FORM AND GESTURES. NOTES ON THE MONUMENTAL MODERN ARCHITECTURE OF FRITZ HÖGER
Hartmut Frank

There is little doubt that among the work of Höger there are numerous projects which do not adapt to his typical style. They are almost always modernist projects in which the stylistic characteristics clearly differentiate themselves from the normally consis-
tent work of Höger: mortar and reinforced concrete or steel and glass constructions, apartment blocks and sombre buildings for administration, trade and industry in addi-
tion to wood and solid brick structures, [Klinker] with heavy roof areas and highly symbolic ornamentation. They do not correspond to a particular period; instead they are spread irregularly throughout his career. They are projects which at that time were almost completely excluded from exhibitions and left without commentaries or illus-
trations, instead being marginally mentioned as work of young collaborators and most of all defined as programme or promoter improvisations. I could adhere to the opinions accepted both by Höger's hagiographers and his critics, if the projects of this type deviating from the usual interpretation were not so numerous or significant.

As a result the suspicion exists as to whether these works have been avoided simply because they do not fit within the proposed field into which Fritz Höger has been placed. Also the legend has been insistently promoted by the architect himself for a long time while other essential contributions have come in the form of the explosive influences and references to some central works such as the Chiliehau, the Hannoverscher Anzeiger and the Rüstringen Town Hall. He is the admired “brick architect” the German regionalist and the highest representative of a modern tendency which has presented itself as a anchor in the town, the race and country, like a direct emancipation of the above. The Höger legend also adjusts perfectly to the myths of German architecture of the 19th Century, his upcoming centenary celebration “year of the roofs” and with the highly political comparison of form and content, which has been a driving force towards an almost model separation between good modernists and bad traditionalists, from which no historian or critic from this country can completely detract.

To overcome this dark area of the concept and value that up to now had been con-
ected to the work of Höger, we should free ourselves of all ideological determination, refusing to be blinded by Höger's own ideas, be it either to agree or criticise them, but instead to find a reformed global vision, a completely independent perspective. The task becomes distinctly complicated in the face of the extremes and frequent person-
al manifestations on the part of Höger, and also within the newly reformed discipline of his discipline, an existence and vigour independent of its history. Nevertheless, this act should not be impossible, as the work of any architect has within the doctrines of his discipline, an existence and vigour independent of its author's biography. It should be possible to consider both works well and badly received by the critics, in addition to any ignored anomalous works and take advan-
tage of the historic distance between the time in which they were developed to be able to value the qualities of Höger's architecture with a higher level of complexity than that which has been possible up to now.

In the corresponding set of Höger's monographs completed by Piergiacomo Bucciarelli, for the first time we find the illustration for a block of apartments worthy, thus using a lot of verbiage to justify the overreaches of urbanism that have already taken place. What they have in common is the conviction that there is no way to stop the headlong spread and the diffuse fraying out of our cities. What cannot be averted must be accepted and can just as well be interpreted as positive to begin with. Of course the theorists who are intent on this kind of supposed re-evaluation are not like-
y to get into the awkward position of having to live in the inhumable settlements from which they manage to wrest an abstract beauty at a distance. They can afford to live cheerfully in the historical city centre, which they complacently designate as obso-
leto, or in the as yet intact countryside. As long as they are not directly affected, they would shrug their shoulders and open that same countryside to urban development.

Is the breakneck urbanisation of our landscape really acceptable? Is it necessary and decreed by fate? Politically, sociologically, and economically it may seem so at first glance; ecologically it certainly does not. The resources of the earth we live on must be used sparingly, and one of our most important and precious resources is the land-
scape. We must not take over more and more land for construction on the edges of our cities in order to move in on the natural landscape with loosely scattered single-
family homes. In this way we destroy nature irrevocably and create peripheries that are neither urban nor rural. We must move closer together. We must preserve the cities we have and consolidate them and make them denser. Done intelligently, this will only make them more urban.

The strategy is not a new one. All over the world new cities were set up mostly on the foundations of old ones. They were modified and modernized within the limits of their carefully defined boundaries. And they extended beyond them into their rural sur-
roundings only when the original urban area was absolutely no longer big enough. In the 19th century the population of Europe multiplied fourfold and a large part of it moved from the country to the cities. Yet the major urban expansions, which were to absorb the hordes of new city dwellers and help the real-estate speculators to acquire quick and easy wealth, were comparatively sparing in their use of land. The downright uncontrolled consumption of landscape did not begin until the wasteful urbanism and irresponsible ideology of disposability in the inexcusably heedless 20th century. It even threatens to weigh upon the beginning of the new millennium.

Not only ecological reasons speak against unchecked urbanisation. In economic terms it is a spectacularly poor investment with regard to both the whole national economy and the long-term perspective. This is because the subsequent expenses are completely indeterminable. Among these, the urbanisation process not taking place until afterwards, including the installation of expensive infrastructures, repre-
sents only the tip of the iceberg. In sociological terms it contributes to the destruc-
tion of the public spirit by taking away the place where public spirit can be expressed. This place is the indispensable basis of every society that has solidarity, is tolerant, and is capable of integration and enjoying life. In political terms it is no less counter-
productive, namely for similar reasons: because it undermines, erodes and ultimate-
ly negates the compact articulated city as the home of res publica.

The decisive argument against unchecked urbanisation and in favour of the compact articulated city, persistently declared dead yet persistently loved and preferred, has in the meantime become the demographic one. Population growth in Europe, North America and Japan is already zero if not declining. Urbanism in these countries should therefore be about the innovative management of the existing fabric, not expansion. Furthermore, in the rest of the world, where the population explosion led to a fourfold multiplication of the earth's inhabitants in the 20th century, the latest scientific reports predict that demographic growth will not continue much longer. It is already slowing down. About in the middle of the century the worldwide population is expected to increase no longer but to remain stable and possibly even decline in the third quarter of the cen-
tury. This means that the cities, which are expanding so rapidly these days that they seem to be bursting apart, will also be stabilizing and perhaps even shrinking.

In other words: the primary reason for the growth of our cities into the landscape dis-
appeared in Europe decades ago and will soon no longer exist anywhere else in the world either. The supposedly progressive urban design theories that deal with rapid urbanisation processes and entire urban regions, those megapolises whose name was coined by the French geographer Jean Gottmann in his influential book of 1961, have been deprived of their basis. The demographic paradigm change must be followed by a change in urban design. Actually, urban design should accompany and anticipate it with appropriate planning measures.

In order to do so, urban design will have to develop new kinds of expertise as well as revive forgotten old ones. Urban design will have to recall its original objective: to design our environment such that it meets human needs, is functional and sustainable, and has high aesthetic and cultural quality. It cannot meet this objective unless planning and design are brought together (again). On the one hand this means the objective col-

RE-ESTABLISHING THE DISCIPLINE OF URBAN DESIGN
Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani

Most of the urban design theories fashionable worldwide today fit into one of two cat-
egories. Either they are impenetrably vague in that they conjure up novel ubiquitous conglomeration that only consist of virtual-and obscure—fields of force. Or else they are affirmative in that they blather about the impossibility of planning the city of today, thus using a lot of verbiage to justify the overreaches of urbanism that have already
In order to work out this design in an up-to-date way, urban design will have to recall its delight. And only public authority can protect and promote public life, which has rather, places of social justice, ecological balance, cultural enhancement and aesthetic quality that their withdrawal left behind was architecture. It is true that this profession's success cannot obscure the fact that its character is palliative. The limits have become all too clear, particularly in retrospect. The individual works of architecture that were meant as urban design catalysts may have taught us to read the city and the landscape in a new way, but they did not transform their surroundings on a large scale. As models recommended for imitation, the monuments of the architects have failed just as badly as the diagrams of the planners. Moreover, they have permitted the same mediocrity to spread out all around them that they had set out to overcome.

The return of urban design to its own domain is still pending. It should no longer exist as the more or less friendly competition between colleagues but as the symbiosis of planning and design. This calls for productive cross-disciplinary collaboration. On the one hand it is imperative to collect, examine thoroughly and apply the individual determinants for a planning project. On the other, it is just as imperative to assemble them such as to meet aesthetic requirements. Then, at the end of the process of analysis, evaluation and assessment it becomes possible to make a definite, though of course not unchallenged, design decision. This can happen only within a large professional and scientific constellation that is willing to work together closely. In the process, this collaboration must redevelop both content and methods and repeatedly test and readjust them. Furthermore, not architectural designs but urban design strategies are what is primarily required of the discipline of urban design. The world of images that depicts these strategies as such and does not let them be misunderstood as architectural designs has yet to be found.

The complexity of the planning and design of our environment cannot be mastered completely by one working group, no matter how big. Nevertheless, a group can be structured such that it represents the main areas of expertise. Architecture certainly belongs. Political, social, economic, ecological, traffic technological and infrastructural strategies are essential if the city and the country are to be set up to provide people the best quality of life with the greatest possible efficiency. But these strategies must always be given material applications in the end. This materialisation is necessarily an architectural one. It must not happen a posteriori, at best making the best of what was assigned in the brief. Rather, it must be included from the start as an objective and a stipulation in the work of the urban designers.

The urban designers will have to act as both inventors and designers, but before that the 19th and early 20th centuries. They were all less concerned with fixing a canon than from the great treatises of the Baroque and Neoclassical periods to the handbooks of the 19th and early 20th centuries. They were all less concerned with fixing a canon than from the tracts of Classical Antiquity to those of the Renaissance, from the great treatises of the Baroque and Neoclassical periods to the handbooks of the 19th and early 20th centuries. They were all less concerned with fixing a canon than with assembling knowledge and systematising what had thus become available. Urban design, although always and necessarily creative, is primarily a methodical kind of work.

Urban design must always work towards the public interest. As numerous (and contradictory) as individual interests that should be weighed and harmonised may be, if as many people as possible are to have a life that meets human needs as well as possible, no individual body representing interests, no matter how judicious, can attain its goal. Even at a time of unfounded euphorically broadcast and forced privatisation, public authority must take responsibility for urban design and be equipped with both the necessary expertise and the necessary jurisdiction. Only public authority can make sure that our cities stay or become not merely economically prosperous but, rather, places of social justice, ecological balance, cultural enhancement and aesthetic delight. And only public authority can protect and promote public life, which has always been the central concern of urban and landscape design.

In order to work out this design in an up-to-date way, urban design will have to recall its own tradition. This recollection does not contradict innovation, which is what the changed conditions call for. On the contrary, radical yet knowledgeable innovation can only come from the background of a long memory. In fact, the historical city and the culture that it produced provide the guidelines for future-oriented urban planning.

Once we have said goodbye to the old – and by now somewhat ridiculous – notion that our conglomerations will and should grow forever until the whole world is covered with urban sprawl to house a peculiar nomadic society of yuppies, we face the new old task of planning, managing and taking care of clearly defined urban areas. Urban areas of this kind do exist and have always existed, especially in Europe. They can provide instructive examples of up-to-date urban planning, both in Europe and beyond.

This is all the more so because even the biggest megalopolis is ultimately nothing but the sum of many small towns or villages. Individual city districts are easily identifiable just about everywhere by their social structure and their social relationships and usually also by their layout and their form. This is the medium scale that should be the primary object of urban planning. Only when it is mastered can overall connections and structural integration come about. Studying historical evidence means anything but copying. Today's tasks are clearly different from those of the past, as are the technological means for accomplishing them. Accordingly, the results derived from the relevant programmes will necessarily be modern, without retrogressive nostalgia but also without futurist obstinacy.

LOUIS KAHN ON THE COSTA DE AMALFI (1929)
Carlos Montes Serrano

In 1929, during his first visit to Italy Louis Kahn visited various locations along the Costiera Amalfitana: Positano, Ravello, Atrani and Amalfi; undertaking an ample range of watercolours and drawings. Although all these were collected in 1991 in a catalogue by Jan Hochstim, it was not possible to identify the areas and concrete locations in which these notes were taken. In 1996 on the occasion of an exhibition on the travel drawings of Kahn, which took place in Chicago and New York, he offered exact information on the locations in which ten of these works were completed. In the present article seven more notes are identified and provide more precise information on the previous ten. In addition to this information, Kahn's intentions in carrying out this work is analysed as is his graphic style and the concrete influences of techniques and representation methods made popular during the second half of the twentieth century in the United States and the possible repercussions of these travel drawings which he developed in the mature stage of his life.

THE ARTIST'S NEW CLOTHES: MARIA SÈTHE, HENRY VAN DE VELDE AND THE QUESTION OF MODERN SELF-FASHIONING
Christina Threuter

A photograph dated circa 1900 shows a woman dominating an interior room (Fig. 1). She stands erect. While her left arm lies loosely alongside her body, her right hand rests on the glass surface of a dainty chest of drawers, her head is bent slightly to the side and her gaze seems to follow her right hand. The woman, her blond hair put up at the neck, wears a full-length, high-necked and wide dress that falls heavily to the hips. Behind the woman, the room opens up through a door into another room, of the back wall.

The woman in the photograph appears statue-like and static: It is not only the motionlessness of the woman herself with her calm, side-wards glance downwards, but the historical photograph has this effect as well. The picture acts as a medial memory. The woman shown in the photograph is Maria Sèthe. She was a painter who was schooled by renowned Belgian artist Théo van Rysselberge, and it is in this circle that she first became acquainted with Henry van de Velde and married him in 1894. However, while van de Velde became one of the more important artists of West European art historiography — painter, artisan, architect, art theoretician and teacher — Maria Sèthe remained insignificant both as an artist and as her husband's most important collaborator. The issue of her contribution to the artistic work, which has been attributed only to van de Velde, has not been a point of research up to now and even her frequent appearance in numerous published fashion photographs for the most part remains unmentioned or is mentioned only in passing. This is surprising, since in his well-received memoirs, Henry van de Velde refers explicitly to Maria
Sèthe’s artistic pursuits, at least during their first years of marriage (beginning in 1894). He emphasises the importance of her collaboration and stresses that she was, to a large extent, responsible for his artistic career (Fig. 2).

Thus, after some brief biographical remarks, I shall focus upon the question of how Sèthe could be excluded from the reception of the works. The discursive discussion of representation, which underlies both the construction of the works and the artist subject Henry van de Velde, can suggest two ways of interpreting the above-mentioned photograph: the published ‘picture’ of Maria Sèthe represents both the artist (van de Velde) in the portrayal of femininity as well as a self-portrait of Maria Sèthe, the artist.

Maria Sèthe, Henry van de Velde and the Arts and Crafts Reform

Maria Sèthe was born in Paris in 1867 and died in 1942 in Brussels. She came from a prosperous, culturally-inspired family. Her father was a wealthy felt manufacturer and her mother a passionate musician and art lover who supported the young avant-garde of the XX group who convened in her Brussels salon.

The first close meeting between Maria Sèthe and Henry van de Velde took place in 1893 during a holiday trip to the Dutch city of Cadzand. They had met previously at the house of her teacher Théo van Rysselberghe, but, as van de Velde tells in his memoirs, the exchange of ideas shared between the two in Cadzand had far-reaching consequences. He wrote that at that time –in particular as a result of his encounter with the works of the British arts and crafts movement, which made a great impression on him– he was being tormented with great doubts about his self-image as an artist. Only conversations with Maria Sèthe, their further contact and the assurance of her support led him to turn away from painting and devote himself to the applied arts.

Even before becoming acquainted with van de Velde, Sèthe had been in contact with William Morris and had planned a longer stay in London in order to study the works of artists in the arts and crafts movement. Moreover, she had worked with Belgian artist Frank Brangwyn (1867-1956), who had been trained in London, and had also worked as an interior designer in Morris’ studio. Thus, in her artistic dealings, Maria Sèthe was herself impressed with the arts and crafts movement, and the lively correspondence she and Henry van de Velde engaged in proves the extent to which she encouraged him to believe in his arts and crafts ideals. In addition, her stay in London enabled her to provide him with a large amount of information, such as theoretical documents, illustrative material about products from the arts and crafts movement, and contact addresses for potters’ studios, furniture workshops and wallpaper manufacturers.

After returning from England, Sèthe and van de Velde prepared a seminar on “The History of Arts and Crafts and the Art Industry” for the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Antwerp. In October, 1893, keeping with this theme, van de Velde started a course at the academy, that he pathetically designates as the beginning of his “crusade”.

They worked together on the goal of promoting the applied arts reform movement on the continent and according to van de Velde together, “...we found a comfortably furnished flat in my parents-in-law’s villa on Dieweg in Uccle and set up our studios in two large rooms specifically intended for that purpose. (...) My mother-in-law had reserved the right to become our first patron. She allowed me to design and furnish a small salon for her daughter Irma, an extraordinarily talented violinist (...). Covering the walls was the first wallpaper that Maria and I had designed, the Dahlia pattern. As for the rest of the time, my wife, and I concentrated on continuing our research and completing the documents that were supposed to aid me in clarifying the prerequisites for the rebirth of arts and crafts in England.”

Together with their extensive correspondence, these admissions verify that Sèthe was an equal partner in their endeavours to give shape to the arts and crafts reform. Contrary to the reception that views van de Velde as an autonomous artistic genius and regards him as an avant-garde pioneer, it can be stated with certainty that it was only his co-operation with Maria Sèthe that helped him develop his self-image as an arts and crafts artisan. It also should not be forgotten that in addition to her artistic pursuits, Sèthe was also active as a wife, housewife and mother. Furthermore, she also acted as a secretary for correspondence and translation of letters and papers and was the director of the studio workshops at each place of residency, where she supervised designs and co-ordinated transportation. In addition, she was the project manager for ongoing artistic jobs, controlled financial transactions and also served as a manager for cases involving contract closing negotiations. Since Henry van de Velde frequently travelled due to his many obligations as an entrepreneur, lecturer and teacher; he could seldom manage the jobs onsite (Fig. 3).

Artist Clothing, Fashion and the Principle of Clothing

In the photograph (circa 1900) described above, Sèthe is seen in one of her many roles: as a model for clothing designs that she and van de Velde created. In addition, she was also an author. In 1900, she published a notebook titled Album moderner, nach Künstlerentwürfen ausgeführter Damen-Kleider (“Album of Modern Women’s Clothing Based on Artists’ Designs”), with a preface and six clothing designs that were displayed during a large general exhibition for clothing in Krefeld held in the same year (Fig. 4). For the purpose of combining the artistic designs of the arts and crafts movement with local trade promotion on an institutional level, Friedrich Deneken, as director of the then still-new Krefeld Kaiser-Wilhelm-Museum (founded in 1897), initiated this accompanying exhibition of “artist clothing” – clothing designed by artists. He intended nothing less than using the model of the British arts and crafts movement to promote local trade through the artistic advisory board, i.e. by producing designs, models and sketch guidelines. For Maria Sèthe and Henry van de Velde, this offered a good opportunity to present their universal reform efforts, which corresponded to the Morris model, in the area of textile art as well.

In the presentation of the artist clothing, Maria Sèthe appears as the favoured model. This is remarkable in that, not only did she give shape to the photographic staging of new women’s clothing, but as a result, she figured as the presentation object of the constituting artist subject: “...starting today, exhibitions of women’s clothing belong to the category of art exhibitions” triumphed van de Velde on the occasion of the Krefeld exhibition and stated “... it is in the nature of things that artists concern themselves with women’s clothing.” In her exhibition review, Sèthe also stressed the necessity of the women’s clothing reform in order to “create garment designs that are more logical, healthier and at the same time, more beautiful than those created by fashion.” She explicitly refers here to the exemplary art-theoretical expositions of her husband, and since she herself did not play a public role as a theoretician and artist, van de Velde’s statements will be used in the following to discuss the different contemporary discourses that underlie the clothing theory.

Van de Velde described women’s clothing reform as long overdue, not only because of the ideals of the artistic reform movements, which included things of everyday use anyway, but also as a reply to the “tyranny of fashion”: “Fashion is the vigilant watch-er of its own imagined world. It is the great enemy, who is also the case of the ruination of all ornamental and industrial arts, and even led so-called high art to degeneracy.” He not only rebelled against short-lived fashion dictates, but also against the stylistic eclecticism of the 19th century, which he condemned as a trendy fashion masquerade. The “new style” that van de Velde proclaimed for all art genres and for every-day consumer goods was to be characterised by rationalised ornamentation. He saw abstract linear ornamentation as the conveyor of reform. Only this would succeed in granting beauty and practicality on artistic form, “as a symbol of her tectonic purpose”. In this, he saw “... rational design principles” that, due to their purposeful position, work together like the functions of an organism’s limbs and therefore follow “perpetual and unchanging principles”, thus reflecting in the design “the highest creative force of nature”, which is constant and eternal.

In the context of 19th century architectural theory, it is evident that van de Velde picked up the thread of Gottfried Semper’s evolutionary-historical model of the “The Origin of Art by basis design principles on a quasi law of nature (since natural law is legitimated both by the story of Genesis and by science). As Marc Wigley elaborates in his important publication on architecture and clothing , van de Velde here as well follows the initiators of the arts and crafts movement, who had assigned ornamentation with the status of being one of the historically oldest art forms, thus differentiating it from anything fleeting or faddish. Moreover, they elevated the principle of clothing to a genuine design feature that is present throughout all art genres. It was on this principle that van de Velde based his criticism of the trendy, fashionably “masqueraded” everyday consumer goods. Regarding textile art as one of the oldest cultural achievements, Semper had already proclaimed the act of dressing bodies as analogous to using “material” to dress architecture or everyday consumer goods. Similar to Morris and Ruskin, he saw the possibility of elevating the status of ornamentation, which had been ‘run down’ by industrialised mass production, and thus raising the status of arts and crafts in general, in contrast to the “high arts”. He developed his interpretation on the basis of an evolutionary-historical approach that he derived from the general human “need for protection” and from the cultural practice of the craft: In “the ancient times of human society”, weaving techniques evolved into textile wall coverings, in the form of mats or rugs. These wall coverings provided the (Vitruvian) “primordial hut”, which consisted of a structural framework, with a room closure that protected people in every kind of weather. Tracing the wall back to a textile, handcrafted origin demonstrates the desire to decorate the wall with the “Painting of the Carpet”, analogous to...
the cultural practice of tattooing, where skin ornamentation appeared to be formed from threads. It is precisely this aspect of Semper’s model of the origin of art that provided van de Velde with his basic argument. By regarding the skin as clothing for the body, which in its primordial form, was adorned with ornamentation by tattooing, in keeping with the evolutionist model, it is only inevitable that over the course of time, this clothing led to a refinement of the material.

In accordance with the evolutionist model, the development of the “new style” is therefore evolutionarily determined (inevitable, as it were) and accordingly, is “progressive” and modern, but not faddish by any means. Therefore, in keeping with this concept, Van de Velde was able to write: “Only recently have artists become aware of their true task. (...) They have proceeded in the same way, without knowing it, as primitive man who first, after he had taken care of his nutrition, thinks to build himself a roof in order to win a wife, then to decorate himself and finally to protect himself from wind and weather with clothing. The modern rebirth of applied art has busied itself first with architecture, then with furniture and everything that goes along with it, objects of use and decoration, and is now going over to its last conquest, clothing.” Referring to George H. Darwin, who had applied the evolutionary theory of his father, Charles H. Darwin, to clothing in a 1872 paper, van de Velde further corroborated this concept: “Our task can only be to recognize the superfluous elements and rudiments of the earlier components of clothing. The more we learn to realise that they arose under circumstances that no longer exist, the easier it is to rid ourselves of them.”

Women’s Clothing Reform and the Picture of Woman

In order to reconstruct the “organic structure” of clothing and adapt it to modern, motorised life, van de Velde suggested applying the “design principle” to clothing. As with all other objects that are treated artistically, the ‘framework’, i.e. the tectonics, should remain visible and be supported by the supplemental ornamented textile surface: “We also have to subject clothing to general tectonic principles. Our creations in this realm have to express a consistent, logical composition and structure in their appearance that clearly underscores the determining purposes and applied design techniques.” This could be achieved by accentuating the seams as the connectors of clothing (simplicity of design) and by emphasising the quality of the textile material (material suitability). Furthermore, in contrast to its “arbitrarily placed” and “naturalistic imitation”, ornamentation, the tectonics of the body can only be expressed using abstract ornamentation; this is due to the inherent laws of abstract ornamentation, that provide for the “possibility to freely move limbs and joints and the possibility for movement of the human body, that clothing should cover but not hide.”

As did all the other artists of the reform movement who examined clothing (and there were more than just a few, they were, in fact, the protagonists of this movement), such as William and Jan Morris, Hermann and Anna Muthesius, Peter and Lilli Behrens, Josef Hoffmann, Adolf Loos, Paul Schultze-Naumburg, Ellis Oppler and others, van de Velde demonstrated his theory exclusively with women’s clothing. Using the following reasoning, van de Velde justified the necessity of reforming women’s clothing as opposed to men’s clothing: “The intentions which form the basis for today’s movement referred primarily to women’s clothing because men’s clothing did not submit as well to the self-befitting fantasies of the merchants: the reason, I suspect, is that men are less likely put up with as much and want to feel comfortable in their clothes. They do not want their movements to be inhibited or encumbered. We men are less patient and this character trait has prevented tailors from going too far in their inventions.” On the contrary, he theorises that is different with women, “women endure physical inconveniences in order to be pleased with themselves (...)” and as the “material” of the tailor, their “patience and passivity (...) know no limits.”

If the clothing reform up to this point seemed to follow purely formal artistic principles that were based on a linear scientific development model, it then becomes clear that further contemporary discourses about clothing reform entered into van de Velde’s theorems:

The thesis that the character of woman demonstrates a tendency towards passivity, while men take an active pioneering role in social changes, is in line with even the most modern of contemporary discourses that was based on the alleged scientific general differences between the genders and the polarisation of their characters. This scientifically-based differentiation of gender characters had already begun in the late 19th century and in the course of the 19th century, it was not only physicians who had come to the opinion that the evolution of woman had come to a standstill on a lower evolutionary level. The inferior physical and intellectual nature of woman was also pointed to in philosophical and anthropological studies. Around 1900, more and more papers were written which became standard works of the still-young sciences of anthropology, psychiatry, psychology and sexology which examined the cultural importance of gender identities. For the most part, these works on the issues of the nature and culture of womankind, the role of eroticism and sexuality in society and the essence of the woman, presented negative stigmatisation and the reduced the image of woman to the sexual. Somewhere between misogyny and the demonisation of womankind, women’s issues, which were generally emerging at that time, became sexual issues. The work and writings of anthropologists Lombroso and Ferrero, for example, not only determined women to be intellectually and biologically inferior, but determined a medically established pathologisation and criminalisation based on sexuality: their assumed complete lack of sexual restraint as well as the sexual impulses inherent their gender demonstrate that females are completely atavistic, while males are advanced in their cultural evolution. The biological constructions of females also found their way into debates about art and thus, the supposed atavism of women which could be fundamentally verified by their ornate clothing, was equated with the atavism expressed in the ornamentation in art.

In this context, van de Velde’s statements on the ornamentation of the “new style” attain a fundamental socio-cultural importance and a polarising gender connotation. Van de Velde’s classification of the new ornamentation as sensible, logical and beautiful in terms of being beneficial to health, strength, purpose and spirit affirm that it is based on a biologicist-Darwinian selection theory. In order to justify using ornamentation, van de Velde utilises the language of the medical-scientific field. In these terms, only the healthy and strong are capable of surviving, while anything arising from emotions is fleeting and not capable of surviving; the gender connotation of the genetic determinists dichotomy, for example, masculinity equals rationality and femininity equals emotionalism, appears here as well. Thus, the ornamentation that van de Velde deemed “an imitation and naturalistic”, that determined the historicism of the 19th century, is feminised and sexualised, while rational ornamentation, which should determine the “new style”, is connotated as masculine.

Henry van de Velde’s proclamation of the “sensible dress” is also embodied in contemporary discourses on sexuality and femininity as well as in the intense debates on art and morality. For example, in a process-like summary based on natural law, Eduard Fuchs, the 19th century “universal historian” and author on the history of morality described the historical evolution of the inherent laws of fashion, stating: “The necessity to even more accurate, the almost exclusive purpose of the decorative design of women’s clothing is the emphasised elaboration of the erotic effects of the female body. In other words: women’s clothing is an erotic issue. This would have to be first sentence in every history of fashion.” The tendency to exaggerate –especially the secondary sex characteristics– in the ornamentation of women’s clothing is only “natural” and the historical evolution of clothing is thus “the natural product of an immanent law of nature”. For women, this exaggeration is necessary in the continual “unscrupulous, competitive struggle” with other women, in order to awaken the desire of men; unfortunately, however, this “law of fashion” leads to the inevitable fact that the “most sensible” fashion reforms would remain unseen by women. Henry van de Velde also speaks of the “desirous way a man looks at” a woman’s body that is veiled with clothing; nonetheless, he criticised contemporary clothing which ignores the female form and figure due to exaggerated ornamentation: “We only want the dress to conceal what one could call physical individuality. Women will gladly consent to their shape and figure remaining recognisable in the clothing.” That fact that the female individual body features have seductive power over man is justified by natural law. In this context, Eduard Fuchs argues that it might be an error –and here he calls upon the scientific discipline of “comparative ethnology”– to presume “a primordial innate shame”, that results in covering up certain parts of the body. Rather, erotic stimulation is caused by clothing which is used to emphasise sexual bodily features. Accordingly, the exaggeration is only logical. For van de Velde, this model of erotic stimulation caused by clothing, which supports the individuality of the female body, is fundamental to his goal of reforming women’s clothing and he argues for a moral and aesthetic view of the veiled body of woman: thus, it is moral to keep the female “tectonic” visible and to subject the clothing itself to design principles that discipline, or in his words, rationalise sexually connoted decoration, excessive ornamentation. Therefore, “desexualised” women’s clothing, respectively the desexualisation of women, corresponds to contemporary moral principles. That the goal of desexualisation also underlies modern, aesthetic design principles is made clear in clothing theory, which links the image of femininity with ornamentation. Analysing femininity and sexuality with artistic design methods in the model of purpose, material and design suitability is fundamental to the ‘genesis’ of architecture and applied arts in the modern age. van de Velde’s moral claim is based upon this, as is his understanding of “aesthetics” and “beauty”.

ENGLISH ABSTRACTS
Women's Clothing and Modern Culture

Henry van de Velde's proposals for reforming women's clothing are based on the presumption that modern society is characterised by differentiation into private and public life. Since clothing and social life cannot be separated, women's clothing has to comply with this differentiation: "Dress is determined where you wear it, either in private or common places". Like the sociologist Georg Simmel, whose writings are formulated as cultural-philosophical theories on the modern age, van de Velde represents a radical dualism by differentiating between a society-public and an individual-private life. Therefore, clothing worn by women in the home should express individual femininity, or in other words, should be sexually stimulating, while "her dress" on the street should be generalised "as it is for men", and "for ceremonial occasions", women, like men, should wear a certain type of "dictated dress". What men have already achieved in their public clothing with the uniform "formal suit", should also apply to women. In this way, the public-social arena is supposed to be desexualised through uniformity. Eduard Fuchs refers to this socio-cultural relevancy of clothing as the "the very exact expression of all culture" and it reflects this as an "organically conditioned cultural reflex". That men have already fulfilled the requirements of modern culture through their clothing, the man's suit, is substantiated by the fact that "the middle class culture, which is based on domination by the masses, is a masculine culture", while in contrast, the obsolete model of aristocracy is "in the end, always a femininity culture". With this cultural classification of gender and clothing, in the context of a discourse on modern society, the definition of modern culture as masculine becomes very obvious. A concurrence can once again be found with Georg Simmel, who stated that the male gender alone is able to represent modern culture.

The Designer of Modern Culture and Maria Sèthe

Even if not in the centre of modern culture, Maria Sèthe stood in the centre of numerous fashion photographs. (Fig. 5) In the photographic staging of artist-designed clothing, the collaborator and wife of the artist (i.e. Maria Sèthe) becomes the projection of the new intentions of design and society reforms, which are based on dichotomical, evolutionary-historical and gender-constructed working models. The male artist subject, Henry van de Velde, becomes a cultural authority: By means of the new standardised clothing, the artist, so to speak, rejects the conflicting and progress-impeding female through his artistic competence, by controlling the sexuality of woman in the public arena.

In the course of the 19th century, textiles per se experienced a link with femininity. Handicrafts, textile material and fabrics, as well as ornate interior designs were coupled with a genuine feminine gender character trait. Sigmund Freud, for example, deemed clothing to be the fetish of woman, and weaving and braiding as her one and only historical contribution to culture, originating as a way to conceal the fact that she is missing a phallus. It does not seem to be a coincidence that it is exactly in the area of clothing, i.e. textiles, which, in the recourse to natural law, underlie reform intentions to finally discipline women to benefit modern culture; in this way, the supposed femininity nature is transformed into masculine connoted culture.

In comparison to painting, the contemporary fashion with the still relatively new medium of photography was determined by the seemingly greater proximity that photographic pictures have to 'nature' and 'reality'. Walter Benjamin points out that, in regards to receptive views, photography takes on the function of a permanent, storing medium that never changes its picture. Thus, the fashion photograph seems to obscure the staging and artificiality of the picture production and suggests a claim to timelessness. The claim of "beauty for eternity", beyond historical conditions, emerged from the continuity and universal validity of natural law principles, both in the image of ahistorical woman and now as well in the female dress which has become timeless. This claim is accordingly visualised through this new medium. Even fashion characterised as fleeting and "transitory" (Simmel) attains permanent worth in the static of the picture. From an artistic perspective, this must have amounted to a revolutionary pioneering achievement, since, unlike man who searches for permanent artistic solutions, the essence of woman is constitutionally characterised by changes in fashion.

However, not only pictures of femininity serve the ideological function for the construct of the male artist as the one who is culturally creative. Around 1900, women themselves also experienced reprimands with respect to socio-political demands and suffered from restrictions on their creative work by the male artist. At the turn of the century, the field of applied arts increasingly opened up as a professional working field for female artists, and both the middle class as well as the proletarian feminist movement sought to fight social and political discrimination. The attempt to marginalising strategies to contain this alleged competition and danger to the prevailing patriarchal order, as demonstrated in the artistic fields for example, by the return to the diletantism debate, also becomes clear with Henry van de Velde. With respect to the purely handicraft activities of tailoring and sewing women's clothing, his viewpoint is: "The artist's intervention is probably only temporary because women possess enough imagination to get along without our help." Nevertheless, in regards to the new "ornamentation", which is in fact an artistic activity, he adds that women will need assistance: "Because not all women, even if they possess good taste, are capable of creating suitable ornaments."

It is only through the artist that women can be liberated from the "tyranny of fashion" and only through him can she experience "a true revolution in her existence, an evolution (that) has to lead to a better way of life (...)."

The representation systems that the artist Henry van de Velde derived from supposedly natural laws are reflected in fashion photography, in the image of the femininity of Maria Sèthe. Maria Sèthe in the clothing of the reformed--masculine connoted--modern culture cannot, therefore, be perceived as a subject that is artistically or culturally creative and active. Her clothed female body and, in the end, the public's gaze that is directed towards it, serve to create modern culture through the artist (who seems to disappear behind it): Henry van de Velde!

portrait of the artist Maria Sèthe, in modern artist clothing

The public presence of Maria Sèthe in modern, timeless clothing, as represented by the published photograph, suggests another interpretation, however: the thesis of constituting the artist subject Henry van de Velde, within the context of contemporary discourses on femininity and art and architectural theory, through the picture of his wife, remains undisputed.

Maria Sèthe presents the clothing that she and Henry van de Velde designed. She is, therefore, a representative and co-author of artist clothing. Although there are no known art-theoretical public statements made by Maria Sèthe, her published picture can nevertheless also point to a confident self-projection of herself as an artist; particularly since the photographically-staged presentation of the above-mentioned artist clothing originates in her own home and workplace, which is designed according to modern principles: the programmatic "Haus Bloemenwert". The concept of her total art work, which comprises all areas of life and which is illustrated in the picture of the completely, designed down-to-the-last-detail house, comes together in Maria Sèthe's new clothing. Accordingly, she presents herself through the photograph as part of the new—in line with modern principles—design, in her private sanctuary as a modern public woman. Recalling the photograph, the section of the interior provides indications for this interpretation: With her almost tender look and her gestures, Maria Sèthe refers to the furniture that has been designed especially for the house, and thus to the close creative relationship between artist clothing and furnishings.

Furthermore, the painting in the central room of the house, the hall, shows a portrait of Sèthe. There is a painting of her teacher, Théo van Rysselberghes, whom she shows in half profile as an artistic person at the piano. This entire staging points out Sèthe as the director of the artist's house, effectively pointing out the numerous household roles she took on as housewife and spouse, muse and artist. (Fig. 6)

Maria Sèthe presents a picture of herself, that—in particular due to the negative sexualised contemporary connotation of femininity, ornamentation and fashion—demonstratively indicates her liberation from the traditional concept of woman through the picture of modern clothing. Who better to illustrate this programmatic intention in public by means of her own portrait than the artist herself: Maria Sèthe!
truly fundamental truths: maternity and the feelings and decisions which make it possible.

Mies, up to date with these delicate circumstances kept them discreetly in consider-
ation when developing the project for the building. To this end, like painters under
patronage during the Renaissance, he began by developing the house's location and
presented this reality in its entirety under the protective gaze of the “donors” the Löw
Beers, parents of the bride.

At the same time throughout the building, the architect provides us with a new plan for
the creation of a sense of intimacy prompting the owners to inhabit the residence as on
collectively organised space. With this in mind the original evaluation of the surround-
ing view allows us to consider not only the centre and physical aspects but also a frame
of knowledge on reality and a number of other wider and more profound factors.

Each area of interior space in the building summons those others elements which
have remained external to share their approximation to an ample range of meanings
—meanings which develop and disintegrate at the rhythm dictated by the house's way
of life—each one being required in their own individual way. Naturalness brings it own
sense of equality and difference, culture and human liberty contributing its possibili-
ties and responsibilities.

In the phenomenology of the Tugendhat house, the bedroom may not necessarily be
located in the depths of the labyrinth, as it is not simply a room available and design-
nated for social purposes and the accommodation of occasional visitors. One and
other form part —at the hand of Mies, of a precise strategy to find the centre of the
world.

MIGRATING VIEWS: TO SANTIAGO FROM ARANZAZU
Miguel A. Alonso del Val

The text aims to show the importance of constructed experience in time and the con-
 tinuity that patient search provides in creative work in the face of the common ten-
dency for criticism of confusion between operative levels, this being achieved by
means of parallel commentary on purely figurative aspects. Based on the joint expe-
rience of Oiza and Oteiza in Aránzazu and their constructive process, a new interpre-
tation of the innovative Chapel project on the Camino de Santiago is proposed, which
defends both the value of constructed experience in the architectural project faced
with the excessively protagonist role conferred on ideological and iconographic
aspects such as the constant migration of dense perceptions, views charged with out-
side elements which are the basis for the architects creative memory, views which are
carried from one project to another.

LE CORBUSIER IN THE SAVOYE VILLA: THE OTHER PROMENADE
Fernando Zaparain Hernández

The Savoye Villa provides an excellent example of the Corbusier promenade. It is
devised as a series of spaces, which in their entirety show the dynamic character
which should be kept in mind by modern architecture, with regard to the new chang-
ing vision of cinema and the new means of transport.

In addition to this well known physical and more literal promenade we find a virtual
promenade which is achieved through the generation of mobile sensations without
the need for the spectator to move between the rooms. It produces a succession of
phenomena and unstable geometric relationships which establish a story. In this way
the architectural route is not simply a local planning but a narrative type experience.

One of the mechanisms which assists in the production of this dynamic sensation is
the flat representation of three-dimensional objects, typically cubist, that Le Corbusier
applied in architecture by means of decomposition with trihedral colours. In this way
coexistence between various opposing faces of the prism is achieved in one sole plain
in addition to the definition of the different stages. The prism character is not spatial
but instead relative.

In the Savoye Villa we also find the aforesaid accumulation of plains, which substitute
the classic perspective for the superposition of various distant plains, with the sup-
pression of the organised structure of depth and the generation of an instantaneous
visual route prior to the topographical element.

Windows are used as a setting in the abyss allowing explanation of the architecture
within itself, driving our perceptions in accordance with a plan and showing at the
same time the representation and the process which has given rise to it. In particular
the lack of mirrors in the Savoye Villa make the building a final reference ignoring the
visitor. At the end of the canonical passageway in the flat roof is an impossible win-
dow which draws our eye back to the house itself and refuses us the role of protag-
iston. The inhabitant becomes the visitor and simply another object within the struc-
ture.

SHOPPING CENTER DESIGN IN THE AMERICAS
Evan R. Ward

“Long ago, in the cities, the plaza mayor was the preferred shopping center. The cities
grew and commerce remained imprisoned in that “center” that was no longer [its true
commercial center] . . . For many people, going shopping downtown today is an
achievement and the source of frustrations. This stage of shopping is coming to an
end. The era of the shopping center is beginning.”

In the 1950s, under the architectural impetus of Austrian immigrant Victor Gruen, the
shopping center emerged as an innovative architectural form that fused commerce,
culture, and community in the suburban United States. Gruen fled Nazi assailants and
immigrated to the United States in 1938. A gifted architect who had been influenced
by the integrated designs of Le Corbusier, as well as the community-building possi-
bilities of European plazas, streets, and markets, Gruen began designing store fronts
in New York in the late 1930s and by the 1940s had moved to California, where he
established an architectural firm and began to muse over the possibilities for inte-
grated shopping centers. Gruen envisioned using enclosed and open shopping cen-
ters that would function as community centers, as well as shopping complexes, for
the increasingly suburban American population. An influential architectural theorist,
as well as practicing urban planner, Gruen gave some of his first visions of the mod-
ern shopping center in an article for Architectural Forum in 1943. Gruen argued that
shopping could be made more pleasurable by further consolidating stores into a
shopping center set apart from the road (unlike contemporary strip malls and down-
town shopping districts). Accessible by car, this new structure would provide: “All
necessities of day-to-day living . . . [including a] post office, circulating library, doc-
tors’ and dentists’ offices, and rooms for club activities, in addition to the usual shop-
ping facilities. Shopping thus becomes a pleasure, recreation instead of a chore.”

Gruen hoped that in practice the modern shopping center would simultaneously serve
as the public plazas and commercial streets of suburban America. For this reason,
his purposefully planned for wide walking “streets” through his early shopping centers.
Fearful that malls would simply become retail centers, Gruen argued for the inclusion
of “as many non-retail urban functions within the complex of the center as feasible,
in creating opportunities for cultural, artistic, and social events and in striving for an
environmental climate and atmosphere which in itself becomes an attraction for
the inhabitants of a region.” Gruen believed that those shopping centers that provided
the greatest variety of functions, be they civic, social, or commercial, would be the most
successful.

In terms of function, the contemporary malls of Latin America seem better suited to
the ideals of Victor Gruen than malls in the United States (see accompanying photos
of the Abasto de Buenos Aires). Latin American consumers, whose expectations have
normally ascribed a greater social function to malls that Americans (U.S.), have made
better use of malls as “streets” where café’s and sit-down restaurants are utilized as
more than places to eat. Furthermore, due to the lack of public funding for museums in
Latin America, shopping centers have also emerged as some of the most impor-
tant exposition points throughout the hemisphere. While a boat or car exhibition con-
stitutes a cultural high point in your average American mall, art expositions, signifi-
cant scientific programs, and other cultural events play an accredited role in Latin
American malls. In the United States, on the other hand, the traditional shopping mall
serves largely as a commercial point of exchange.

In form, Latin American malls have also evolved in their own ways over time. The first
enclosed shopping mall in Latin America opened in São Paulo in 1966, the Shopping
Iguatemi. As in the United States, the Brazilian shopping center transformed the geo-
spatial dynamics of shopping throughout the region. In São Paulo, the Shopping
Iguatemi slowly attracted Brazil’s upper crust away from the traditional boutique-style
shopping district on the Rua de Augusta and into the mall. In 1969, the Plaza
Universidad, designed by architect Sordo Madaleño, one of Mexico’s premiere archi-
tects of hotels and shopping centers, opened on the outskirts of Mexico City in the
fashionable Ciudad Universitaria. The North American imprint on these new global
landscapes where members of the consumer imagination congregated was apparent.
Although many aspects of the design in the complexes reflected European or local tastes, the structures themselves, with ample parking for automobile access, food courts, and movie theatres, illustrated the growing United States influence on Latin American consumer cultures. These new structures not only pioneered commercial architecture in the region, but also provided a setting where imported brands could be viewed and consumed.

American investors, architects, and lighting specialists played important roles in shopping center development throughout Latin America. Nelson Rockefeller’s International Basic Economy Corporation was one of the first American corporations to invest in the construction of regional shopping centers in San Juan, Puerto Rico (Plaza Carolina) and Caracas, Venezuela (Centro Comercial Ciudad Tamanaco), the latter constituting the largest shopping center in Latin America during the 1970s. According to IBEC’s 1969 Annual Report, “A combination of higher income being enjoyed by the emerging middle class, together with a new mobility made possible by wider ownership of automobiles has made the regional shopping center [in Latin America] a practical one.” Architectural firms such as RTKL (based in Baltimore, Maryland) and lighting specialist Theo Kondos (New York) answered the call from Latin American investors to build appealing and innovative malls in countries including Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and Mexico. These companies adapted to the cultural preferences of the various consumer markets throughout the region. This included working in buildings that were naturally heated and cooled, as opposed to American malls which were built with air-conditioning and heating systems to protect the consumers from outside weather. These shopping center specialists also strove to adapt to the unique social requirements of Latin American malls: entire families tended to congregate at the shopping centers (a requirement which demanded wider walkways than were customary in U.S. malls) to socialize, eat, and be entertained, as well as to shop. In sum, American technical expertise in shopping center development played an integral role in the growth of mall-based shopping throughout Latin America. In an effort to present the Latin American shopping center as a fusion of United States and national cultural influences, with its own architectural history, this article provides, through interviews and field surveys, an overview of ways in which contemporary American and Latin American architects, contractors, and marketers have successfully transformed their shopping centers into the new streets and plazas of various Latin American countries and cities during the last two decades.

Argentina

Shopping Centers arrived relatively late in Argentina (during the mid- to late-1980s), but created some interesting regional design variations thanks to heavy investment in malls during the 1990s. One of the most important architectural innovators, Juan Carlos Lopez, an educator of architects as well as a designer, pioneered the field of transforming declining fin-de-siècle buildings into modern shopping centers. Lopez was the driving force behind the transformation of some of Argentina’s most elegant nineteenth century buildings into equally opulent shopping centers, including Patio Bullrich (Buenos Aires), Galerías Pacífico (Buenos Aires) and Patio Olmos (Cordoba). One of Carlos Lopez’s associates, architect Juan Pfiefer, co-founded JPZ Arquitectos with Oscar Zurdo in 1992. Pfiefer and Zurdo have continued to work in the genre of recycled properties, but have also been noted for their contemporary designs. The studio, for example, received a Certificate of Merit in Design Innovation from the International Council of Shopping Centers for their work on the Los Gallegos Shopping (Mar del Plata, Argentina) and Mall Marina Arauco (Villa del Mar, Chile).

Pfiefer worked with Juan Carlos Lopez on the renovation of Galerías Pacífico prior to opening PFZ Arquitectos. The property is emblematic of Argentina’s visible pride in and hope to preserve some of its early twentieth century architectural masterpieces. The Galerías Pacífico was originally commissioned by the Bon Marché S.A. department store in Paris around the turn of the twentieth century. At the time, Buenos Aires provided a significant number of mail orders to the legendary Paris department store. Bon Marché decided that a store in Buenos Aires would be a smart investment. Emilio Agrelo and Raul Le Vacher designed the building, an imposing stone structure rising three stories above the street. The architects styled the building after the Bon Marché in France, as well as the Galería Vittorio Emmanuelle in Milan, with its two intersecting glass-covered corridors. Bon Marché (France) abandoned the project prior to opening a department store there and the building served as the National Museum of Fine Arts from 1896 to 1940. Instead of being populated by stores and consumers, it was home to painters and sculptors. Later on it passed into the hands of the Buenos Aires Railroad, which gave it the name, Galerías Pacífico, and opened an office of tourism there. Lopez and PFZ Arquitectos helped restore the building for use as a shopping center. With a fully modernized interior, Galerías Pacífico fuses a European superstructure with an American-style shopping center.

Despite the market for renovated shopping centers, Pfiefer clearly sees the origins of Argentina’s modern shopping center in the United States, and not in Europe. He has noted, “It is very common that [Mills’s] Galeria Vittorio Emmanuelle inspired the birth of shopping centers in the world, no so much for its architectural characteristics, but instead for the idea of covering a commercial street and facilitating the life of the sellers and the consumers.” In contrast, Pfiefer points to the construction of the Country Club Plaza of Kansas City in the 1920s and Victor Gruen’s Northland Mall in Minneapolis in 1956 as the beginning of the modern shopping center. In the latter case, the idea of using at least two department stores as “anchors” at each mall set the pattern for the modern American shopping center. However, Argentine shopping centers had to innovate in the category of anchors, since traditional department stores were not doing very well in the country by the late 1980s and early 1990s. In this fashion they better approached Gruen’s vision of accommodating a broad retail mix within the shopping center.

Pfiefer has also offered perhaps the most articulate explanation of why department stores have not succeeded in the late twentieth century in Argentina, and why alternative anchors, such as hypermarkets, home improvement stores, or supermarkets, took their place in shopping centers. First, he argues that the persistence of shopping streets in Argentina has inhibited the move towards larger, more impersonal stores. While shopping centers sprung up around the country during the 1990s, the shopping streets of Buenos Aires continued to draw heavy traffic and are known for much of their social and gastronomical offerings as they are for their retail stores. Pfiefer believes that Argentina’s moderate climate and flat geography have made the street a much more attractive place to shop than a large department store. It is not uncommon in Argentina for major shopping arteries to be cut off to cars (Florida Street in Buenos Aires, for example), which facilitates open-air shopping areas. Furthermore, the personal attention given to the consumer in the street-front stores remains a valued trait by the Argentine consumer. This is validated by the amount of space that many Argentine stores, be they oriented towards the middle class or the upper class, reserve for elegant waiting areas.

Pfiefer also cites the growing cultural influence of the United States and the decline of European influence on Argentine consumer culture as another reason why department stores did not take hold as the anchors of shopping centers. Although European culture had originally encouraged a strong interest in department stores, shopping centers arrived in Argentina at about the same time that department stores in the United States were fighting to survive. Moreover, several American department store chains showed an initial inclination to invest in Argentina but then decided not to. As a result, with a lack of national department stores and unwillingness on the part of U.S. stores to enter the Argentine market, alternative anchors provided one of the most obvious regional shopping center variations in Argentina. In the place of department stores, some shopping centers courted hypermarkets: Wal-Mart anchored Alto Avellaneda; French giant, Carrefour, anchors the spectacular Paseo Alcorta; and Chilean Jumbo hypermarket serves as one of the anchors of Argentina’s largest mall, Unicentro. Uruguay often follows the commercial tendencies of Argentina and hypermarkets or supermarkets anchor even its most prestigious shopping center. At the posh Punta Carretas shopping center in Montevideo (renovated from a former prison by Juan Carlos Lopez and Associates), a grocery store, Ta Ta, shares space in the mall with upscale clothes such as Zara.

For Pfiefer, the main reason for the intensive growth of shopping centers in Argentina has not solely been the influx of foreign capital, but also the interest of developers in looking for new modes of selling and buying products. This, he believes, is the key reason for the phenomenal success of hypermarkets and shopping centers in Argentina, and not simply the availability of money to build them. Pfiefer argues that the function and form of shopping centers in Argentina has more to do with creating a mass-medium alternative to street shopping, rather than designing a format to replace it. Unlike in the United States, Brazil, and Mexico, where shopping centers sprang up on the urban periphery, Argentina’s first malls were located inside of its major cities near the preferred shopping streets. The need for new types of anchors in Argentina was also accompanied by the arrival of numerous international franchises, including restaurants, movie theatres, and entertainment centers. These new innovations underscored differences of the shopping center from the shopping street and made them alternative places for socializing, as well as shopping. Pfiefer has noted: “In Argentina, the shopping center did not appear in inevitable opposition to the street, but as an alternative that found its viability after the accelerated economic
transformation during the last decade [1990s] and its cycle of segmentation and social marginalization, urban deterioration, insecurity, lack of protection for civic centers and the discontinued strategic planning of the state."

Finally, Pfeifer also suggests that the architecture of Argentine shopping centers has followed the logic of its owners and not solely the architectural whims of current design models. Mall owners, who depend on the rent of tenants, must harmonize as best as possible the overall ambience of the shopping mall, which often eliminates the level of design originality possible at a street-front store. Pfeifer contends that these economic realities led to a conservative architectural tradition for shopping centers in developing countries. As a result, Argentina’s first malls, such as Alto Avellaneda in suburban Buenos Aires, were very conservative in design, reflecting the cautiousness of their developers, yet have become – in the 1990s and beyond – much more design-intensive, incorporating entertainment and other functions, as they proved their profitability. Pfeifer believes that with a dual emphasis on harmonizing the mall’s appearance with the surrounding city and satisfying shopper’s sense through novelty, mall developers have geared their shopping centers towards the masses and will continue to cater toward the common denominator in appearance and function. This movement towards stimulating consumer’s senses in hopes of loosening their wallets follows the growing trend in shopping center design in the United States – to entertain as well as sell products. As a result, Argentine shopping centers will probably continue to find a good measure of their creative inspiration in the United States.

The influx of multi-national corporations not only transformed commercial architecture in Argentina, but also the local commercial construction industry. MMP Obras Civiles S.A. (hereafter cited as MMP) was one of the construction companies that rode the wave of globalization to success. MMP began as a large company focused primarily on Argentine-funded construction projects. During the 1990s it transformed itself into a sophisticated company that specialized in multi-national building projects for McDonald’s, YPF (Spain), Musimundo, and MIN (Spain). Vice President Eduardo Palombo explained that these new companies came with to Argentina with highly organized corporate structures and specifications, something that was largely unknown at the time in Argentina. As a young company, MMP took advantage of the opportunity to integrate this type of corporate structure into their own practice, and soon found opportunities to represent the very companies they were emulating.

In terms of shopping centers, Palombo noted that his company was asked to develop a multi-theater and multimedia store, Musimundo, at Unicenter. Unicenter is the largest mall in Argentina and located on the outskirts of Buenos Aires. In 1994 MMP built the Salón Arce de Musimundo, at the time the largest retail music store in South America. It opened on June 10, 1994, and during a three-day period the store sold more than $500,000 dollars worth of products. Palombo remembers that one customer’s response to the new store was “I saw this in Miami and now I can buy it here!” The scale of store provided the space necessary to emulate multimedia retail giants such as Tower Records, Media Play, and Best Buy. These spatial transformations also facilitated the consumer convergence of the two cultures. Three years later MMP constructed a fourteen-theatre movie salon with 3500 seats and an eating patio for General Cinema at the Abasto de Buenos Aires. At the inauguration, the CEO of General Cinema, Mr. Paul DelRossi, noted, “Really, when we began this project I did not imagine that you could construct movie theatres here with the same or better quality than in the United States.” Again, MMP played a critical role in introducing the architectural history and context of a shopping center’s surroundings. One of MMP’s most intriguing international work has been its association with McDonald’s.

In 1993, MMP was working on another store for the multimedia chain Musimundo in Buenos Aires and McDonald’s executives were impressed with the rapidity with which MMP was able to complete the project. McDonalds subsequently evaluated MMP as a possible partner for building their restaurants in Argentina. Palombo vividly recalls the adjustments that MMP had to make to McDonald’s corporate culture. He recalls: "The beginning was very hard because we had to adjust ourselves to the rigid procedures, strict standards of quality and unbreakable deadlines. Including I remember the anecdote that three directors of the company had to assist an entire day at a restaurant to cook hamburgers and attend to customers with the end goal of assuring the spirit of the company and experience the exigencies to which a restaurant of this company is subjected."

Palombo contends that MMP not only made the necessary adjustments to McDonald’s corporate culture, but also that it turned the challenge into an opportunity to become McDonald’s top construction ally. MMP Obras built forty-eight stores over the course of seven years. In the process, MMP not only carried out the construction of buildings, but also coordinated their procedures according to the architectural demands of McDonald’s corporate office.

Culturally, Palombo has noticed changes and continuity in the culture of commercial construction in Argentina as a consequence of globalization. For the company, he observed, the biggest change has been the pace at which projects are completed. At the beginning of the 1990s, Palombo observes, “in our country the traditional construction industry was not prepared to respond rapidly and effectively to the requirements of commercial architecture.” This required that MMP not only cut the time needed to build a commercial structure from ninety to thirty days, but also train sub-contractors and staff to respond to the heightened pace of deadlines that multinational corporations required. In terms of the culture of shopping, Palombo argues that shopping centers gave a strong challenge to the classic shopping streets in Buenos Aires, such as Santa Fe, Lavalle, Florida, and Cabildo Streets. Like Pfeifer he sees security and comfort as the main reasons behind this preference for the malls, as well as for free and secured parking, a wide variety of brands, entertainment, and food courts featuring “a new style of food. Fast Food.” New building materials regularly used in American commercial construction have accompanied new design patterns to Latin America. These materials included two by two foot removable ceiling panels, synthetic marble (Corian) countertops, porcelainite floors with wide joints, and natural and shaded aluminum exterior cover plates.

Mexico

Far to the north, Mexicans have generally shown a greater affinity for North American-style shopping centers than Argentines, yet its architects have adapted those forms to Mexico’s European and Native architectural traditions. GVA, one of the most prominent architectural firms in Mexico, and the self-proclaimed oldest architectural and planning studio in Latin America, has been building the consumer imagination in Mexico – including tourist resorts and shopping centers. Oscar Benitez, marketing manager for GVA, has elaborated on the form, function, and cultural influences of shopping centers in Mexico. With a heavy emphasis on the social function of shopping centers, Benitez emphasizes that the mall is not simply a “machine for shopping,” but instead a place, “where a person can find alternatives of entertainment, both social, corporate, and commercial, all with the object of creating a synergy between the distinctive businesses that make up a shopping center or better said, a place of meeting.” Benitez suggests that since the social function of a mall is as important as its economic functions, the structure should be one where people enjoy spending time. The more functions a mall fulfills, the more effective it will be in keeping the attention of consumers: whether as a movie theatre, a place for art exhibits, or a place for shopping. For GVA this has also meant moving more towards multi-use facilities, which incorporate shopping centers, business offices, and hotels. In the spirit of a World Trade Center complex, “this synergy generates greater profitability for the businesses due to the heavy flow of persons that these types of projects generate.” For GVA this is a design principal that has manifested itself over time. With their first project, Plaza Mexico, GVA followed a traditional mall pattern featuring one or two major anchors, a small to mid-size tenant mix, and minimal entertainment areas. As mall owners began to realize how valuable multi-use components were to the gross earnings of shopping centers, they began to warm up to new functions for shopping centers. “Today, in all of the plazas that GVA has constructed… Benitez notes, “entertainment has converted itself into one of the principal anchors of shopping centers, such as movie theatres, coffee houses, restaurants, internet cafes, [etc.]” One of GVA’s most ambitious projects has been that of contributing to the master plan of the University of Guadalajara with a proposed shopping center for the campus.

Benitez also sees critical cultural influences that have made the shopping center unique in Mexico and Latin America. Because Mexicans place a great deal of emphasis on spending time together, the multi-use shopping center has blended seamlessly with regional and national cultures. “It is very common for a Mexican to go to a shopping center simply to socialize (bars, theatres, restaurants, events). Shopping centers have converted themselves into a meeting place and we think that with time they will continue to embrace more aspects of Latin American life.” In terms of international influences on shopping center architecture in Mexico, Benitez cites the United States, but also Spain. Instead of blindly adopting the traditionally angular architectural design of U.S. shopping centers, GVA’s Mexican architects look for a combination of curves and straight lines, “to avoid the monotony by achieving variety and beauty in the distribution of spaces, but also functionality.” Attention to context, a particularly notable trait of Latin architects and artists, also contributes to a greater awareness of the architectural history and context of a shopping center’s surroundings. One of
Mexican architect Hugo Dante Rivas was trained in Mexico by Luis Barragán and later practiced architecture in the United States for Hill & Jangaard Architects PC (Florence, Alabama). He explains that both the pre-Columbian and colonial periods were critical to the architectural evolution of shopping centers in Mexico today. In terms of concepts of space, Rivas sees the concept of open spaces as a key to understanding modern commercial architecture in Mexico. In ancient Tenochtitlan, native Mexicans organized tianguis, or markets, that concentrated the sale of various products in open-air plazas. Admired by the Spanish, the commercial and social function of these open spaces persisted into the colonial period. This was most evident in Mexico City at the Zócalo, the central plaza, and the Alameda, both of which were manicured gardens where the elite met to socialize and merchandise (in the case of the Zócalo) placed themselves around the margins of the plaza to sell their goods. Other open-air Spanish plazas also carried on the economic function of pre-Columbian tianguis, with vendors adding stores to the open-air presentation of commodities. Rivas argues that during the late-twentieth century the insecurity of open spaces, such as the plazas of large Mexican cities, drove people into the shopping centers. This transition from public squares to shopping centers is evident in the most popular name for malls in many parts of Latin America—the “plazas.” These shopping centers also took on many of the social functions of the plazas as well. As a result, shopping centers throughout Mexico and Latin American in general have played an even more important role as social centers than they have in the United States. Whereas the United States boasts the teenager “mall rats” that infest shopping centers on the weekends, large family groups have accompanied the transition from public plazas to malls in Latin America.

During this transition from public plazas to malls, Dante Rivas contends, the enclosed shopping center model imported from the northern United States did not culturally or aesthetically connect with the long-standing Mexican preference for open architecture. The preoccupation with space, light, and color, went back to both the pre-Columbian cultural centers of Teotihuacan and Chichen Itza. Not only were those majestic sites colorfully painted, open-air, public patios critical to successful urban design and ceremonial life. Mesoamerican Temples were primarily valued for their exterior functions, in contrast to Egyptian pyramids whose interiors, with their wealth and tombs, were of the greatest social value. From the open-air platforms at Teotihuacan, religious instruction or ceremonies could be performed. Centuries later, in Tenochtitlan, the stone temples at the heart of city served as the platform for open-air sacrifices and rituals. Dante Rivas further notes that theological beliefs also fostered a preference for open-air architecture, particularly among the Maya. In Mayan theology the spirits of the dead descend into Xibalbá, the underworld. According to the Popol Vuh, a collection of sacred Mayan writings, the underworld is not necessarily an undesirable place, but the journey there can be frightening. Xibalbá, literally translated from Quiche, the native Mayan language, means “place of fright,” and represents the unknown, dark, and sometimes perilous journey of the human spirit through the cosmos following death. Caves throughout Mesoamerica have represented the portals into the underworld in the physical world for centuries. It is inside of caves, because of their mythic proximity to the life-after, that many secret rituals have taken place. Suffice it to say; darkness and the unknown have best characterized Xibalbá in the Mayan imagination.

Dante Rivas notes that once the colonial period began, Spanish architects discovered a dilemma linked to Mexican architectural preferences: the Spanish could not persuade natives to enter the dark churches—fearing that the devil lived there. As a result, open chapels were built, where Spanish parishioners could worship inside the building, while native Christians could listen from an outside porch. This Mexican preference for open spaces encouraged the development of malls with open passages and open plazas. Dante Rivas believes that this trend also reinforces the climactic differences between Mexico and the United States. Whereas American cities are generally more subject to cold weather than their Mexican counterparts, the malls built north of the border exhibit a greater need for heating and cooling systems. In contrast, Mexican shopping centers tend to rely on open ventilation patterns because of the more temperate climate. Ultimately, mall developers have been most successful in Mexico when their “plazas” mimic the colorful, open-air, plazas that have helped define Mexican architectural history.

Finally, Dante Rivas argues that European culture has exercised a significant influence on Mexican commercial design. He contends that Mexicans did not consider the Spaniards to be very flexible in adapting to Mexican cultural preferences. With the transition of Spanish control to the Bourbon House at the beginning of the eighteenth century, France gained a foothold in the cultural hearts of elite Mexicans. With independence and liberation from the Spanish, the fascination with all things French exploded. Rivas suggests that it was not only the French products, which no doubt the Mexican elite treasured, but also their architectural flexibility and willingness to accept the ideals of light, color, and motion in Mexican architecture and fashion. Dante Rivas linked this to consumer culture in the Americas today, arguing that the French are still much more flexible culturally than the United States in dealing with Mexico. As a result, elite Mexicans still prefer European fashions and architectural styles. Dante Rivas noted that European clothes are so much brighter than the drab blues, grays, and blacks found in American stores. The commercial architecture of the French and other European architects in Mexico also tends to follow the same pattern: an emphasis on color, light, and motion, and a rejection of buildings built for nothing more than a given commercial purpose. Dante Rivas pointed out that the Mexican architectural pioneer, Chuco Reyes, best summed up this critical difference in the American and Latin/European ways of seeing architecture when he said: “The beauty of imperfection is more important than perfection without beauty.” Thus, French architectural flexibility, its respect of color, light, and motion, as well as its respect for variation, have contributed to the Mexican aversion to functionalist enclosed shopping centers.

American Technical Expertise

European culture has played a significant influence on shopping center architecture in Latin America, but this should not obscure the technical leadership that American corporations have spread throughout the hemisphere. In terms of shopping center architecture, global design leader RTKL Associates (Baltimore, Maryland) has worked with Latin American shopping center developers for several decades. Jeff Gunning, a Vice President for RTKL, has overseen the expansion of his firm into the region. For Gunning, the most important difference between shopping centers in Latin America and the United States is environmental: Latin American shopping centers have traditionally not used heating and air-conditioning systems whereas American malls have. This preference for open-air shopping centers, as elaborated upon by Dante Rivas above, gave American designers ideas they could take back home and apply to domestic shopping centers. According to Gunning: For U.S. architects used to enclosed centers, this was an opportunity to think more in terms of streets and canopies, while for developers and owners [in Latin America] the ongoing cost and noise associated with HVAC systems was much less of an issue that would be in the US. American architects working in Latin America learned lessons they are now applying to the new generation of open-air and hybrid centers cropping up across the US as consumer patterns evolve.

In terms of function, Gunning’s concurred with the majority of the architects consulted for this book: malls in Latin America play a larger social role in the lives of families than in the United States. In Gunning’s words, a shopping center in Latin America was a “much more communal place” than its American counterpart.

In terms of the process of constructing a shopping center, Gunning suggests that construction techniques are more often the problem than the availability of materials in Latin American markets. In one case his company encountered, a floor plan had to be changed when a local craftsperson familiar with designing terrazzo floors could not be located. More often than not, Gunning suggests, adaptation to local materials is the rule of the day. “We may use materials in Latin America that we wouldn’t think of using in North America,” he notes, “such as rustic indigenous stone, which add[s] a distinct regional flavor to the space.” Perhaps the biggest challenge for an architectural firm doing business in Latin America is the adaptation of the model—a shopping center—to regional culture. Gunning notes that the unique tenant mix in Latin America, including fewer chain and department stores and more localized businesses, create a different type of shopping center. As Juan Pfeifer noted for Argentina, many times the anchors tend to be stores other than traditional department stores. In some cases pharmacies and five and dime stores serve as shopping center anchors. These differences affect design and planning.

Lighting is also a critical element in shopping center design, but one often overlooked by the consumer. American lighting specialists have provided global leadership in this aspect of shopping center design as well. New York-based Theo Kondos has been a lighting expert for several decades, undertaking numerous commercial projects around the world. Like RTKL, Kondos’s lighting firm is globally recognized and brings its experience around the world to bear on its approach to Latin American projects. For Kondos, like the majority of the specialists interviewed, the enhanced social functions of shopping centers in Latin America tend to define the functional differences with malls in the United States. Kondos points to the wider walkways used in Latin American...
malls, where “whole families enjoy walking together in a parallel line, whereas in the U.S. family members tend to walk one behind another.” Structurally, Kondos, who has worked on numerous recycled mall projects in Argentina, observes that designers in South America “like to add more architecture to the centers” than American designers. In terms of lighting, however, Kondos notes that “developers want US’ know how’ with an international name.” Culturally, Kondos suggests that American shopping centers tend to be more brightly lit than shopping centers in Latin America. In some cases the type of shopping center being built determines this. In a more contemporary building, where there is less detail, Kondos would use more lighting to “create patterns and rhythms of light,” a focal point to enhance the ambiance. In historical properties, like the Galerías Pacífico in Buenos Aires, lighting transforms the historical features of the buildings into visual focal points. Like RTKL, Kondos has found the greatest challenge in adapting to the available resources in each country. “You should design around what you can get,” he observed. “...Each country is unique in the manufacture of light fixtures. Do not be too critical; -- just 'go with the flow.'”

Luís Martín, of Fort Lauderdale-based Pavlik Design, has worked on the interior design of numerous department stores in Latin America. Pavlik Design began work in the region around 1991 and has since won several design awards for is work with Palacio de Hierro, Mexico’s most exclusive department store. Pavlik not only completed interior work on Palacio de Hierro’s stores at Centro Santa Fe, Mexico City’s largest mall, but also on the Polanco store, which is located in the architecturally chic Plaza Moliere 222. In 1995 Pavlik also helped to renovate Palacio’s flagship store on Durango Street, just steps from the Zocalo. According to Martín, design varies from country to country, and most importantly, from client to client. When Pavlik started working with Palacio de Hierro at the beginning of the 1990s, the chain had the image of an elite store, but did not have the brands or the international “look” that the company desired. Pavlik employed new strategies, including the use of more lights. This innovative approach successfully captured the attention of luxury brands that had been reluctant to place their products with the department store. Not only did the store become more elegant, but also the exclusive brands felt that the store matched up to their exacting standards. Martín stressed the primacy of light in store design, citing the need to help consumers see products in conditions as close to daylight as possible. He pointed out that the colors needed to be seen by customers, as they would be outdoors. Furthermore, bright stores attracted the most customers.

As a result of his experience, Martín believes that the availability of materials, and not local infrastructure in a particular region of Latin America, is the most critical component of successful project. If a client’s region does not have a desired material, such as granite or marble, then the designer has to adapt to local materials. In order to avoid any delays due to material availability, extensive research is carried out prior to going into an area. Martín also stressed the importance of using materials that are easily replaced in a given area. In Chile, for example, certain types of lighting fixtures may not be available. Even if you can buy them or import them for the store’s grand opening, the long-term health of the store needs to be taken into account. If a store manager cannot replace lights given the materials available on the local market, an adaptation in the initial design plan may be necessary. The greatest danger, Martín points out, is that local managers may begin to cut corners and compromise the original design. This would not only reflect poorly on the store, but also on designer’s ability to bridge the gap between design expertise and materials in a local region of Latin America. Martín stresses that designers “have to create an integrated product that maintains the whole design package and that can be maintained after [the designer] has gone from the store.”

Martín also argues that despite the impacts of globalization, global models cannot be used in design projects in Latin America. Although people around the world have a greater understanding today of what people on the other side of the globe are buying, Martín notes, they want to be able to purchase it in a setting in which they feel comfortable. The layout of a Ripley department store in Chile, for example, would vary from the layout of a similar store in Mexico. Electronics are such a strong item in Chile, that they would be placed near the front of the store, whereas at a store like Palacio de Hierro in Mexico City, clothing would be emphasized to capture the attention of the upscale consumers. In terms of cultural influences, Martín believes that different regions in Latin America follow different cultural leads. The American influence is much stronger in Mexico, whereas the European influence prevails in Argentina. In Mexico elite consumers want to buy European clothing, but they want the stores to look like American stores. As one moves down the socioeconomic ladder, the American influence, not only in design but also consumer tastes, becomes stronger.

Miami: Shopping Capital of Latin America

Today Miami not only lays claim to the unofficial title of “Capital of Latin America,” but also the title of “Latin America’s Shopping Center.” No shopping center in the Caribbean or Latin America better integrates the architectural and aesthetic preferences of Latin America’s elite than the Bal Harbour Shops, located north of Miami on Bal Harbour Island. Financed by Florida businessman Stanley Whitman and designed by the Miami-based architectural firm Johnson and Associates in the late 1960s, the shopping center is comprised of two open-air retail floors and a third administrative floor. The structure focuses the shopper’s attention inward to the lush vegetation, palm trees, water fountains, and pools filled with exotic fish in the interior courtyard. It is this structure and landscape that represents the meshing of North American conceptualizations of a shopping mall with the finest high street shopping of Polanco in Mexico City and Avenida Alvear in Buenos Aires. First, the vertical orientation (three stories in height) of the shopping center structurally reflects the integrated shopping spaces so common in the United States. It was also the first United States shopping center that carried out a vertical addition. A third floor was added to Neiman Marcus in 1973. In terms of convenience, this vertical concentration of luxury stores and services made it easier for the jet set of Miami or Latin America to visit a multitude of boutiques without having to make numerous stops along a boulevard. While it is not enclosed, it has brought together the highest end retailers in the world in a shopping center format. Furthermore, the presence of department stores alongside the most exclusive boutiques in the world is also a largely American influence. Whitman wanted to have traditional anchors, in this case Neiman Marcus (joined in 1971) and Saks Fifth Avenue (joined in 1976), to provide a strong attraction, along with the boutiques, to the center. In this sense, covered or not, Bal Harbour is reflective of a traditional American shopping center.

The Latin influence in the mall, on the other hand, is evident in the open-air format with a flow pattern reminiscent of the high streets of Latin America. Whether you are on the first or the second floor of Bal Harbour shops, you feel as if you are on a street. In fact, there are comfortable cafes on both levels of the mall. The interior orientation feels like a colonial-era Spanish home that has been isolated from the outside world, providing a sense of tranquility from the surrounding traffic. The palm trees, which have been here since the mall opened, have now created an overhead canopy that is reminiscent of the tropics and further shields shoppers from surrounding distractions. The movement of water, the color of the fish and the flora, and the careful attention to the storefront displays all speak to the cultural preferences of elite Latin shoppers. The attention to display windows may be characteristic of upscale retailers throughout the world, but the attention to color and form has a particular effect upon Latin shoppers who are familiar with those design motifs in their own countries. Venezuelan designer Angel Sanchez ties these design traditions (American and Latin American) together, illustrating the synergy created by meshing an American retailing mix with an open-air, tropical structure. She notes: “I feel like having my collection in Bal Harbour Shops is like having a presence on the Madison Avenue of Latin America, where both collectibles that I love are combined. One is New York – with its international fashion glamour and its cosmopolitan lifestyle – and the other is Caracas – with its natural beauty, tranquil environment and all of my Latin clients!”

Conclusion

When Victor Gruen revolutionized retail architecture with the advent of the enclosed shopping center, he had no idea that it would take on a functional life of its own in North American suburbs, where shopping took precedence over community building. In contrast, Latin American shopping centers filled many of the roles of form and function ascribed to the structure by Gruen, including a preference for mixed retailing, wide walk ways that permitted strolling and family activities, and enhanced cultural experiences for patrons. Despite these similarities to Gruen’s original vision for the shopping center, the form of Latin America’s shopping centers can best be described as a fusion of culture, capital, and expertise from the United States and the individual nations where these structures are built. A greater degree of creative interaction between the two regions should be the logical outcome for shopping center design in the Americas during the twenty-first century.

SETS OF PLANS, ARCHIVE PHOTOS AND OLD DRAWINGS: THE DOCUMENTATION OF THE HISTORY OF ARCHITECTURE.

Juan Miguel Oxotorena

There are various institutions related to architecture dedicated to the study of history, nevertheless, public archives aimed at this specific area are scarce. Paradoxically,
the scarcity is most profound in the case of the History of Architecture of the 20th
Century; and this is due to a number of motives related to personal difficulties within
the art and in particular the profound consequences of the positions and debates
based around the so-called Modern Movement. However, specific foundations exist
aimed at development and cultivation of the documentary legacy of its most promi-
nent protagonists; still, this appears insufficient and leaves the collection and analy-
sis of the necessary information as a task yet to be undertaken for the in-depth under-
standing of life during the period.

ARCHITECTURAL MYTHS AND REALITIES IN THE RELATIONSHIPS
BETWEEN GERMANY, ITALY AND SPAIN DURING THE WAR YEARS OF
THE 20TH CENTURY. CHRONICLE OF A CONGRESS.
José Manuel Pozo Municio

On the 25th and 26th of March 2004 the Fifth International Congress of Contemporary
Spanish Architecture took place in Pamplona in the School of Architecture of the
University of Navarra, under the title German and Italian models for Spain during the
Post War years. A number of diverse researchers took part in the event among them
Francesco Dal Co, Carlos Sambricio, Giorgio Muratore, Marco Mulazzani and Hartmut
Frank.

The discussions and papers presented at the Congress (summarised in Modelos ale-
manes e italianos para España en los años de la postguerra, T6 Ediciones, Pamplona,
2004) in addition to the round table debates confirm the necessity to study the area
in greater depth and place a more rigorous historic focus on the real content of Post
War Italian architecture which was transmitted onto the Spanish art of the same peri-
od, making it essential to suppress the ideological and aesthetic issues which have
affect the critical analysis carried out over the past decades, in terms of the manner
in which one refers to the other.

In the second address, referring to Germany, the works presented served to prove the
necessity to concede a greater role to German architecture during the interwar years
in the configuration process of Spanish architecture in the fifties. Particular docu-
mentary relevance was provided in this case in the presentation of the Libreta de
Aizpurúa y Labayen (José A. Medina), which was the document in which these two
architects, great exhibitors of modern effort in Spain during the 30's and champions
of GATEPAC, collected a detailed report of the works they considered worthy to be
catalogued, with a particular focus on German architecture. Simply the contribution
of this document, it being the work of two prominent architects begs us to question
the mode in which our recent architectural past has been documented.

On the other hand following the projects exhibited during the Congress, there appears
to be a need to seriously question the existence of State architecture itself and above
all establishes the necessity to doubt the main role given to the Spanish political and
ideological opposition as a factor and impulse to progress and as a guarantor for the
introduction of forms of contemporary architecture into Spain.

Another important fact connected to the Congress was the presentation of the book
Los brillantes 50, 35 proyectos, which took place the afternoon before the Congress’
commencement coinciding with the inauguration of an exhibition of the same name,
prepared based on the contents on the book, and which is narrowly linked with the
Congress as its elaboration project arose amidst the Second Congress, celebrated in
2000. Finally, at the closing of the Congress, the study theme for the Fifth Congress
which will take place on the 16th and 17th of March 2006 was announced as “North
American Architecture, a Driving Force and Mirror of Spanish Architecture in the
beginning of Modernity (1940-1965)”.

ENGLISH ABSTRACTS
112