Growing up in Tokyo and Berlin, she did her undergraduate studies at the University of Tokyo (architectural theory and German studies) and at Bauhaus-University Weimar (architecture). Along with B.A. dissertation on early Bauhaus and its experimental house, she translated a German book ‘Was ist das Bauhaus?’ into Japanese, becoming the publisher’s third best-seller in 2019. She received her master’s degree from the University of Oxford, in history of art and visual culture, with a dissertation on the Isokon Flats in London.

PAPPAL SUNEJA is a PhD Scholar at Bauhaus-Universität Weimar, specializing in architectural history and theory. His research examines the role of ‘Design’ periodical (1957–1988) in shaping India’s modern architectural discourse post-independence. As founder of the Architectural Journalism & Criticism Organization (AJC+), he promotes critical thinking in design through publications and competitions. He has presented his work at leading institutions including MIT, Harvard GSD, and the Canadian Centre for Architecture. In 2024, he received the DAAD Award for academic excellence and intercultural engagement. His recent book, ‘Charles Fabri: An Art Critic, Building Bridges between India & Europe’, reflects his broader interest in transnational dialogues and postcolonial cultures in architecture and media.

PATRICIA NOORMAHOMED is an architect with a PhD in Architectural Heritage from the Polytechnic University of Madrid. She is currently an integrated researcher at Dinâmia’CET-Iscte and a member of the editorial board of the journal Architectural Histories. Previously, she was a Swiss Excellence postdoctoral fellow in Urban Studies at the University of Basel and a lecturer at Wutivi University. She has also been a visiting researcher at Habiter – Study Centre of the Free University

of Brussels and a researcher in the FCT-funded projects ‘ArchWar’ and ‘WomArchStruggle’. Her research interests include 20th-century architecture, urban housing, built heritage, African modernism, and colonial and postcolonial history.

RICHARD ANDERSON is Professor of Architectural History and Theory at the University of Edinburgh. His books include Ludwig Hilberseimer’s ‘Metropolisarchitecture and Selected Essays’ (2012; fourth print edition 2019), ‘Russia: Modern Architectures in History’ (2015), and ‘Wolkenbügel: El Lissitzky as Architect’ (2024). He is currently Elizabeth and J. Richardson Dilworth Member at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton. His current projects include the assembly of a volume of El Lissitzky’s writings on architecture and the city and a transnational history of architectural activism in Europe.

SEAN YUXIANG LI (they/them) is an architect, artist, and research assistant at the University of Copenhagen, working with the Museum of Copenhagen. Their research probes (pre)informal architecture and alternative urban histories, grounding how squatting, androgynous spatiality, and diasporic domesticity unsettle inherited urban landscapes. Sean has presented work at ETH Zurich, the Royal Danish Academy, Copenhagen Architecture Festival, and ARCC-EAAE, ICNS, and EAHN conferences, and regularly collaborates with NGOs to link critical scholarship to community practice. architecture disobeys.

SETAREH NOORANI is an architect, researcher and curator at Nieuwe Instituut. Setareh Noorani’s (curatorial) research at the Nieuwe Instituut focusses on the role of feminism, decolonial practices, non-institutional forms of representation and more-than-human perspectives in the way we build, remember and change cities. She currently leads the project ‘New Currents: Indian Ocean Futures’ and previously co-initiated the Open Call Hidden Histories (2024) and the Arus Balik — Shifting Currents programme (2024–2025), curated the exhibition Designing the Netherlands (2023), and led the long-term project Collecting Otherwise (2021–2025). Noorani has been published in Footprint Journal, and Radical Housing Journal, amongst others. Noorani holds a master’s degree (MSc) in Architecture (TU Delft, cum laude).

STEF DINGEN is coordinator of the Jaap Bakema Study Centre at Nieuwe Instituut and a practising architect, researcher, and educator. His writings exploring the representational quality of architecture on the boundary of the private and the public were published in Tijdschrift *Article* (2021, 2023) and on ArchiNed (2025). Most recently he co-edited the re-edition of a rare, limited run of Le Corbusier’s ‘Vers Une Architecture’ designed by Willem Sandberg and co-curated the accompanying exhibition ‘Revisiting Vers Une Architecture’ in the Faculty of Architecture at the TU Delft (2024). Stef holds MSc degrees from the TU Delft and The Berlage Center for Advanced Studies in Architecture and Urban Design, and has held guest teaching positions at the Amsterdam Academy of Architecture and the Fontys Academy of Architecture and Urbanism in Tilburg.

TASHANIA AKEMAH is an exhibition designer who has collaborated with renowned institutions such as the Guggenheim Museum and the Carnegie Museum of Art. She holds a BFA in Architecture and Architectural History from the Savannah College of Art and Design, where she graduated with a thesis titled ‘The Production of a Colonialist Vision: Misrepresentation of Traditional Indonesian Architecture Through Thilly Weissenborn’s Lens and Colonial Fairs’. She later earned her Master of Architecture from Columbia University’s Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation (GSAPP). Her work encompasses research on architecture’s role in exhibitions, media, and the politics of representation.

TOMÀ BERLANDA is Professor of Architectural Technology at the Politecnico di Torino, Honorary Research Associate at the University of Cape Town, and co-founder of astudio.space architecture & urbanism. His teaching and research focus on notions of environment, construction, ground, and land across geographies of the South. With his collaborative practices he has produced internationally recognised design work in Eastern and Southern Africa, ranging from school buildings, early childhood development centres, and health facilities. He has served as technical reviewer for the Aga Khan Award for Architecture, nominator for the Obel Award, and is an academic board member of the African Futures Institute.

YAĞIZ SÖYLEV is an architect and researcher. He is a PhD candidate at TU Delft’s Department of Architecture, where he also teaches and coordinates several MSc design studios within the Building Knowledge section. His research explores design thinking in architectural practice, learning environments, and global networks of knowledge exchange. Since 2021, he has been co-responsible for the cartographic studies in the *OverHolland* journal. In 2024, he began serving as advisor to the Stimuleringsfonds Creatieve Industrie. He has taught as guest lecturer at the Academy of Architecture in Amsterdam and Università Iuav di Venezia. He holds an MSc degree with honours in Architecture from TU Delft. His work has been exhibited internationally, including the 16th Venice Architecture Biennale, where he was associate curator of *Vardiya — The Shift*.

Programme

26.11.2025
Nieuwe Instituut
Auditorium

13.00
Doors open

13.30
Welcome

13.45
Networks and Conferences
Moderated by Andreas Kalpakci

Against CIAM:
Socialist Architectural Networks
in Europe, ca. 1951
Richard Anderson
(University of Edinburgh)

Modern Planning Meets the Historic
Town: Contradictions and Frictions in
the 1929 IFHTP Congress in Rome
Ella Müller (European University
Institute)

'To Keep Abreast of World Ideas':
Gender, Networks, and Landscape
Architecture as a Transnational Project
Luca Csepely-Knorr and Joy Burgess
(University of Liverpool)

The Anyone Project as a
Mediatised Network of Knowledge
Exchange (1990–2001)
Cathelijne Nuijsink (ETH Zurich)

Q&A

15.15
Break

15.45
Networks and Coloniality
Moderated by Eytan Mann

Blueprints of a Shift:
Moments and Movements
that Shaped Post-Independence
Indian Architecture
Chinmay Gheware (CEPT University)

Aligned in Exchange:
Fairgrounds of Sovereignty
Tashania Akemah
(Independent Scholar)

The Aga Khan Award and the
Idea of 'Modern African' Architecture
Tomà Berlanda (Politecnico di Torino)

Memories of Palimpsest:
Yamada Mamoru and the
Architecural Discourses on the
German-Japanese Colony of Tsingtao
Moe Omiya (University of Zurich)

Q&A

17.15
Break

17.30
Networks and the National Collection

Architecture of Development:
The Bouwcentrum as International
Broker of Dutch Building Knowledge
Setareh Noorani (Nieuwe Instituut)

18.15
Buffet-style Dinner
At Nieuwe Cafe

19.30
Keynote

The Orbits of Archiving:
A Pragmatist Perspective
Albena Yaneva

27.11.2025
TU Delft
Berlage Rooms

10.30
Doors open

10.45
Welcome

11.00
Networks and Education

Moderated by Yağız Söylev

Tracing CIAM Summer School's Networks: Continuity, Connections, and Peerships in CIAM's Experimental Pedagogy
Leonardo Zuccaro Marchi
(Politecnico di Milano)

Class of '30: 'International' Students and the Liverpool School of Architecture
Juliana Kei (University of Liverpool)

The World as Project: Pedagogical Exchanges between the Hochschule für Gestaltung Ulm and the Design Schools of Latin America
María Paszkiewicz
(University of Navarra, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology)

Cooperation and Exchange Networks in Architectural Education: Notes from Post-Independence Mozambique
Patricia Noormahomed
(Dinâmia'CET-Iscte)

Q&A

12.30
Lunch break

14.00
Networks and Dwelling

Moderated by Dirk van den Heuvel

UNRRA-Casas and Post-War Social Housing in Italy: Transnational Exchanges and State Warfare
Jiayao Jiang (University of Cambridge)

From Jan to Yankee: Tracing the Jengki Architecture Networks in Post-Independence Indonesia
Anita Halim Lim
(University of Amsterdam)

Affinity Group as Architectural Practice: Dweller-Controlled Urbanism and Anarchist Architects
Jere Kuzmanic
(Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya)

Archipelagos of Appropriation: Squatting and the Dissemination of Spatial Knowledge
Sean Yuxiang Li
(University of Copenhagen)

Q&A

15.30
Break

16.00
Networks and Actors

Moderated by Irina Davidovici

The Friendship and Archives of Werner Moser and Mart Stam
Ludo Groen (ETH Zurich)

Intertwined Avant-Gardes: Bauhaus Dialogues with Tagore, Shantiniketan, and Indian Modernism
Pappal Suneja (Bauhaus Universität)
and Manu P. Sobti
(The University of Queensland)

The Modern Socialite: Gabriel Guevrekian, from Parisian Salons to American Universities
Hamed Khosravi
(Architectural Association)

Phyllis Lambert and the Canadian Centre for Architecture: Towards the Creation of a Global Network of Exchange
Léa-Catherine Szacka
(University of Manchester)

Q&A

17.30
Closing Remarks & Drinks

CONFERENCE

Conference Organising Committee

Dirk van den Heuvel
(Convenor of the conference, Head of the Jaap Bakema Study Centre)
Stef Dingen
(Coordinator of the Jaap Bakema Study Centre)
Irina Davidovici
(Co-Convenor of the conference)
Andreas Kalpakci
(Co-Convenor of the conference)

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SPECIAL THANKS

EFL Stichting for their generous financial support, providing travel grants for a selected number of early career researchers.

Published by Delft University of Technology and Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam, November 2025.

ISBN number: 978-90-835794-2-9

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