

DRAWING VERSUS MODERN ARCHITECTURE. DRAWING IN THE DEBATE ON ORNAMENTATION IN VIENNA

Mariano González Presencio

Adolf Loos and Josef Hoffmann represent the two opposing positions in the debate that occurred at the change of the century in Vienna on the subject of ornamentation. Regardless of the critical assessment that has been made of their respective figures, what are of interest are the arguments used in their controversies, because they coincide to a certain extent with some of the issues that have still not been solved by modern architecture. In this sense, their ideas on the role reserved for drawing in architectural design are by no means tangential. Drawing was the instrument used by Hoffmann and the secessionist artists in their desire to reduce the differences between arts and crafts.

Adolf Loos was against this expansive desire of the secessionists. Aware of the role played by drawing in this elimination of the frontiers between major and minor art forms, he was critical of those who he called "drawing gentlemen".

It is not merely a question of ability. This controversy reflects a series of considerations that affect the definition of the discipline itself, from the limits of its independence to the specific matter with which it operates, including the most important issue (for Loos at least) of language and representation, in a debate that, as nearly everything in Vienna at the end of the century, has a manifest moral background.

The truth is what Loos is searching for. For him, the truth of objects is related to their use and only when they become inadequate because the use has changed or become obsolete, is a change in design justified. The use of ornamentation in this kind of objects is merely a way of "disguising" their truth.

From this perspective, it is clear that the differences of opinion between Loos and Hoffmann were deeper than a mere discrepancy between professional abilities. Not only that, but the issues involved in the controversy were the subject of debates that were never solved by the Modern Movement: the different between architecture and applied arts, or, in other words, the possibility of disciplinary independence and the consideration of the concepts of shape and space as opposites, or one as dependent on the other. Underlying all this is the issue defined in the title, the function of drawing in modern architecture, for which the comparison between Loos and Hoffmann is a mere illustration.

PERSPECTIVES IN LITERATURE, PAINTING AND ARCHITECTURE

Fernando Inciarte

There has never been a lack of theories about art among artists. In general, it used to be taken as granted what art was; and this was never in doubt. This naïveté or security is now a thing of the past. The essence of art in its glorious past was, as some said, hidden; and that now the medium of art tries to bring this into the open. So art has acquired a new, broader definition; this includes its own philosophy and a reflection of its very self, among others. This undoubtedly means that art has reached a crisis point. "Any crisis is purification," said Schelling. From the crisis point of traditional art to the beginning of the century the hope was always that art might purify itself; that in some way it might reappraise itself to its very core, and this way be able to show its all. This desire for art to give its all is was hidden for centuries, and it is now that this is coming to the fore.

By concentrating in the essence of art we can look for the pure essence in each of the arts. Today's art can help us better ask ourselves the question about the art in previous centuries, and what was considered art then.

Let us reflect on the evolution of architecture, painting and literature from the distant past to today. By this criterion, famous figures such as Plato, Velázquez and Theo Van Doesburg have influenced the evolution and conception of art from ancient times to nowadays.

ENGLISH MODELS IN THE 17TH CENTURY. FROM BALTHAZAR GERBIER TO CHRISTOPHER WREN

Carlos Montes Serrano

The study on the use of models, as a system of representation, in the 17th Century in England, provides interesting information on the architectural ideas of the period. In addition to the influence of the writings of the Italian renaissance, we can see that the use of models goes together with the emergence of the architecture as a profession, the importing of new architectural styles, and the importance given to the idea of design rather than construction.

The study is based on the most important English architectural writings and treaties of the 17th Century. Of particular significance are the two treaties written by Sir Balthazar Gerbier (1662 and 1663), little studied before now, since they describe architecture in England after the restoration in the reign of Charles II Stuart. The manuscripts of Sir Roger Pratt (1660) and Sir Roger North (1698) provide additional information on the change in tastes and the interest of English nobility in the theory of practice of architecture. In this respect, the nobles interested in architecture suggest the use of models, together with drawings and educated references to foreign treaties, in opposition to the practical and trade-based knowledge of Surveyors.

The article also mentions the models that were known to exist, or are still preserved, from that period. From the writings and memoirs of Christopher Wren, published in the *Parentalia*, we discover that the traditional use of models did become common practice in the configuration of projects and design decisions. This tradition was to be continued by Wren's disciples and followers throughout the first third of the 18th Century.

OBJECT, IMAGE, AURA. LE CORBUSIER AND THE ARCHITECTURE OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Daniel Naegele

In the early 20th Century, new technologies and discoveries in physics and psychology privileged the subjective and relative over the objective and absolute. Architecture, seemingly of an unquestionable objectivity, was now subject to a 'crisis of the object'. Photography contributed to this crisis. It construed architecture as image. Initially this liberated Modern-movement architecture, detaching it from the tyranny of tradition and freeing it from its place of origin and from the effects of aging. Ultimately, however, it interfered with the authenticity of the object, depreciating its authority and effacing its 'aura'. The image of architecture bred an architecture of image.

What to do? Architecture could resist representation, cultivating instead the object's authenticity.

Conversely, architecture could become representation. Le Corbusier, the century's most influential architect, discovered a third way. Captivated by purposeful visual ambiguity, he joined artifact and representation. He arrived at a new architecture of illusionist space, a 'seemingly authentic' architecture that accessed cult value the aura through the illusion of exhibition media.

Le Corbusier employed four strategies to conjoin real and representational space. Initially, he invoked the space of representation with large-scale 'writing' on building facades, resulting in a word/image paradox.

Secondly, he enlarged the photograph to the size of architecture, building a 'wall' of photographic images at the Pavillon Suisse, a overlay of representation. Next, in his 'Electronic Poem' pavilion in Brussels, Le

Corbusier created a 'space of representation' comprised largely of electronic emissions, of light and sound that evoked cult sensation. Finally, he employed the human body as metaphor for architecture. By equating body and building, the 'aura' was re-presented. Myth and Modern architecture were conjoined. The temporal was imbued with the transcendent sense of the eternal.

With each strategy, Le Corbusier evaporated the object into sensation, and an aura-like atmosphere resulted.

He called this resonance "l'espace indicible" and offered it as a new *venustas*, as the new delight, in a progressive theory of architecture for the post-war, electronic era.

With illusion the basis of a new architecture, a dialectical relationship with material reality itself was established. In this way, representation served Le Corbusier not to record modern architecture, but to transform it, opening the door to an architecture antithetical to its principles.

THE SILENCE OF JOSE ORTEGA Y GASSET

Ulrich P. W. Nagel

In August 1951 a congress took place in Darmstadt in the former West-Germany with the object to stimulate a cultural dialogue between architects and theorists of culture. This congress with the topic "Human Being and Space" had great importance in the German history of architecture. It joined together traditionally orientated architects like Bonatz, Neufert or Kreis and representatives of modern tendencies like Scharoun, Taut, Schwarz, Eiermann and Ruf amongst others. On cultural-critics side assisted Alfred Weber, Dolf Sternberger, Martin Heidegger and the Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset.

The great architect of churches in Germany, Rudolf Schwarz, a doubtless in modern architecture orientated master without traditional intents of "Heimat" —architecture— turned in his lecture vehemently against the dogmatic functionalism of Bauhaus provenance, expressing his search in "spiritual form".

His argumentation has to be understood before the background of the division of the German territory in two states, being borderline of the confrontation of two social and political blocks: the individual liberalism and the socialist collectivism. In his refusal of the on both side feared materialism Schwarz represented the ideas of Catholic circles among Romano Guardini which tried to find a third social concept, the Christian Socialism.

In the Spain of Franco —where the dictator, in his fervent anticommunism estimated by the United States, was on his political zenith— although that the concept of national autarky like the architectural historicist idea of an "Escorial-Style" has been failed, there was no open discussion about the further social or cultural orientation apart of national Catholic identity. Except of a harmless private architecture, presenting a world without problems, the fifties were in Spain a decade of speechlessness. Consequently the lecture of Ortega which could have opened an interesting dialogue between Germany and Spain was an aesthetic reflection without echo nor during in the congress neither later in both countries.

MADRID 1904: TWO ARCHITECTS IN SEARCH OF A STYLE. PRESENTATIONS GIVEN BY BERLAGE AND MUTHESIUS EN THE VI INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF ARCHITECTS

José Manuel Pozo

In 1904 the VI International Congress of Architects took place in Madrid. At this event H.P. Berlage and H. Muthesius gave two conferences in which

notes taken showed their point of view of how the new style of architecture, that the period demanded, should be characterised.

Put simply, these two texts still seem new, in spite of the passing of time; and are a good example of the two architects' farsightedness. They are evidence of their attributed leading roles in dispersing and establishing the ideas that became the base for the development of architecture in the twentieth century.

The article links the two texts to the architectural work of Mies van der Rohe, and is often considered as the birth of the 'New Style', which Muthesius and Berlage longed for. The 'New Style' refers both to the materials and the ways in which they are used.

From our modern perspective the desires expressed by Muthesius in 1904 have been more than bettered by reality. One cannot underestimate the value of the closing words of his Madrid presentation, when he declared that the job of architects is forge: "A closer union between the arts of engineering and architecture."

Berlage, brushing aside the minor details that held others back, knew how to put the problem in its proper context: "I dare to say that, by embracing a modern style, construction will have enough influence to be the impetus for the new style."

It is possible to appreciate, in Mies' architecture, the aspirations expressed by Berlage in Madrid in 1904. This is partially demonstrated by his orientation, and also by the high regard in which the German maestro held Berlage. This comes as no surprise, considering the admiration that Berlage inspired in him. They met up by chance during Mies' stay in Holland during the preparation of the Kröller-Müller Museum project, in which Berlage was also involved.

Whether in concrete or iron, what is sure is that lintels and 'unlimited plans' alongside walls and geometrical order came to be leading features in defining the Real Style. Put in plastic language the compositional method, and the repeatable example model, which could be adapted to resolve any society need of the day: from a church to a museum, or to a block of rooms. It is a style which Berlage more or less predicted, and that Mies made reality. To this day, this is great style.

FROM NEW STATE ARCHITECTURE TO THE ORIGINS OF OUR CONTEMPORANEITY. THE DEBATE ON HOUSING IN THE FIFTIES

Carlos Sambricio

After the Civil War, the process of reconstructing destroyed urban areas was only approached systematically (and not in a token fashion) around 1950, when the arrival of large numbers of rural immigrants threatened to collapse any possible ulterior transformation. A new kind of economic housing is considered, abandoning the rural-based criteria of both the DGRD and the INC, and the discussion leads to the possible industrialisation of building, abandoning the artisan criteria (building based on walled vaults) defended by Moya or Bassegoda...

Taking the European experience after the world war as their point of reference, a young generation of Spanish architects, unrelated to the experience before the War, study Scandinavian, Italian and German examples, and between 1954 and 1956 projects appear that bear no relation to the monumental architecture (the architecture of the New State) that had until recently been defended by some.

It becomes fundamental to design the furnishings, to consider the possibility of self-support in new housing, to design interiors based on the functional criteria used in other architectures. And the experience comes to an end when the State acknowledges that it is unable to provide a solution for the problem and leaves it in the hands of the private sector.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE AMERICAN MUSICALS ON GUTIÉRREZ SOTO

Carlos de San Antonio Gómez

Film sets have been pioneers of new architectural images, such as, for example, the futuristic city used by Fritz Lang in *Metrópolis* (1926), or the aerodynamic architecture of *Things to Come* (1936). However, these images were not immediately corresponded by reality. One exception are the musicals of the thirties, which left their mark on dance halls and night clubs. Such is the case for *Casablanca*, a project by Gutiérrez Soto that no longer exists. Gutiérrez Soto designed another two projects: the *Barceló* cinemas (1930) and *Fraga* (1942), but they lacked the spatial and decorative richness of *Casablanca*.

Art-Déco was the style chosen for these sets, because it reflected the luxury and sophistication of that society. The spectator felt that he was involved, together with Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, in a fantastic story with a happy ending in a luxurious night club. This world of fiction was recreated by Gutiérrez Soto in *Casablanca*, a project designed as a show place, where entertainment and decoration were present at the entrance itself, with the surrealistic touch provided by the giant neon palm tree. After an interesting spatial sequence, access to the club followed the same scheme as the sets designed by Van Nest Polglase for musicals. According to Juan Antonio Ramírez, it consists of stairs in the centre, a dance floor and two wings at the side with balconies for the spectators, as seen in *Flying Down to Rio* (1933) (the year that *Casablanca* was built), *Roberta* (1935), *Swing Time* (1936) and *The Gay Divorce* (1934). The decoration was Déco in the smallest detail: colour contrasts on walls, floors and fabrics, glass, gilt surfaces, mirrors, palm trees, fountains, lightning flashes, the moon and the star on the floor.

THE TUBULAR EMBRASURE

Preston Scott Cohen

At the Sacristy of San Carlo ai Catinari in Rome, unusual conic and cylindrical elements are hidden within conventional architectural symmetries. The effect of concealment can be compared to anamorphosis, an extreme case of conventional perspective that produces distorted images only able to be seen undistorted only from a peculiar position or by using a special instrument. The Sacristy can be likened to an anamorphosis executed in the language of architecture. It becomes accessible by means of the instruments of geometric analysis presented in this article. The projective transformations enacted here establish a concordance between architecture and geometry which is otherwise not evident in their historical relationship.

The most astonishing element in the Sacristy is a cylindrical void, passing behind an exterior pilaster, piercing the corner of the building. The entire episode - by passing between two apparently separate windows - not only escapes visual notice, but also eludes the conventional definition of an embrasure (a direct passage, through the thickness of a wall, from an exterior and/or exterior opening to a window or a door).

It seems particularly odd that a window was located behind the pilaster given that Classical codes of decorum forbid an embrasure from intersecting, much less burrowing through, a classical corner pilaster. It appears that the staging and avoidance of this taboo resulted in a hybrid between an element within classical architecture (an embrasure or bi-furcated embrasure) and a form outside it (a tube/void).

The upper windows in the Sacristy may initially seem to be ovals, a motif common in Baroque Rome. In fact, they are ellipses, the eccentricity of which calibrates the position of the cylinder with multiple symmetrical and serial patterns of fenestration. As opposed to ovals, which are combinatory two-dimensional shapes, ellipses imply the presence of another system - projective geometry. This is particularly so if the ellipses are considered to

be strictly geometrical results—as suggested by this analysis—rather than properties of classicism. This is noteworthy since projective geometry, advanced by Gerard Desargues during the first half of the seventeenth century in France, is not known to have been used this way by the Baroque architects of Rome.

In the mid-seventeenth century (at the time of the Sacristy), wonder referred to the passions of inquiry into hidden causes. Natural philosophers revered rare natural objects that resisted categorization and exhibited excessive or perverse functional qualities. When the notion of wonder was associated with Baroque architecture, it primarily referred to either visual displays of geometrical virtuosity or delightful optical devices (such as mirrors or painted anamorphoses) applied to the main body of architecture. It did not fixate upon rare exceptions within the classical language of architecture that were not overtly spectacular. Though the tube is arguably rare (there are no known comparable examples) it is not due to its spectacularity but rather to the way in which it ingeniously overcame the binding limits of a system of form by concealing itself within it. It defied architectural definitions and simultaneously functioned extraordinarily by creating even stealthier diffuse light than a conventional embrasure would. Thus, it is more like natural and other artificial wonders of the seventeenth century than it is wondrous as architecture.

SILHOUETTES ON A SLAB. THE RESIDENTS OF THE VENICE HOSPITAL BY LE CORBUSIER

Fernando Zaparaín Hernández

The phases of the Venice Hospital project by Le Corbusier, from 1963 to 1965, are documented in plans and letters held by the authorities.

This project reflects the vision of one man, Le Corbusier. Although this is one of his final creations, it follows on with the same attitudes that he showed throughout his life. He doesn't bother with the Venetian Morphology (i.e. linear development) to implant theoretical structure (i.e. biological growth). It is a kind of ideal city which is stratified vertically, and where the patients follow a metaphorical route towards liberation. The systems used grouped the rooms together, and the primacy of movement makes the project an urban style experiment, and a model of human life.

The room is like a cell with no view of Venice, and with the patient lying on a slab. The room has a controlled zenith light, and is in accordance with similar plans made by Ronchamp.

Here a man seems to be depersonalised, as if he were a faceless silhouette similar to a modulator. In modern times other forms such as cinema and painting have made studies of deprived men who have been put in a crowd of people.

The Paimio Clinic was also built using modern functionalist criteria, but is more concerned for the individual and its style pays more attention to details for example the views, the furniture and the ceiling.

CHRONIDE OF A CONGRESS. "THE HISTORICAL COMMITMENT OF SPANISH ARCHITECTURE IN THE FIFTIES"

Jorge Torres Cueco

In the fifties, Spanish architecture began to approach the coherence and quality present in the rest of Europe. This congress, in three of its sections (the debate on housing, the state of industrialisation and and theoretical reflection), has tried to identify the factors that contributed to the achievements, and the failures, of this period of architectural culture. Vittorio Magnano Lampugnani analysed the permanence of modernity. Carlos Sambricio described the circumstances that surrounded the debate on housing and its importance in the first half of the decade. M^a José Cassinello defended the persistence of a scientific reason, identifiable with moder-

nity, in the years immediately after the war in Spain. Antonio Piza, on the other hand, compared European thinking with the isolation suffered by our predecessors. The final lesson by Thomas S. Hines referred to the architecture of R. Neutra. These different papers helped to consider the period in some depth.

Lively and controversial round tables completed both sessions. At the heart of the discussion was the different considerations on the level of knowledge and the exchange of information between architects in the forties and fifties. There was practically only complete consensus on three general issues; recognising the difficulties derived from strict cultural and political censorship, the weakness of the “official” arguments that a Francoism completely lacking in ideas tried to establish as architectural guidelines, and the limited number of professionals interested or involved in the architectural debate that was active throughout Europe at the time. Nevertheless, an acknowledgement of the fortune and intensity of the architecture produced by those professionals was evident.