

Taking
a Stand?

Debating
the
Bauhaus
and
Modernism

bauhaus-archiv
museum für gestaltung

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Preface

Annemarie Jaeggi
Director Bauhaus-Archiv /
Museum für Gestaltung, Berlin

The two symposia «100 years of bauhaus—a critical discourse» in September 2018 and «taking a stand? debating the bauhaus and modernism» in November 2019 did more than simply providing a framework for the Bauhaus anniversary in Berlin, for they focused in addition on a critical, polyphonic engagement with the Bauhaus. While in 2018 international participants explored how visions of artistic and societal renewal associated with the Bauhaus can assume relevance today, the 2019 conference examined a hugely diverse range of attitudes adopted by Bauhäusler (former Bauhaus teachers and students) and modernist architects as émigrés, in exile, in divided Germany and in conflict-ridden political situations. Closely intermeshing the symposium with a school project also afforded scope to explore the potential of an early dialogue between academia and cultural/political education, shedding light on the sparks of inspiration this can generate on both sides. That proved fruitful precisely because the concept of taking a stand spans a broad nexus of ideas for investigating the Bauhaus—ranging from practical issues of how and where we live, scrutiny of our own actions and opportunities for collaborative work, through to the major topics of our era, such as how we handle resources and sustainability.

We are also breaking new ground with the curated format of this publication, now significantly expanded beyond the scope of the symposium. In addition to traditional reading modes, it offers new content-driven approaches and readings via overarching questions and keywords. Andrea Bärnreuther's great merit lies not only in having conceived and implemented the two symposia and this publication with a hugely farsighted vision and enormous commitment, but furthermore especially in having opened up the Bauhaus to the future and made it fruitful as part of an «entangled history» and as a driving force for transcultural exchange in interdisciplinary research areas. We cannot thank her enough for this! Finally, on behalf of the Bauhaus-Archiv / Museum für Gestaltung, I would like to express our gratitude to all our sponsors for their great support: the Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung [Federal Agency for Civic Education], the Senatsverwaltung für Kultur und Europa des Landes Berlin [Senate Department for Culture and Europe of the Federal State of Berlin], and the Kulturstiftung des Bundes [German Federal Cultural Foundation].

bauhaus-archiv
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debating the bauhaus
and modernism

taking A stand ?

an international symposium of the
bauhaus-archiv / museum für gestaltung
on 29 / 30 november 2019

at berlinische galerie
alte jakobstr. 124 - 128
10969 berlin

Fig. 1
Flyer of the symposium «taking a stand?
debating the bauhaus and modernism»
of the Bauhaus-Archiv / Museum für
Gestaltung on 29/30 November 2019 at the
Berlinische Galerie, designed by L2M3,
referring to László Moholy-Nagy, *Bauhaus-
balkone in Dessau* [Bauhaus Balconies
in Dessau], 1927, Bauhaus-Archiv / Museum
für Gestaltung, Berlin

Introduction

Andrea Bärnreuther

The publication «taking a stand? debating the bauhaus and modernism» is based on a symposium,¹ sponsored by the Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung [Federal Agency for Civic Education], that also incorporated a school project and accompanied the Bauhaus-Archiv / Museum für Gestaltung's original bauhaus centenary exhibition at Berlinische Galerie (29th/30th November 2019). The exhibition and the publication were sponsored by the Senate Department for Culture and Europe of the State of Berlin and the Kulturstiftung des Bundes (German Federal Cultural Foundation).

The publication views itself not in the spirit of conference proceedings but instead as a further project development step: On the one hand, almost all the presentations and discussions were revised for the publication and supplemented by seven further papers. On the other hand, this curated publication format, in addition to traditional reading modes, opens up non-linear and multi-perspective approaches via questions and keywords. These summarize or supplement the text passages they reference.

During the preparatory phase before the symposium, two classes from the Nelson Mandela and the Paula Fürst School in Berlin addressed the issue of where we live and how to live when faced with the housing and climate crisis, as well as considering the topics of utopia and taking a stand; they produced short films, screening these for the participating international researchers on 29th November prior to the opening event and discussing the issues with them. In return, the scholars presented questions from the symposium and discussed their personal approach to the research topics. Three articles in the publication offer an introduction to the film project, with teasers intervening in the publication context to showcase the links to the films.

«taking a stand? debating the bauhaus and modernism»

Our symposium's project title alludes to an idea of the Bauhaus as adopting a social attitude, a notion widespread during the Bauhaus anniversary year, and brings questions into play concerning what it means to take a stand. Demands for us to stand up and be counted are omnipresent today. That is because central values and principles of our democratic society are increasingly called into question by

the encroachment of right-wing populist and right-wing extremist positions into the societal mainstream.

Our key image ^{Fig. 1} refers to a 1927 photograph by László Moholy-Nagy, *Bauhausbalkone in Dessau* [Bauhaus Balconies in Dessau]. It depicts taking a stand as entailing an unstable equilibrium, teetering on the brink of collapse, requiring constant vigilance and effort to maintain it. We understand «taking a stand» with regard to architecture and design not as a synonym for «style»² but as «an attitude towards the world and one's own being-in-the-world» (Peter Wagner)³ within the complex context of design, social and political concerns and processes, as well as a heuristic method for developing relevant questions.

The question of what we understand by taking a stand regarding the Bauhaus formed the starting point for an expedition that led us to insights into the complexity this entails.

The Bauhaus—as the flagship of Modernism—became recognizable as a complex that encompasses material culture, ideas or ideologies, teachings and practices, as well as politics and geopolitics, while it became apparent how our images of the Bauhaus connect with us—with our questions and perspectives, as well as our values and criteria for determining value, i.e. with our attitude or our decision to take a stand.

Can an institution with so many different facets as the Bauhaus be regarded as embodying a social attitude?

In his opening lecture, Winfried Nerdinger provides insights into the Bauhaus' various and sometimes contradictory programmatic approaches, distinguishing between four phases: the Itten Bauhaus, the Gropius Bauhaus, the Meyer Bauhaus, and the Mies Bauhaus. He also demonstrates how effectively Bauhaus founder Walter Gropius made this diversity and difference disappear, turning the focus instead to the Bauhaus he directed and the image of an ever-topical, universally valid Bauhaus idea.

«Was heißt hier Haltung?» In German the title asks what we understand by adopting an attitude, both in terms of the Bauhaus per se as a discursive object and the ways in which we address it.

In order to be able to answer our initial question, we must therefore first ask ourselves which Bauhaus we mean or want, which entails first of all clarifying what we even mean by Bauhaus—out of the enormous wealth of ideas present in the anniversary year, catapulted into simultaneity from the very different contexts where they originated, only those fundamental for our object of discourse shall be emphasized: Do we mean a historical object, the school of art, design and architecture that existed for 14 years, or the Bauhaus including its history of global reception? Do we understand the Bauhaus

as a vitally alive project that continues uninterrupted or as a living tradition, as reconceptualized by Bauhaus founder Walter Gropius? Or is it for us—also envisioned in a transtemporal sense—an artistic, socially emancipatory vision, as the artist Asger Jorn understood the Bauhaus and, drawing on his view, the *bauhaus imaginista* anniversary exhibition? Can we also go along with the line adopted by this exhibition in perceiving the Bauhaus as a transcultural and transnational network of relationships that can once again become a driving force for transnational and transcultural exchange, or do we see it as Germany's most successful cultural export?

The Bauhaus that we encountered during the 100th anniversary year oscillates between its roles as an object of the past, a resource for the present and a screen for projections in which we find ourselves reflected.

Anniversaries pursue a politics of remembrance. They exist within the field of tension between scholarship and politics, which cannot be resolved in favour of either. The two poles that define this field are historical research and re-construction of what this anniversary is celebrating to make it a catalyst and means of mobilisation for the present and the future.

Looking back now, with nine months' hindsight, it seems fair to say that the Bauhaus anniversary has borne fruit. Its most spectacular manifestation is EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen's political proclamation of a new European Green Bauhaus in her 16th September 2020 State of the Union Address «Building the world we want to live in: A Union of vitality in a world of fragility».⁴

The Bauhaus has thus entered the arena of the sustainability debate in a present defined by the climate crisis: as the cultural dimension of the European Green Deal and a wave of European renewal with the EU spearheading a circular economy.

The Bauhaus as a symbol of radical renewal and change in our lifestyles, as a paradigm of new forms of collaborative design and interdisciplinary knowledge-generation, as well as new visions of building as a field of experimentation, as a process-oriented method that strives to attain distant goals, delves into new possibilities, and much more.

The Bauhaus as the flagship of European renewal characterized by sustainable development in the guise of a political statement—that is an idea that was not yet explicitly present in the Bauhaus anniversary year. However, many ideas that can be regarded as a driving force were already present: the idea of the Bauhaus as a workshop for the future and a worldwide think tank, and all the desiderata associated with that—the courage to experiment, confidence that we can change many people's lives for the better, a force that transcends the boundaries of political interventions and generates new approaches to thinking and design, which are so urgently needed in the light of globalisation and digitalisation, climate change and migration—while, last but not least, the question of what politics can do today

also emerged. That's not all: Through his interest and participation in our opening event, German Vice-Chancellor Olaf Scholz, now in the running for the post of chancellor, set the ball rolling on this topic as a political contribution to the Bauhaus anniversary year.

The opening lecture by architectural historian and Bauhaus expert Winfried Nerdinger and Olaf Scholz's keynote speech render palpable the tensions that generally characterize anniversaries: on the one hand, critical historical analysis and, on the other, the political intent to shape the world, which seeks to understand the Bauhaus as a resource for the present and a call for action, outlining political prerequisites and sketching out the course to be steered by socially committed architecture, especially for housing and urban planning in the 21st century.

The complexity of taking a stand

The symposium encompasses three interconnecting and overlapping thematic complexes in which the complexity of taking a stand is investigated and discussed in detail: ranging from the attitudes of *Bauhäusler* (former Bauhaus teachers and students), as well as the architects of *Neues Bauen* [the New Building Movement], and how these were reflected in activities and works through to the attitudes that shaped or continue to shape Bauhaus historiography and its politics of remembrance, including our own attitude as Bauhaus researchers or historians, which underpins the construction of our (re-search) object.

The publication comprises 20 papers and 5 highly fascinating discussions. Here however I shall simply briefly introduce the individual papers in order to outline the overall conceptual structure.

The papers in Section I deal with questions concerning the fate of the visions developed by the *Bauhäusler* as well as by *Neues Bauen* architects, after the Bauhaus' closure, concerning planning and building a «new world» in the unfamiliar new contexts of emigration or exile, and ask what taking a stand means in this context.

They show the architects in various political and economic contexts, which often made it difficult to adopt a resolute stance, as well how they handled conflict situations and areas of tension. In this context, learning processes are also examined and attempts to reimagine modern architecture.

Taking Hannes Meyer in exile in Mexico as his point of departure, Ryan Fred Long examines the contrast between European and Latin American self-images and ideas of identity, the contrast between the ideology of progress and «being contemporary with the world», the homeland and post-colonial homelessness. He sees Hannes Meyer's approach to the localisation and contextualization of architecture and his handling of the tension between regionalism and universalism in the context of Kenneth Frampton's «critical

regionalism» as a response to homelessness. Long draws on Kenneth Frampton's analytic terms, viewing Meyer's «trajectory of displacement» as a «marginal counter-history», whose potential lies in its eccentricity, i.e. in the simultaneity of connection and separation, «the joint and the disjoint».

While Long thus links the beginning and the end of the symposium and inspires the discussion of Section III, Raquel Franklin analyses Hannes Meyer's attitude in terms of two construction projects that required him to compromise: In the Soviet Union he had to accept Socialist Realism, despite realizing that he could not contribute to it, and in Mexico he had to accept working in the capitalist world. For Franklin, Meyer's scientific, social and functional approach, along with his idea of the «fate of landscape» as a determinant of design, constitute the common denominator and are indicative of his attitude.

Can architectural modernity simply be translated into other parts of the world, such as the Near or Middle East, without altering its identity? What kind of experiences did German architects have in Turkish society? Paola Ardizzola explores these questions and, drawing on the example of Bruno Taut's transposition of *Neues Bauen* into his exile in Turkey, reveals a successful attempt to mediate between the matrix of Modernism and the matrix of a reinterpretation of specific traditional architectural traits, thus creating a different Modernism beyond Historicism and the International Style—in a dialogue between tradition and modernity.

There are good reasons to consider Modernism's willing engagement with learning processes and its self-criticism as a form of attitude too.

Ulrich Hartung and Eduard Kögel demonstrate the complexities of taking a stand through the example of Richard Paulick. Hartung accompanies the architect as he travels «from the Bauhaus to the Stalinallee and back». Kögel accompanies Paulick in exile in Shanghai «in search of a more humane architecture».

Hartung traces out how Paulick moved from the Bauhaus to the diametrically opposed approach manifested in the Stalinallee, where Paulick adhered to Socialist Realism and the National Tradition doctrine, yet subsequently returned to his initial practice in the urban planning designs for Hoyerswerda, Schwedt and Halle-Neustadt, where he again embraced modernity in terms of industrial processes and construction.

Hartung views the prevailing economic and ideological conditions as permeating Paulick's design mindset and thus constitutive for his architectural and urban planning designs. What he perceives as a reconciliation of Socialist Realism with industrialized construction processes as the Bauhaus legacy looks from Kögel's perspective questionable yet also worthy of further interrogation. Kögel provides insight into Paulick's great ambition, shaped in exile in Shanghai in the 1940s: to work on a revolutionary new architecture by integrating architecture into nature and strengthening its socio-political impact.

Section II focuses on transfer, translation and transformation processes of Bauhaus and Bauhaus pedagogy, drawing on the example of Sweden, Latin America and China in the political arena, i.e. in an engagement with asymmetrical power relations and geopolitics.

Contrary to the idea of the Bauhaus as the most successful German cultural export, activated very effectively by various political stakeholders in a funding and marketing perspective in the context of the anniversary year and then adopted without criticism by many others, the very different forms of Bauhaus reception, as a function of time, space, political orientation and geopolitical significance, economic approach and social reach, turn the focus more onto the diverse forms of translation and transformation.

Facets of taking a stand are encountered here on various levels: on the one hand, in the understanding of the Bauhaus that underlies our project, namely as a transnational and transcultural network of relationships, or in the historiographical perspective of «entangled history».

The question of whether Bauhaus reception should be presented as a one-way process or as bi-directional needs to be examined in each individual case, particularly as it can only be answered with the appropriate research and sources. And in order to start pursuing research along these lines, an appropriate historiographical perspective or attitude is needed.

On the other hand, attitudes become visible in the sender's projection or the recipient's expectation and how these interact in transfer and translation processes.

What conceptions do *Bauhäusler* or *Neues Bauen* architects in exile have about their remit, their host country, and its inhabitants? What problems does reception of Bauhaus ideas seek to solve and what social and political significance does this reception assume for the local populace?

And thirdly, differing perspectives on the same subject matter—as a social project to be renewed in the present or as an object of intellectual imagination—can also be brought together with different attitudes, although here professional differences and experiential, and certainly also social, contexts may have a stronger impact than cultural or national factors.

Atli Magnus Seelow focuses on the transposition of continental European Modernism into the Nordic context and the Functionalism that emerged from this, which had a uniquely enduring effect as an aesthetic-political programme that shaped the Swedish welfare state's architecture, urban planning and design. He also refers to the differences in reception of the Bauhaus, which in Germany, as a tangible utopia, became a screen for projections, and Functionalism, which was subjected to a reality test and finally abandoned.

The Bauhaus reception in Chile is the subject of three papers, each with a different perspective: David Maulén de los Reyes discusses how the Hannes Meyer Bauhaus, as embodied in Tibor Weiner, influenced socially engaged architectural training and practice, which he understands from the perspective of the cybernetic system model as a systemic approach critically directed against technocratic modernity and that should be further developed. In his view, the prerequisite for this is the 1920s «Active School» movement—a synthesis of educational approaches from Europe and Latin America that recognized the cultural variables of each context in the construction of knowledge.

Susanne Neubauer and Marcelo Mari present an early example of post-colonial critique of the Bauhaus: the contribution that German design theorist Gui Bonsiepe, a student of Tomás Maldonado from Argentina at the Hochschule für Gestaltung in Ulm, made during his time in Chile; in his role as project manager for the central economic administration, he fostered value-based, anti-capitalist, sustainable design rooted in local design and craft production within the cultural-political context of Salvador Allende's Chile. Bonsiepe criticized the concept of «good design» advocated by the Ulm School of Design as an expression of cultural imperialism.

Whereas David Maulén de los Reyes views socially committed architectural practice in the tradition of the Meyer Bauhaus as a resource for the present, Fernando Pérez-Oyarzun sees the Bauhaus School in Chile, regardless of which particular tradition one considers, as a component of the intellectual conceptual universe of art historians and students. He demonstrates how it is intertwined with the artistic and intellectual milieu in Chile and how it has left its mark and reinvigorated art, architecture and design teaching, especially in the second half of the 20th century, while remaining utopian in terms of its socially transformative impetus.

Chin-Wei Chang examines the historical advent of modernity in the arts, design and architecture in mainland China. He understands the Bauhaus as a collection of attitudes to design problems in the industrial age that is still relevant today. At the same time, he relativizes the Bauhaus' significance in relation to other modern traditions, calling for the Bauhaus to be decentralized and attention to be directed to translation and transformation processes, as well as to the social significance for the local populace.

In contrast, Zoe Zhang considers the Bauhaus to be very important for China. She sees the Bauhaus as a complex comprising material culture, ideas and politics. In her view, the Bauhaus' capacity to survive lies in the superposition of anonymous reception in the form of material culture and reception of ideologically distinct versions of the Bauhaus, i.e. in its great breadth and flexibility. The Bauhaus in China transcends popular and high culture, the roles of a colonial power and a colonised people and unites adversaries from the Second Japanese-Chinese War. Having been submerged in the anonymity of material culture, it survived the Cultural Revolution, re-appearing in various versions in the 1980s and sparking controversy.

Section III relates the question of attitude to Bauhaus historiography and its culture of remembrance, thus linking up to the Bauhaus anniversary year and our present.

Using architect Mart Stam to illustrate her argument, Simone Hain depicts Modernism as an attitude that can only conceive its own position outside of contemporary art history, in the process also rendering visible the blind spots and cognitive weaknesses of an image-driven and work-based art historiography. Hain shows Stam as a leading figure in the Constructivist movement, his interest in participating in a great historical-cultural development on an unprecedented scale, his affiliation to a community of values in which cultural progress and an alternative form of economic management, cooperation and consumption are inextricably linked and there is no room for authorship.

Philipp Oswalt tackles the Bauhaus brand from a twofold perspective: Hannes Meyer's critique of the Bauhaus style and the «White City», Tel Aviv, which as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, views itself as the world capital of Bauhaus. He articulates the argument that the branding that has kept the Bauhaus alive to this day and been highly successful in the Bauhaus anniversary year makes productive examination of its heritage more difficult: due to the branding's focus on objects and the «Bauhaus style», which was already highly controversial in the historical Bauhaus. Oswalt calls for a more in-depth engagement with Hannes Meyer's Bauhaus—not only in the spirit of a corrective to Bauhaus historiography but also to heighten awareness of a fundamental conflict in modern consumer design between its iconic-symbolic status and its social utility value.

Taking Tel Aviv's «White City», as an example, he shows how myth-formation around the Bauhaus brand creates new, constructed affiliations to the Bauhaus and links it to values that cannot necessarily be connected to an actual affiliation with the Bauhaus. Oswalt examines the objectives along with the both positive and negative intended or functional impact—identity formation, exclusion and repression processes.

Ronny Schüler homes in on the dark side of Tel Aviv's mythicization and investigates the repression of Bauhaus history through the prism of two less well-known Bauhaus students in the shadow of Arie Sharon. For Munio Weinraub Gitai and Shmuel Mestechkin, the Bauhaus was a testing ground for socialism and Zionism. In this context, Schüler also addresses the contradiction between the Bauhaus' founding ideals and its popularisation in the spirit of neo-liberal interests in its exploitation, which paid scant attention to the social-utopian ambitions of the Bauhaus and *Neues Bauen*, and, on the contrary, fostered social displacement processes under the «Bauhaus» label.

Hila Cohen-Schneiderman examines processes of repression relating to the historical intertwining with National Socialist Germany materially inscribed in the «White City», depriving it of its «whiteness» and purity. She also highlights scope for new discoveries and

perhaps even processes of change in an artistically inspired culture of remembrance. Taking the language of material culture as the starting point, specifically tiles made in Germany, the artistic research and exhibition project to mark the inauguration of the Max Liebling Haus, restored with German funding, as the White City Center (with the Bauhaus Dessau Foundation as a partner) was sparked off by the Transfer Agreement (1933), of all things. That encompassed an economic agreement between Nazi Germany and the Zionist Federation, as a result of which assets were transferred from Germany to the «White City» in the form of building materials.

Lessons from the Bauhaus

There are many reasons to believe that we can only learn something from the Bauhaus about our own challenges and about ways to resolve our current problems if we understand it as a complex made up of material culture, ideas/ideologies, teachings and practices as well as politics and geopolitics, and if we engage with the social, political and design processes underlying the objects and buildings, as well as with their effects.

The Bauhaus is embedded in the nexus of an ambivalent European modernity and its universal aspirations, interwoven with colonialism and European hegemonic claims or practices. The Bauhaus as a discursive object transcends the boundaries of disciplines, moves into areas that elude traditional architectural or art historical analysis while also escaping a national or Eurocentric perspective; it calls for inter- and transdisciplinary approaches, as well as questions and methods of «entangled history», along with the corresponding transnational and transcultural exchanges—and, last but not least, it demands a readiness to constantly and self-critically question one's own criteria for determining value.

At the same time, in order to avoid over-simplifying, we should also always be aware of what separates us from the historical Bauhaus: first and foremost a concept of sustainability and the need for sustainable development, awareness of the scarcity of resources, scepticism about an unqualified faith in progress and towards utopias that leapfrog the existing world and believe they can manage without transformational efforts.

The last two papers in the epilogue explore the current significance of the Bauhaus. Elke Krasny asks if, particularly in view of COVID-19, we should be devising an architecture that tackles the challenge of repairing the future and finding a new critical and sustainable approach to the existing and the traditional, rather than clinging to the modern promise of building a better future. She views care ethics as a topic for research and teaching, as well as for architectural practice—a framework for re-examining the Bauhaus legacy—and draws up a blueprint for a new architecture curriculum that considers the interrelationships between economic, ecological and social issues.

Thierry Fabre understands the Bauhaus as a source of inspiration for the present day, as a model for «the art of dwelling differently in the world», for the invention of the unknown and the reinvention of everyday environments and a new lifestyle that will enable us to make the requisite changes to our ways of life. He sees the creative art scene in the Mediterranean region as an embodiment of the Bauhaus spirit in the present.

The question of taking a stand, adopting a particular attitude enables us to build bridges between our own attitudes and those of the *Bauhäusler*, Modernist architects and Bauhaus recipients in translation processes, historiography and politics of memory.

In this context, excellent opportunities emerge to open up forms of cultural education to encompass social and political issues and processes, as well as to the educational goals of social science subjects, such as a critical spirit, multi-perspectivity, dealing with diversity and heterogeneity. There are many reasons to believe that great, as yet untapped potential lies in new forms of combining knowledge about the arts and hands-on learning, on the one hand, and cognitive learning or knowledge about social and political sciences and history on the other.

In new configurations of cultural and political education in the analogue and digital realm, interdisciplinary synergy effects could be generated, tapping into the field of tension between art and science; at the same time, networked thinking could be promoted and practised, along with a broad spectrum of creative, digital, discursive, collaborative, social and democratic skills among students, young people and adults. These are vital prerequisites for the social transformation processes needed today. In this context, examining the Bauhaus and its heterogeneity or rather the contradictions that permeate its teachings and practices, which to this day continue to be multiplied in worldwide reception and constant (re)production of highly diverse Bauhaus images, offers an excellent springboard for engaging with diversity and difference, with history as construction, with processes of memory, marginalisation and repression, with colonialist thinking and hegemonic practices, with a new understanding of cultural heritage as a transnational and transcultural network of relationships and with areas of tension that cannot be resolved and must be endured.

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Questions and Keywords

Instructions

The following book offers readers three multifaceted methods for navigating this publication. The first is the customary table of contents, the second is by means of 15 overarching questions, and the third is through 324 keywords. The two latter possibilities present the reader with a spectrum of ideas and questions which can be used as anchor points while reading.

To ensure accessibility, the publication features the basic functionality of a PDF file, for which you will need to download a free version of Adobe Acrobat Reader DC (https://www.chip.de/downloads/Adobe-Acrobat-Reader-DC_12998358.html). This allows you to view the publication regardless of your device's operating system (e.g. Windows, Mac OS or Android). If you wish to navigate through the publication using the questions or keywords, you can enter queries via the search function (Ctrl +F). An additional tool located at the top left of every text page starting with the opening section enables you to access the three different navigation options if you wish to try out new methods of access. All the page numbers of the three navigation options, i.e. the table of contents, questions and keywords, are linked to their corresponding pages. Individual questions are also accessible via their corresponding letter, e.g. [G], which allows you to jump to the respective passage to which the question refers.

We hope you enjoy trying out the various navigation methods provided in this publication.

[A] Can we see in the Bauhaus as a whole—despite its apparent heterogeneity—a uniform stance or even something like the epitome of a social attitude?

47, 53, 58, 60, 75, 86, 116, 446, 447

[B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?

77, 83, 85, 92, 155, 156, 158, 175, 181, 182, 196, 201, 207, 208, 210, 215, 216, 218, 239, 255, 256, 266, 303, 361, 367, 368, 392, 437, 447, 460, 478

[C] How can we explore the kinds of stand taken by Bauhaus and Modernist architects and designers and their consistency?

157, 163, 165, 179, 196, 207, 210, 215, 218, 220, 222, 226, 392, 450, 460

[D] How can we discover the social and political processes behind buildings and objects, planning and building activities as well as reception processes?

269, 400, 401, 413, 418, 423, 438

[E] What are the political prerequisites for socially engaged architecture or design?

76, 88, 90, 91, 92, 93, 95, 104, 257, 260, 267, 273, 275, 388

[F] What are the social, political, and economic preconditions for Bauhaus reception? And how do they vary from one period or country to another?

235, 236, 243, 249, 251, 253, 265, 282, 300, 309, 318, 324, 340, 349, 350, 388

[G] Which ways of taking a stand can we discover in processes of Bauhaus transfer, translation, and transformation?

241, 249, 255, 270, 282, 342, 443, 449

[H] What does it mean to understand the Bauhaus as a transnational and transcultural network of relationships?

337, 340, 341, 429, 449

[I] What can we learn from the history of the Bauhaus and Modernism when facing current issues? And how can this enable us to gain new insights into the past?

68, 77, 79, 86, 110, 182, 257, 270, 309, 341, 380, 381, 418, 424, 438, 459, 471, 474, 476

[J] The Bauhaus embraces different versions and ways of taking a stand. Which version or stance could help us tackle present and future challenges?

68, 291, 329, 379, 430

[K] There are many facets of Modernism and modernity as well as many ambivalent aspects. What does that mean for our own concepts and visions?

171, 179, 181, 189, 191, 423, 424, 427, 448, 450

[L] How did widespread ideas about the Bauhaus evolve? How do they relate to historical facts and which stances, interests and mechanisms do they reveal?

59, 60, 65, 119, 393, 400, 404, 430, 446, 448

[M] What are the criteria for being included in history or excluded from it, and for historical relevance? What kinds of stand do they reveal, and which blind spots and cognitive shortcomings do they generate?

51, 117, 197, 363, 371, 372, 428, 437

[N] How do our own cultural, social, and political beliefs and stances affect our understanding of the Bauhaus, Modernism, and modernity?

119, 197, 221, 243, 261, 293, 310, 317, 327, 330, 372, 394, 436, 445, 447, 448, 471

[O] What is the significance and relevance of the Bauhaus and Modernism today—a historical phenomenon or a resource for the present? And what, if anything, constitutes their current relevance?

76, 98, 111, 112, 151, 182, 261, 275, 280, 293, 310, 329, 381, 431, 462, 472

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Opening Section

From Bauhaus and Modernism
to Today's Challenges for
Housing and Urban Planning

Opening Speech:
The Bauhaus—Workshop of Modernism.
A Complex of Different Teachings and
Practices, and Irresolvable Areas of Tension
and its New Design as a Success Story

Winfried Nerdinger

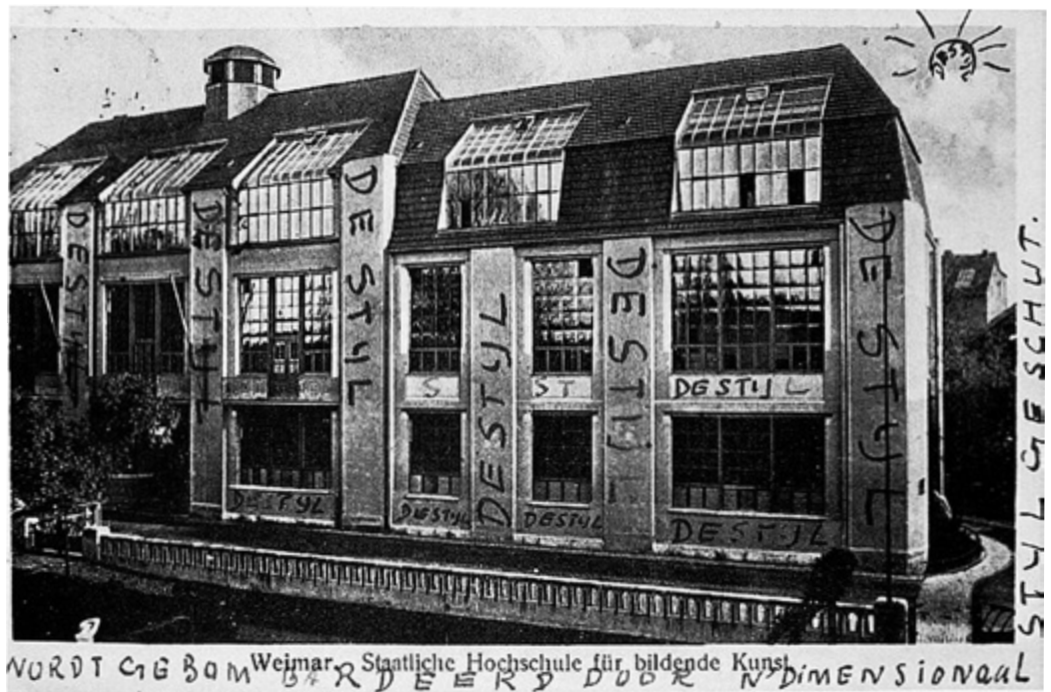


Fig. 1
Portrait of Johannes Itten in Bauhaus clothing. Photograph: Paula Stockmar, around 1921

Fig. 2
Material study from the Itten preliminary course by Margit Téry-Adler. Photograph: Paula Stockmar (attributed), 1920–1921

Fig. 3
Postcard from Theo van Doesburg to Anthony Kok with view of the Weimar Bauhaus building, based on designs by Henry van de Velde

- [A] Can we see in the Bauhaus as a whole—despite its apparent heterogeneity—a uniform stance or even something like the epitome of a social attitude?

bauhaus centenary

bauhaus school
education reform

bauhaus style

politics of memory

interpretative power of the
Bauhaus' founder

bauhaus idea of always up-to-date,
universally valid design

heterogeneity of the bauhaus

different bauhaus versions

During the countless events to mark the 100th anniversary, «the Bauhaus» was almost always used as a term referring to a reform-oriented school which, while diverse, nevertheless assumed a uniform stance from 1919 to 1933. At the same time, «the Bauhaus» served as a stylistic term to label almost every form of unornamented «modern» design—from geometric teaspoons to large white-painted flat-roof housing estates. Walter Gropius would have been pleased about both those references, and would also have been glad that the Bauhaus Verbund [Association], founded on the occasion of the centenary, gave further impetus to a conception of the Bauhaus as an idea that remains ground-breaking today, in terms of both its programmatic approach and its aspiration—100 years of bauhaus «Thinking the World Anew». It was after all Gropius, who, with a founding father's authority, narrowed the scope of the term «the Bauhaus» to signify a uniform, inherently consistent school related only to him, systematically extracting the content of teaching and work at the Bauhaus from the historical school and transforming it into a universally valid «idea» that could purportedly flourish everywhere, perpetually renewed, irrespective of place and time. However, if we want to talk about «the Bauhaus» and trace its impact or attitude, we must first clarify which Bauhaus we are actually referring to, as the historical Bauhaus can be divided into four completely different eras, with teaching strategies and production that are in some cases in diametric opposition. In addition, in order to distinguish between facts and fiction, it is vital to examine critically the reduction to an idealized «Bauhaus style» initiated by Gropius and subsequently pursued by «the Bauhäusler» [Bauhaus staff and students] and many others, as well as the way an almost infinitely renewable Bauhaus idea was thus constructed.

Political Genesis and A-political Self-image— An Endless Underlying Conflict

bauhaus school
education reform

bauhaus as a call for change

social utopian aspirations

Founded in Weimar in 1919, the Bauhaus was an educationally progressive school that stood in diametrical opposition to previous approaches to training artists in academies. With a pathos reminiscent of Richard Wagner, Walter Gropius called for the creation of a *Gesamtkunstwerk*—a «cathedral of the future» (*Kathedrale der Zukunft*)—by means of small «builders' lodges»¹ akin to medieval guilds of skilled craftsmen. For him, the key issue was the

new unity of art and the people

bauhaus and politics

political and aesthetic revolution

connection between art and the people, a unity that had allegedly been torn apart by the academies and which he sought to find once again through a romanticized medieval ideal of craftsmanship. This approach to a new unity, developed and propagated in the Berlin Workers' Council for Art (*Arbeitsrat für Kunst*) in the period immediately after the November Revolution, appealed to the «provisional republican government» that held office in Weimar in early 1919. It wanted to reform the educational system, introducing formats akin to the comprehensive school (*Einheitsschule*) or what were known as activity-based schools (*Arbeitsschule*) in order to break down class barriers and educate young people to think democratically, and this was a key reason for appointing Gropius. However, even in the initial phase the Bauhaus was plagued by a central problem that persisted throughout its existence. While Gropius aimed to overturn the «old classical education»² and replace it with a new «Gothic» world view grounded in craftsmanship, he wanted nothing to do with politics, especially party politics, although the Bauhaus had come into being as a result of political upheaval. As late as January 1920, he wrote to his friend Adolf Behne, with whom he had conceived the Bauhaus Manifesto: «Every party is filth and generates hatred and more hatred. We must destroy the parties; I want [to found] an apolitical community».³

Fighting on Two Fronts—Against Political Opponents and Advocates of Existing Academic Education

As a state institution, however, the Bauhaus also relied on political support from a left-liberal coalition in Thuringia's regional parliament, where it fell within the ambit of progressive educationalist and SPD Minister for Public Education Max Greil. That meant the Bauhaus had a political tinge by way of association right from the outset, which is why it was attacked by right-wing and nationalist groups. Gropius was in a sense fighting on two fronts: on the one hand against the Bauhaus' political opponents, and on the other hand against representatives of existing academic education within his own establishment, as the Bauhaus was created by merging the erstwhile Weimar School of Fine Arts (*Hochschule für bildende Kunst*) and the former School of Arts and Crafts (*Kunstgewerbeschule*) and had to take on the entire existing teaching team.

Itten's Bauhaus—A school of Individual, Expressive Self-Development

new pedagogies

bauhaus propaedeutics—*vorkurs*

Gropius largely left this internal struggle to the newly appointed «master» Johannes Itten ^{Fig. 1}, who deliberately turned academic education on its head by first having the students manufacture only children's toys for an entire semester. Rather than learning from role models and practicing painting nudes or nature, the students were supposed to create artistically by drawing exclusively on their inner resources, developing their natural creativity ^{Fig. 2}. The coup succeeded, but as a consequence a number of horrified academics peeled off from the Bauhaus and subsequently schemed against it. Itten meanwhile rose to become a kind of cult figure at the Bauhaus, where—dressed as a monk—he spread the esoteric Mazdaznan doctrine to which he adhered ^{Fig. 1}. The Bauhaus soon became, at least in part, a sectarian Itten school—a school of individual, expressive self-development.

individualistic approach

From the Cathedral to the Machine for Living in, or From Monk's Habit to Overalls

modernization and industrialization

new unity of art and technology

new curriculum

The turning point came with Theo van Doesburg, who moved to Weimar in 1921, where he proclaimed the De Stijl doctrine, developed in the Netherlands in 1917—in the middle of the war. Its focus on global harmony created by elementary, universally valid basic forms and primary colours, as he wrote to a friend, exploded «like a bomb»⁴ at the Bauhaus ^{Fig. 3}. Gropius, who was gradually realizing that the school was slipping out of his grasp, was also drawn to the theory of geometric harmony, and rapidly abandoned the expressive architectural idiom previously cultivated in his office. In Winter 1921/22, a dispute arose between him and Itten, with Gropius accusing the latter of turning the Bauhaus into an «island of mavericks»,⁵ whereas the Bauhaus should actually be engaging with the world of technology and industry in the workshops. Gropius prevailed and in Spring 1922 announced that the «unity of art and technology» (*Einheit von Kunst und Technik*) was to be the new motto for the training. Craftsmanship played only a secondary role in the revised curriculum, the cathedral and the grand utopian goals had disappeared—Itten left the school and headed to a Mazdaznan centre in Switzerland. In Summer 1922 Oskar



Fig. 4
Director's office of Walter Gropius at
the Bauhaus in Weimar, overall
design and furniture: Walter Gropius.
Drawing: Herbert Bayer, Isometry,
1923

Fig. 5
Portrait of László Moholy-Nagy
Photograph: Lucia Moholy, 1926,
1960s reproduction

- [M] What are the criteria for being included in history or excluded from it, and for historical relevance? What kinds of stand do they reveal, and which blind spots and cognitive shortcomings do they generate?

Schlemmer succinctly summarized the total rejection of Itten's Bauhaus: «Instead of cathedrals, the machine for living in.»⁶

After Itten's departure and the complete U-turn—also indicated by a new Bauhaus logo—Gropius settled his score with Itten's Bauhaus in February 1923. All that had been nurtured there, he asserted, was «artistic conceit»;⁷ instead of working, «festering thoughts» were encouraged and «every hammer blow» among real «word pagodas» was given the status of a philosophy. Rather than Itten's individualistic esotericism, the exact opposite now gained ground—an anti-individualistic geometric schematicism of basic forms and primary colours. Art critic Paul Westheim commented on this sarcastically after visiting the first Bauhaus exhibition in August 1923: «Three days in Weimar, and you've seen enough squares for a lifetime.»⁸

formalistic approach

Geometric Formalism, Constructivist Experiments and Artistic Inspiration—Gropius' Bauhaus

If Itten's expressive, colourful Bauhaus, which only existed for three years, did not give rise to an obdurate De-Stijl Bauhaus, but instead to Gropius's new Bauhaus ^{Fig. 4}, it was thanks to the painters—Lyonel Feininger, Paul Klee, Wassily Kandinsky and Oskar Schlemmer—who provided artistic balance, as well as the young Hungarian László Moholy-Nagy. He succeeded Itten in Spring 1923, and, in direct contrast to the latter's monk's habit, demonstratively wore overalls ^{Fig. 5}. Moholy-Nagy turned the Bauhaus into a laboratory for experiments to examine the big city, technology, photography, and new media, supported in all these activities by his wife Lucia Moholy, who was later disgracefully deleted from the Bauhaus' history. As early as 1923/24, drawing on this mix of geometric formalism, Constructivist experiments and artistic inspiration, a number of products were created, such as the lamp by Karl Jucker and Wilhelm Wagenfeld ^{Fig. 6} or the teapot by Marianne Brandt ^{Fig. 7}, which later became distinctive symbols of Bauhaus design.

bauhaus as workshop of modernism

formalistic approach
constructivist approach

bauhaus icons

First Closure Despite Abstaining from Politics

A completely new Bauhaus came into being but could, however, only develop after the enforced move to Dessau. When the left-liberal



Fig. 6
Table lamp, glass version MT 9/ME 1 by
Wilhelm Wagenfeld, production:
Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar, design
1923–1924, realized around 1927

Fig. 7
Tea infuser (MT 49) by Marianne Brandt

Fig. 8
Woman in B3 club chair by Marcel Breuer
with mask by Oskar Schlemmer and
clothing fabric by Elisabeth (Lis) Beyer-
Volger. Photograph: Erich Consemüller,
around 1926, reproduced around 1967

- [A] Can we see in the Bauhaus as a whole—despite its apparent heterogeneity—a uniform stance or even something like the epitome of a social attitude?

bauhaus and politics

coalition that had supported and financed the Bauhaus fell apart during the economic crisis of late 1923 and early 1924, a right-wing/nationalist grouping, the «Ordnungsbund», took over the government in Thuringia, and within a year this educationally progressive school was stifled, for it was seen as representative of leftist school policy. Gropius' attempts to keep the Bauhaus out of politics had been illusory, for the Bauhaus was clearly identifiable as a political product of the revolutionary period. Gropius' friend Adolf Behne wrote in *Die Weltbühne* when the school was closed in 1925: «All that abstaining from politics proved to be of no avail for the Bauhaus. [...] It is utopian to want to be apolitical in a politicised environment.»⁹

Working and Marketing a Corporate Identity

bauhaus corporate identity

bauhaus brand

bauhaus icons

critique of bauhaus propaganda

- [A] With the move to Dessau in Spring 1925, the final traces of the pathos-ridden pronouncements of 1919 were removed from the curriculum. A social dimension was no longer associated with the training programme, which now was defined quite objectively as «training of artistically gifted people in the fields of craftsmanship, technology, and form so that they may work together on the building.»¹⁰ This iteration of Gropius' Bauhaus was shaped by the new «young masters»—Josef Albers, Alfred Arndt, Herbert Bayer, Marcel Breuer, Hinnerk Scheper and Gunta Stölzl—who had been trained at the Bauhaus and were now increasingly developing formally coherent forms of expression. The workshops at the new Bauhaus building focused their efforts on this geometric-Constructivist corporate identity, whilst paying scarcely any attention to social relevance, and Gropius, tirelessly emphasising the school's importance in countless lectures throughout Europe, spread the brand without placing any particular emphasis on social issues. The tubular steel armchair that Marcel Breuer designed Fig. 8, which he developed in cooperation with Junkers Flugzeugwerke, an aircraft manufacturer, and had patented in his name, became the most famous Bauhaus product. In Breuer's opinion, however, this icon of Bauhaus design had nothing to do with the Bauhaus.

During that period, the propaganda unfolding around the Bauhaus was already unappealing to many contemporaries; Hans Poelzig, for example, declared that the Bauhaus should get more work done and spend less time blowing its own trumpet. Back in 1923, Adolf Behne had already warned against turning

critique of bauhaus style

right angles and geometrization into a formal principle, «that is, a means of external stylisation»;¹¹ now however moves towards a uniform, recognizable appearance advanced in precisely this direction. While Gropius was aware of the shortcomings of «machine romanticism»¹² and «square stylisation», he was convinced that a schematic approach could also gradually be overcome at the Bauhaus, this «focus of experimental and pioneering work».

Bauhaus Style Paves the Way for Bauhaus as an Era-Defining Term

bauhaus brand

As a result of the work done on a corporate identity and its marketing, the newly coined term «Bauhaus style»¹³ was rapidly adopted across the board, not only for the Bauhaus products, but more generally to refer to geometrically stylised design. Gropius initially viewed this as a sign of success, for since 1910 he had repeatedly advocated a new style in keeping with the Deutscher Werkbund's programme, and the recognizable identity of the Bauhaus designs fostered both dissemination of the Bauhaus brand and product sales. The success of the Bauhaus style cultivated at Gropius' Bauhaus underpins subsequent worldwide acceptance of the term «Bauhaus» to refer to unornamented designs composed of elementary forms, without any direct reference to the historical school. The Bauhaus style made the name Bauhaus an era-defining term.

epoch-making bauhaus style

The Needs of the People Instead of the Requirements of Luxury—Meyer's Bauhaus in the Struggle Against the Bauhaus Style and For Social Relevance in Design and Teaching

critique of bauhaus' formalistic approach

It was precisely to combat this formalism that Gropius' chosen successor, Hannes Meyer, who became Bauhaus Director in April 1928, did all he could to free the school, which he saw as «frozen in a horizontal-vertical world of form, rigidified into an academy»,¹⁴ from the «fashion» for the Bauhaus style and to bring it «back to life». After the U-turn against Itten's Bauhaus, a second complete turn-around occurred under Meyer, this time seeking to shape an establishment that would no longer create geometric aestheticised luxury goods, but instead products to meet

iconic symbolic value vs. social utility value

needs of the people vs.
requirements of luxury

utility value vs. bauhaus style

social, functional, and scientific
approach

critique of bauhaus style

critique of bauhaus' formalistic approach

people's needs. These products were to be researched and designed in keeping with functional and economic specifications with a view to their social and collective utility. The new motto was «the needs of the people rather than the requirements of luxury» (*Volksbedarf statt Luxusbedarf*)¹⁵. Meyer initially criticized the Bauhaus style—and thus also the lack of socially relevant design and teaching under his predecessor—and then openly opposed it or had it ridiculed in *Die Weltbühne* by his friend Ernst Kállai in 1930: «Today everyone knows about it. Houses with lots of glass and shining metal: Bauhaus style. [...] Tubular steel armchair frame: Bauhaus style. Lamp with nickel-coated body frame and a disk of opaque glass plate as lampshade: Bauhaus style. Wallpaper patterned in cubes: Bauhaus style. [...] Printing with sans serif letter and bold rules: Bauhaus style. everything written in small letters: bauhaus style. [...] Bauhaus style: one word for everything. [...] A fashion magazine in Vienna recommends ladies' underwear [...] decorated with more contemporary Bauhaus-style geometrical designs.»¹⁶ Fig. 9 For Meyer, previous Bauhaus work was antisocial and aesthetically over-sophisticated and laden with formalisms: «The products that were to be expedient and functional, technical and constructive and economically necessary were for the most part conceived out of a taste-oriented arbitrariness decked out in new clothes and out of a *bel-esprit* propensity for elementary geometric configurations.»¹⁷ He therefore came to the conclusion: «Art stifled life everywhere. Thus, my tragicomic situation arose: As Bauhaus director I fought against the Bauhaus style.»¹⁸

Critique of Bauhaus Propaganda and Bauhaus Style

critique of bauhaus style

iconic symbolic value vs.
social utility value

historical homelessness

critique of bauhaus' formalistic approach

Meyer was not alone in criticizing the Bauhaus style. In 1926, Bertolt Brecht had already declared the «carefully contrived harmony and dogmatic functionalism» of the «modern Bauhaus apartment» to be unbearable: «It isn't necessary for everything to match everything else in a house, or else it would be unliveable in.»¹⁹ Walter Benjamin wrote of «living without a trace»²⁰ and of «lodgings» for nomads of no fixed abode, Josef Frank criticized the formalisms of corporate identity as mere «identification marks»,²¹ with which only formal demarcations were being created in Germany rather than modernism focused on people. Cologne-based architect Rudolf Schwarz pointed out that technical forms were merely decorated through geometrization and therefore referred in 1929 to the



Fig. 9
«Bauhaus Stil», in: bauhaus, Zeitschrift für Gestaltung, Year 2, 1928, issue 4, ed. by Hannes Meyer, p. 23 (gloss)

Fig. 10
View of the 1929–30 Bauhaus travelling exhibition at Gewerbemuseum Basel, 21st April to 20th May 1929, room with works from the weaving and furniture workshop, exhibition architecture by Hannes Meyer. Photograph: unknown, 1929, reproduced in 1989

Fig. 11
Design drawing for an atrium house by Eduard Ludvig, 1931



die malerei ist tot
 aber in menschen wird jede kunstausbildung von abstrak-
 tionen lebendig und gestaltungsgewaltiger arten bezeugt und
 es bedarf keiner erhellungen nach vor dem gebiet an-
 stellen, wird die reihe überfüllt sind diese reinliche
 erhellung bilden, aber weiter sprengt noch die schwebende
 architektur verhalten ABC gelassen und gehen nur schlie-
 ßlich vor nach, was sich eigentlich von durchschnitt und
 untergang haben müssen und sie treten es nicht achtlos
 von außen ein haben sich bilden! und diese macht ab-
 dinge und anhalten, mit bildner bruch aber zu haben ist
 anhalten, die schatten sich bilden! bilden in ihre anbringe
 zu nehmen und an die welt zu bringen, und haben sogar
 bilden aben, was aber, wenn man diese reihe an bilden
 bilden können? ein malerische gestaltungsgewaltige art,
 daß in letzten dieser kunstausbildung ist es abstraktion
 von über die dinge dieser lage abstraktion wird,
 wir haben es was gibt es dies nicht mehr nötig, wir gehen
 ins leben oder haben eine reihe, wenn wir bilden gehen
 wollen.

konkretion
 „der konkretismus ist es nicht an, ja, er überwindet
 ganz wesentlich anbringe von innen abstrak-
 tionen von wille konkretion.“
 von maler in d. zeits. stg., Berlin, Februar 1928.

„wille konkretion müßte sich sagen, daß man anmöglich
 liegt anhalten kann, hier gibt es keine verhalten, nur
 abstraktion.“
 in zeitschrift in d. h. stg., stg., Juni 1928.



Wie sieht sie aus.

wie „die konkretion“, wie

critique of bauhaus
propaganda

iconic symbolic value
vs. social utility value

critique of bauhaus style

bauhaus signifying
western capitalist culture
and production

critique of bauhaus style

«artistic technicity» of the «vertical-horizontal rationalists». ²² Like many others, Schwarz was repulsed by the propaganda surrounding the Bauhaus and by the emergence of a «disgusting orthodoxy with bleak programmes», which transformed «useful kitchen fittings» into a «useless ideology». ²³ In 1932 Schwarz summed up the situation in a nutshell: «The Bauhaus style was a failed mixture of the engineering design process and the ideas of Expressionist architecture with a Cubist bent. One took one half of art [...], namely the formal conception, and likewise only one half of the engineer's world, the mathematical-purposeful one. That route was a dead end [...]» ²⁴ During the Weimar Republic, criticism of Bauhaus propaganda and the Bauhaus style thus came not only from right-wing nationalists who were opposed to «international» design that was not rooted in German traditions, but also from artists with varying affiliations and stances who simply rejected Bauhaus schematicism. Criticism from the Communists was also particularly acute; they viewed Meyer's Bauhaus as also being nothing more than a «cog in the machinery of the capitalist class» ²⁵ because product rationalization did not change anything in capitalist production relations, so that manufacturers profited most from mass production.

Hannes Meyer took the most radical stand against the Bauhaus style in his own establishment; to mark the school's 10th anniversary in 1929, he put together a travelling exhibition that did not present a single work from Gropius' Bauhaus, but displayed only the efficient and functional new products created under his direction in Meyer's new Bauhaus ^{Fig. 10}. That was a clear snub to his predecessor, but his approach was an economic success and the Bauhaus acquired a completely new profile. ²⁶ However, as a result of the dramatic shift in the political climate in the wake of the world economic crisis, socially liberal Dessau politicians, who had previously supported the Bauhaus but now feared losing votes, dropped Meyer with his socially committed stance and he had to vacate his post in August 1930. Gropius played a massive role in his successor's overthrow and was instrumental in finding a new director who did not oppose him and the Bauhaus style.

Mies' Bauhaus—An Oblivious Bauhaus as a School of Architecture

When Mies van der Rohe took up his post in autumn 1930, the Bauhaus encountered an architect who subjected the school to

- [A] Can we see in the Bauhaus as a whole—despite its apparent heterogeneity—a uniform stance or even something like the epitome of a social attitude?

a third complete restructuring, turning it into an architecture academy oriented towards his views. The new curriculum succinctly announced its educational goal: «The Bauhaus' purpose» is «thorough manual, technical and artistic training of students».²⁷ Ultimately, Mies' Bauhaus was only a school of architecture that churned out Mies epigones—«*Mieslinge*»^{Fig. 11}. After only four semesters, the now right-wing nationalist majority in the Dessau municipal authorities closed the Bauhaus in Summer 1932, the school moved to Berlin as a private institution run by Mies, and was ultimately closed down by the National Socialists seven months later in April 1933.

national socialist politics
bauhaus signifying left-wing culture

Bauhaus Modernism under National Socialism and the Question of Functional or Modern Design's Resistance to Nationalist-Racist Politics

Although the three occasions on which the Bauhaus was closed down were also about the design approach it represented, the school was essentially criticized for the political context that underpinned it. It is revealing to note that the Bauhaus could have been reopened if the school were to have agreed to remove two individuals who were incriminated in the Nazis' eyes—the Russian Wassily Kandinsky and the Socialist Ludwig Hilberseimer—and if it had issued a statement of support for the National Socialist regime. Mies and the other teachers would thus have been able to continue running the school officially during the National Socialist era, albeit with restrictions. This indicates that the issue was not so much about art but was more about political assimilation and «*Gleichschaltung*» [process of Nazification and control] of the Bauhaus.²⁸

bauhaus and politics
national socialist politics

Since the Bauhaus' designs were developed without direct social references except Meyer's era, they could be utilized by almost any political form of society after the school was closed.

- [A] For this reason, designs developed at the Bauhaus also persisted throughout the Nazi era in many areas, and many Bauhaus students and staff who were not persecuted for racist or party-political reasons found opportunities to work in the Nazi state after 1933. «Modernization restricted to capitalist growth and technical progress»²⁹ dovetailed readily with certain areas of Nazi ideology and economy. Modern forms—in the sense of unornamented functional design—could be used to serve the National Socialists' interests wherever the new regime wanted to appear progressive,

bauhaus modernism under
the national socialist regime

- [L] How did widespread ideas about the Bauhaus evolve? How do they relate to historical facts and which stances, interests and mechanisms do they reveal?

questioning modern design's
power of resistance

in fields ranging from exhibition design and advertising to industrial construction. Functional and modern design and nationalist-racist politics, and indeed also Communist or fascist politics, were by no means mutually exclusive.³⁰

Bauhaus Historiography in the Light of Walter Gropius' Interpretative Power

bauhaus historiography
interpretative power of the
bauhaus' founder

As Meyer went to the Soviet Union in 1930 to assist with reconstruction, and Mies van der Rohe never identified personally with the Bauhaus, Gropius could subsequently take all the credit for founding the school and interpret it as he saw fit. His successor's attacks had hit him hard, for «style» was associated with historicism and academies, which the Bauhaus was supposed to overcome. For that reason, Gropius henceforth declared in almost every subsequent depiction of his school that there had never been any intention to develop a «Bauhaus style». As early as 1930, in a new volume of the *Bauhausbücher* series he continued to publish, he wrote, responding directly to Meyer's attacks: «the goal of the bauhaus is not a style, system, dogma, canon, recipe or fashion! it will live as long as it does not depend on form, but continues to seek behind changing forms the fluidity of life itself.»³¹ On the one hand, he thus rendered uniform the heterogeneous historical Bauhaus, while on the other hand, completely reinterpreting his previous Gropius' Bauhaus approach. That had been characterized by paring design down to geometric elements, working with basic forms and primary colours; in this re-reading he denied the resolute efforts during his time as Bauhaus Director to establish uniform stylistic expression and indeed a corporate identity that would ultimately be oriented towards the market economy.

[L]

heterogeneity of
the bauhaus

processes of oblivion
and repression

formalistic approach

bauhaus corporate identity

bauhaus idea of always
up-to-date, universally
valid design

epoch-making bauhaus style

When the Bauhaus as an institution disappeared in 1933, Gropius forced this reinterpretation into a timeless, always future-oriented idea, whereby all forms of life could purportedly be designed in a universally and internationally valid manner. With a «Bauhaus style», his school would have been tied to a historical location and era and would thus designate a process that had been concluded, whereas with a uniform Bauhaus as an idea that transcends time, all the caesura in the school's narrative could be papered over. That allowed Gropius to continue pushing his propaganda with this construct and instrumentalizing «the Bauhaus» for contemporary purposes as required.

- [A] Can we see in the Bauhaus as a whole—despite its apparent heterogeneity—a uniform stance or even something like the epitome of a social attitude?
- [L] How did widespread ideas about the Bauhaus evolve? How do they relate to historical facts and which stances, interests and mechanisms do they reveal?

During his time in England from 1934 to 1937, he had already begun to transform the Bauhaus in his lectures into an idealized place that did nothing but experiment with its gaze fixed on the future. When a large Bauhaus exhibition he organized with Herbert Bayer was shown at the New York Museum of Modern Art in 1938 ^{Fig. 12}, Gropius stated in the press release: «However, the principal theme of the exhibition is the Bauhaus as an idea. That idea seems as valid today as it was in the days when the Bauhaus flourished.»³² The New York exhibition simply blanked out the years under Hannes Meyer and Mies van der Rohe, adopting, as did the catalogue, the title «bauhaus 1919–1928». The school thus merged completely with Gropius and he became «Mr Bauhaus». Not only did Meyer's Bauhaus and Mies' Bauhaus disappear, Itten's Bauhaus was also reduced to a preliminary course largely purged of esotericism and Expressionism. When it came to the influence of De Stijl, the catalogue only mentioned in a marginal note: «Doesburg's preoccupation with problems of pure form was not in harmony with the Bauhaus ideal [...]. His influence on a group of the students gradually waned.»³³ These were all simply falsifications of historical facts.

Mythologization of the Bauhaus as the Origin and Source of Modern Design

In New York, Gropius' glorification of the Bauhaus was already being criticized, sometimes harshly. Alfred Barr, Director of the Museum of Modern Art, proclaimed that many of the works exhibited were trivial or inferior, and accused Gropius of assigning a unique status to Bauhaus products and Bauhaus teachings without knowing anything about artistic and educational achievements in the USA.³⁴ Although mythologization of the Bauhaus as the origin and effervescent fount of modern design was also later repeatedly criticized by other historians and artists, Gropius and the former Bauhaus masters teaching in the USA, as well as their students, were not deterred and continued, largely unabashed, to promote this falsification of the Bauhaus as a uniform, avant-garde think tank.

- [A] In the process, all contemporary historical contexts were also deliberately suppressed, because they referred to German history, which was not supposed to be mentioned due to the Nazi regime then in power.

bauhaus historiography

bauhaus idea of always up-to-date, universally valid design

processes of oblivion and repression

colonial and hegemonic thinking

demand to decentralize the bauhaus

bauhaus myths

politics of memory

processes of oblivion and repression



Fig. 12
Book cover for the exhibition «Bauhaus
1919–1928» at the Museum of Modern Art
(MoMA), New York 1938, designed by
Herbert Bayer using a motif by T. Lux
Feininger

bauhaus idea of always
up-to-date, universally
valid design

claim to universal validity

bauhaus as a creative force

In the foreword to the German edition of the New York catalogue in 1955, Gropius again stated: «The essence of the Bauhaus was a constantly developing process, not the creation of a new «style». It followed an organic idea that could transform itself according to changing living conditions, i.e. it was not bound to time, place or nation.»³⁵ With this definition, the Bauhaus could be detached from history, providing a justification for transferring it to other countries as an abstract idea. Continuous flourishing of the «Bauhaus idea» was virtually declared to be a principle. However, the skilful construct aimed at keeping the Bauhaus eternally alive was inherently contradictory, for adapting the Bauhaus idea to life in all its shifting forms would have resulted in the Bauhaus being nothing more than a constantly changing creative force, which would therefore not be recognizable at all.

«Bauhaus imaginiste»—Asger Jorn’s
concept of the Bauhaus as a constantly
changing creative force

bauhaus imaginiste

societal emancipatory
role of art

«good design» as a concept

critique of functionalism

That was exactly the approach adopted by Danish artist Asger Jorn, who, referencing Kandinsky and Klee, interpreted the Bauhaus as a place where the creative abilities of artists from all over the world could be freely developed. He therefore wrote to Max Bill, director of the successor institution, the HfG Ulm, in 1953: «Bauhaus is the name of an artistic inspiration», which should be creatively continued in Ulm in the spirit of a «Bauhaus imaginiste». When Bill replied that the Bauhaus was a movement promoting a well-defined doctrine, namely creating aesthetically and functionally «good design» in the machine age, Jorn wrote to him that if the Bauhaus was not «imaginiste», in other words, not an artistic inspiration, then it was a «Bauhaus imaginaire», a merely artificial, that is to say, dead, doctrine.³⁶ Since Bill did not want him in Ulm, Jorn wrote a manifesto «Contre le fonctionnalisme» and founded an international association «pour un Bauhaus imaginiste contre un Bauhaus imaginaire», with which he confronted doctrinaire functionalism with playfully free artistic design and organic or wild architecture, «l’architecture sauvage».³⁷ However, he could not compete with the «Bauhaus», which was becoming established as a style concept to describe functional modernism, and the movement was absorbed into Guy Debord’s «Situationist International» in 1955.

The Triumphal Progress of Ahistorical Bauhaus Propaedeutics in Architecture and Design Schools Worldwide

interpretative power of the bauhaus' founder

bauhaus idea of always up-to-date, universally valid design

bauhaus propaedeutics—*vorkurs*

bauhaus school acting as a precedent

relationship to history

Gropius' reinterpretation of the Bauhaus as a universally valid idea, on the other hand, enjoyed enormous success in the post-war period. He increasingly defined the Bauhaus idea as teaching the «grammar of design»,³⁸ which entailed learning the grammar of universally valid laws of material, colour and proportion that applied irrespective of time and place. Bauhaus thus symbolized «design without a past». Ahistorical Bauhaus propaedeutics penetrated design doctrines in architecture and design schools around the world, and Gropius' extreme hostility towards history became established as a cognitive template for architects and designers.

Bauhaus Modernism—The Historical Locus of Purportedly Timeless «Good Design» or a Universal Language as an Expression of Democracy and Freedom

«good design» as a concept

postmodern attack on modernism

bauhaus modernism as antithesis of socialist realism

bauhaus as a cold war weapon

bauhaus signifying democracy and freedom

critique of bauhaus' formalistic approach

Purportedly timeless «good design» became the hallmark of Bauhaus modernism, cited as a catch-all term, although it in turn proved to be historically dated, at the latest when postmodernism began once again to seek historical references and thus relegated the Bauhaus to history.

As early as the 1970s, Swiss architectural historian Peter Meyer wrote sarcastically that Gropius had continuously «whipped up» the Bauhaus's fame «to give it epochal significance».³⁹ Gropius' position as a famous and influential professor at the Graduate School of Design at Harvard University assisted him in this endeavour, as did the situation during the Cold War, for culture was also instrumentalized due to the East-West divide. While «Socialist Realism» was proclaimed in the Eastern Bloc and referenced «national building traditions»—national in form, socialist in content—, the West declared abstract art and Bauhaus modernism to be a universal language, an internationally valid expression of democracy and freedom. At the CIAM Congress in Bergamo in 1949, the delegate from Communist Poland, Helena Syrkus, declared, «We of CIAM must revise our attitude: the Bauhaus is as far behind us as Scamozzi.»⁴⁰ For Syrkus, the Bauhaus was a long-dead



Fig. 13
Poster for the exhibition «50 Jahre Bauhaus» at Württembergischer Kunstverein Stuttgart, 5th May to 28th July 1968, design by Herbert Bayer



Fig. 14
«Bauhäusle», student residence on the Stuttgart-Vaihingen campus of Stuttgart University. Photograph: Danny Galm, 2020

- [L] How did widespread ideas about the Bauhaus evolve? How do they relate to historical facts and which stances, interests and mechanisms do they reveal?

formalism and therefore during the reconstruction process architects should take account of the «reality», i.e. the architecture that emerged from history and exists today. In direct contrast to this position, the hallmarks of Western so-called «Bauhaus» architecture involved denying any reference to the past and advocating internationally valid design detached from history and geography. Whereas the Bauhaus, which Walter Ulbricht dubbed a «true child of American cosmopolitanism»,⁴¹ became a symbol of the «bourgeois formalism» reviled in the Eastern Bloc, the school conversely gained further popularity in the West for precisely this reason.⁴² It was viewed as an international representative of the Weimar Republic's democratic culture, which had been driven out by the National Socialists and could now spread through the USA, the patron of the free world, where two former Bauhaus directors as well as numerous Bauhaus masters and students worked. In the young Federal Republic of Germany, this constellation gained special significance, because everyone who referred to the Bauhaus seemed to be referring to the «better Germany» that—as an allegedly vibrant idea—could be revived again after the Nazi era and provide a source of legitimacy.⁴³

The Bauhaus' prominent role as a shining example for West German architects' majority was further reinforced by a debate initiated by Rudolf Schwarz. In an essay in the magazine *Baukunst und Werkform*⁴⁴ in early 1953, Schwarz attacked the «unbearable phraseology» as well as the «materialism» and «disgusting cult of means-to-an-end», whose «dictatorial» aspirations he identified at work in the Bauhaus just as during the Nazi era. Against the backdrop of devastated cities and a «hollowed-out horizon of public memory»⁴⁵ Schwarz called for reconstruction based on the tradition of that great «Western conversation» that was not conducted at the Bauhaus, because Gropius, as he maliciously remarked, «obviously could not think [...] and that is something you must be able to do, if you want to be more than an uncommitted master builder».⁴⁶ With this attack, Schwarz triggered ferocious architectural controversy in Germany; he found hardly any supporters, while Gropius and the Bauhaus emerged from this debate almost glowing. It was only at this point that the Bauhaus turned into the idea fabricated by Gropius of always up-to-date, eternally valid design. The Bauhaus exemplified the «cult of the new» of aesthetic modernism, the «glorification of topicality» that was placed in «abstract opposition to history», behind which lay, however, «the longing for an immaculate, contemplative present.»⁴⁷

bauhaus as nazi germany's antithesis

bauhaus reception in the federal republic of germany

national identity construction

critique of bauhaus propaganda

bauhaus idea of always up-to-date, universally valid design

relationship to history historical homelessness

Walter Gropius' Construct of an Abstract
«Bauhaus idea» as a Trademark and Advertising
Medium of the Early Federal Republic

bauhaus reception in the
federal republic of germany

national identity construction

With the construction of the Bauhaus as a continuously renewed, internationally valid idea, the entire modern movement was de facto compressed into a term that also provided a kind of camouflage for many former Nazi supporters in the Federal Republic. Gropius became the undisputed honorary figurehead and was heaped with accolades. When he was awarded the Goethe Prize in 1961, the mayor of Frankfurt declared in the award speech: «Today we know that practically everything that [...] happens in architecture, in the fine arts, in arts and crafts, in what is called «industrial design», was influenced and shaped, to a greater or lesser degree, by the Bauhaus.»⁴⁸ The construct that Gropius had fabricated of a «Bauhaus idea» devoid of facts and history became the hallmark and advertising medium of the early Federal Republic.

Bauhaus as an International Cultural Brand
at the Height of its Success—Designation of
Tel Aviv as the Bauhaus White City

tel aviv as bauhaus' world capital
«bauhaus» white city

bauhaus brand

In the post-war economic boom, a modernity pared down to simply rationalization and functionality was promoted worldwide and «Bauhaus» became established as an overarching term in many industrial countries. In Israel, erstwhile Bauhaus member Arie Sharon, who was commissioned by Ben-Gurion to oversee the new country's urban and architectural development, linked this undertaking with the name of his old school to such an extent that all 1930s modern architecture in Tel Aviv, Haifa and Jerusalem is still referred to there as «Bauhaus», even though it is a mixture of architectural forms of European modernism.⁴⁹

The Bauhaus-Archiv as Institutionalized
Memory and the Major Anniversaries as
Loci of Remembrance Politics

bauhaus reception in
the federal republic of germany

In the Federal Republic of Germany, the Bauhaus-Archiv, founded in 1960 and soon endowed with lavish state funds, ensured that everyone who had attended the school even for a short time

bauhaus myths

politics of memory

postmodern attack
on modernism

epoch-making bauhaus style

bauhaus idea of always up-to-date,
universally valid design

appeared in a sense ennobled by this experience, and that products from the Bauhaus—even if they were banal—gradually acquired cult status. Mythologization of the school after Gropius' death was perpetuated by the Bauhaus-Archiv as «institutionalized memory»⁵⁰ as well as by the large exhibition in Stuttgart on the occasion of the 50th birthday of the Bauhaus ^{Fig. 13}, which was expressly conceived to be «open to the present» and was subsequently shown worldwide. Although there had never been any «Bauhaus» architecture and the Bauhaus had by no means played a leading role in the Weimar Republic's culture, «Bauhaus» gradually became a general stylistic concept. However, the worldwide countermovement that emerged with postmodernism relegated the Bauhaus, along with «classical modernism» as a whole, to history and «Bauhaus» became a style and a concept designating a specific period.

Despite this, the «100 years of bauhaus» programme devised by the Bauhaus Association 2019⁵¹ with the motto «Thinking the World Anew»—, takes as its point of reference the concept launched by Walter Gropius, namely a constantly renewable, future-oriented notion of the Bauhaus, abstracted from the historical school. The same applies to the «Grand Tour of Modernism» (Grand Tour der Moderne), a project initiated by Bauhaus Kooperation Berlin Dessau Weimar, which leads visitors through «100 sites of the Bauhaus and modernism», spanning 100 years to the present day, and evokes the idea of the Bauhaus' timeless validity.

The Bauhaus' Unabated Impact and its Founder's Interpretative Power

epoch-making Bauhaus style

As a historian, you may shake your head when you see how «Bauhaus» is used today as a kind of era-defining term for anything and everything that looks like an unornamented, cubic design, but you can also acknowledge that a stylistic term to refer to twentieth-century «classical modernism» grew out of a small school in Weimar and Dessau. The last comprehensive stylistic concept that referenced Germany was «Gothic» and, as is well known, this originally had a negative connotation, as in Italy this was the name given to architecture that came from the «Gothic barbarians». That was also historically incorrect; given that the Gothic style was invented in France, the correct term would have been «opus francigenium», but it did not catch on. As generally happens

- [I] What can we learn from the history of the Bauhaus and Modernism when facing current issues? And how can this enable us to gain new insights into the past?
- [J] The Bauhaus embraces different versions and ways of taking a stand. Which version or stance could help us tackle present and future challenges?

bauhaus as a screen
for projections reflecting
our own aspirations

bauhaus representing
modernism and modernity

interpretative power of
the bauhaus' founder

bauhaus centenary

politics of memory

with an all-encompassing era-defining term, it can reflect many different facets, and consequently today «Bauhaus» has become a screen onto which countless unspecific notions of modernity are projected, along with experiments of every kind, such as the «Bauhäusle» [self-designed student housing] built by students at Stuttgart Technical University Fig. 14. Historical concepts go their own way, so they can only be examined with a critical historical gaze after the fact, and in this context, it should indeed be noted that Gropius' power to define the terms has gained the upper hand in Germany. At the openings of the many generously subsidised events in the Bauhaus centenary year, the Bauhaus was repeatedly invoked, inter alia by the German President and Chancellor, as a vibrant idea that apparently still influences us today or could even serve as a model. Gropius would have been delighted.

Learning from History—The Bauhaus as a Complex of Different Teachings and Practices, and Irresolvable Areas of Tension

lessons from the bauhaus

different bauhaus versions

- [I] At the end of the Bauhaus centenary year, one can thus only hope that something has been learnt from history, and this should be based on historical facts.⁵² That means that in future when people talk about the «Bauhaus», the first point to clarify should be which Bauhaus they are actually talking about Figs. 15 a–d: Is it Itten's colourful Bauhaus, which sought ways to develop individual creativity, developed an artistic propaedeutic, but ended up entangled in esotericism? Or Gropius' Bauhaus, which was influenced by De Stijl and symbolizes artistic experimentation with all new manifestations of our technical-industrial world, yet had scarcely any social references and often created only geometric formalism? Or is it Meyer's Bauhaus, which pursued socially oriented functional design, but did not reflect the conditions and profit interests behind functionalism, and failed politically? Or is it Mies' Bauhaus, which attempted to render architecture more intellectual, but also promoted the schematism of a primarily economically oriented functionalism in building and construction (*Bauwirtschaftsfunktionalismus*) (Heinrich Klotz) that subsequently spread worldwide? The Bauhaus certainly still has something to tell us today, but only on the basis of critical, historically differentiated reflection.
- [J]



Fig. 15a
Portrait of Johannes Itten in Bauhaus
clothing. Photograph: Paula Stockmar,
around 1921

Fig. 15b
Portrait of Walter Gropius. Photograph:
Emil Bieber, around 1930

Fig. 15c
Portrait of Hannes Meyer visiting the
construction site of the Federal School
of the German Trade Union Federation
(ADGB) near Bernau. Photograph: un-
known, around 1928/29

Fig. 15d
Portrait of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe.
Photograph: unknown, around 1930–1932,
reproduced in the 1960s

- Notes
- 1 Walter Gropius, *Ziel der Bauloge*, Manuscript at Bauhaus-Archiv, Berlin, dated 1919.
 - 2 Walter Gropius, «Wie kann Weimar zu neuer Blüte gelangen?», in: *Die Schatzkammer*, May 1921, reprinted in: Volker Wahl (ed.), *Das Staatliche Bauhaus in Weimar. Dokumente zur Geschichte des Instituts 1919–1926*, Vienna/Cologne/Weimar 2009, p. 263 f.; cf. Winfried Nerdinger, *Walter Gropius—Architekt der Moderne 1883–1996*, Munich 2019, pp. 99–105, 120–126.
 - 3 Letter from Walter Gropius to Adolf Behne on 31 January 1920, quoted in Karl-Heinz Hüter, *Das Bauhaus in Weimar*, Berlin 1976, p. 221.
 - 4 Sjarel Ex, «Theo van Doesburg und das Weimarer Bauhaus», in: Jo-Anne Birnie Danzker (ed.), *Theo van Doesburg. Maler—Architekt*, Munich 2000, p. 30; Annemarie Jaeggi, *Adolf Meyer. Der zweite Mann: Ein Architekt im Schatten von Walter Gropius*, Berlin 1994, p. 157.
 - 5 Wahl (as Note 2), p. 159.
 - 6 Andreas Hüneke (ed.), *Oskar Schlemmer. Idealist der Form. Briefe, Tagebücher, Schriften 1912–1943*, Leipzig 1989, p. 93.
 - 7 Volker Wahl (ed.), *Die Meisterratsprotokolle des Staatlichen Bauhauses Weimar: 1919 bis 1925*, revised by Ute Ackermann, Weimar 2001, p. 508, there also the following quotations.
 - 8 Paul Westheim, «Bemerkungen. Zur Quadratur des Bauhauses», in: *Das Kunstblatt*, 1923, p. 319. [English translation, quoted in: Magdalena Droste, *Bauhaus 1919–1933*, transl. Karen Williams, Köln 2002, p. 106]
 - 9 Adolf Behne, «Abbau der Kunst», in: *Die Weltbühne*, 13 January 1925, p. 59.
 - 10 Hans Maria Wingler, *Das Bauhaus: Weimar. Dessau, Berlin 1919–1933*, Bramsche 1962, p. 118. [English translation quoted in Hans Maria Wingler, *The Bauhaus: Weimar, Dessau, Berlin, Chicago*, Cambridge (Mass.) 1969, p. 111]
 - 11 Adolf Behne, «Die Internationale Architektur-Ausstellung im Bauhaus zu Weimar», in: *Die Bauwelt*, 1923, H. 37, p. 533.
 - 12 Walter Gropius, «Die geistige Grundlage des Staatlichen Bauhauses in Weimar», text submitted to the magazine *Glocke* dated 17 May 1924, reprinted in: Wingler (as Note 10), p. 91, there also the following quotations.
 - 13 *Der UHU*, Berlin 1931, «200 Worte Deutsch, die Sie vor zehn Jahren noch nicht kannten», from: Gropius-Archiv 11/85, Houghton Library, Harvard University.
 - 14 Hannes Meyer, «Vortragsnotizen vom 22.04.1929», in: id., *Bauen und Gesellschaft—Schriften, Briefe, Projekte*, (ed.) Lena Meyer-Bergner, Dresden 1980, p. 54.
 - 15 Meyer (as Note 14), p. 69. [English translation as Note 10, p. 164.]
 - 16 Ernst Kállai, «Zehn Jahre Bauhaus», in: *Die Weltbühne*, 21 January 1930, Nr. 4, pp. 135–139, reprinted in: id., *Vision und Formgesetz. Aufsätze über Kunst und Künstler 1921–1933*, Leipzig and Weimar 1986, pp. 133–140, quotation p. 133. [English translation as Note 10, pp. 161–162.]
 - 17 Kállai (as Note 16), p. 135 [English translation also as Note 10, p. 162.]
 - 18 Hannes Meyer, «Mein Hinauswurf aus dem Bauhaus, Offener Brief an den Oberbürgermeister Hesse», Dessau 1930, in: *Das Tagebuch 1930*, Nr. 33, pp. 1307–1312; reprinted in: Meyer (as Note 14), p. 67–72. [English translation as Note 10, p. 164.]
 - 19 Bertolt Brecht, «Nordseekrabben oder Die moderne Bauhaus-Wohnung», in: id., *Werke—Große kommentierte Berliner und Frankfurter Ausgabe*, Vol. 19, Frankfurt am Main 1997, pp. 267–275, quotations p. 273 f. [English translation Bertolt Brecht, «North Sea Shrimps», in: id., John Willett and Ralph Mannheim (eds.) *Collected Short Stories of Bertolt Brecht*, London 1983, pp. 115–116]
 - 20 Walter Benjamin, «Kurze Schatten II: Spurlos Wohnen», in: id., *Gesammelte Schriften*, IV,1, Frankfurt am Main 1972, p. 427 f.; *Gesammelte Schriften*, VI, Frankfurt am Main 1985, p. 426 f.; [English translation: Walter Benjamin, «Short Shadows (II): To Live without Leaving Traces» (1933), in: *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings, Volume 2: Part 2 1931–1934*, (series eds.) Michael W. Jennings, Howard Eiland, Gary Smith, Cambridge, Mass/London 2005, pp. 701–702]; cf. Winfried Nerdinger and Juan Barja (eds.), *Walter Benjamin—Eine Reflexion in Bildern*, Munich 2011, pp. 22–25; Yan Ma, «Spur—Walter Benjamins Suche nach der Literatur und Geschichte im Interieur», in: *Literaturstraße. Chinesisch-deutsches Jahrbuch für Sprache Literatur und Kunst*, Vol. 15, 2014, <http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:bsz:16-list-431304> (Consulted October 18, 2019).
 - 21 Josef Frank, *Architektur als Symbol. Elemente deutschen neuen Bauens*, Vienna 1931; on Frank's criticism of the pronounced lack of ornamentation, which he described as «new arts and crafts», cf. Winfried Nerdinger, «Neues Bauen—Neues Wohnen», in: id. (ed.), *100 Jahre Deutscher Werkbund 1907/2007*, Munich 2007, pp. 142–145.
 - 22 Rudolf Schwarz, «Neues Bauen?», in: *Die Schildgenossen 1929*, p. 207–217, reprinted in: id., *Wegweisung der Technik und andere Schriften zum Neuen Bauen 1926–1961*, Braunschweig 1979, pp. 121–131, quotations pp. 126, 130.
 - 23 Schwarz (as Note 22), p. 126.
 - 24 Rudolf Schwarz, «Baustelle Deutschland», in: *Die Schildgenossen 1932/33*, p. 1–16, reprinted in: Schwarz (as Note 22), pp. 139–153, quotation p. 139.
 - 25 «Der «neue Kurs» am Bauhaus», in: *Rote Fahne*, 6 June 1930; cf. «Das Bauhaus», in: *Die Linkskurve*, 6 June 1930: «Bauhausreklame für Junkers und den deutschen Konserventrust! Ist das vielleicht sozial? Das ist alles Dienst an der herrschenden Klasse.»
 - 26 Cf. Winfried Nerdinger, ««Anstößiges Rot»: Hannes Meyer und der linke Baufunktionalismus—Ein verdrängtes Kapitel der Architekturgeschichte»,

- in: id., *Geschichte–Macht–Architektur*, Munich 2012, pp. 129–147.
- 27 Magdalena Droste, *bauhaus 1919–1933*, Cologne 2019, p. 326.
- 28 Peter Hahn et al. (eds.), *bauhaus 1933*, Weingarten 1985.
- 29 Jürgen Habermas, «Einleitung», in: id. (ed.), *Stichworte zur geistigen Situation der Zeit*, Vol. 1, Frankfurt am Main 1979, pp. 7–35, quotation p. 23 [English translation, Jürgen Habermas, «Introduction», in: id. (ed.), *Observations on «The Spiritual Situation of the Age»*, transl. Andrew Buchwalter, Cambridge (Mass.)/London 1985, p. 15]; id., «Die Moderne—ein unvollendetes Projekt», in: id., *Kleine politische Schriften* (I–IV), Frankfurt am Main 1981, p. 428. [English translation, Jürgen Habermas, «Modernity—An Unfinished Project», transl. Nicholas Walker in: Maurizio Passerin d'Entrèves and Seyla Benhabib (eds.) *Habermas and the Unfinished Project of Modernity*, Cambridge (Mass.), 1997, pp. 1–38]
- 30 Cf. on this point Winfried Nerdinger (ed.), *Bauhaus-Moderne im Nationalsozialismus. Zwischen Anbiederung und Verfolgung*, Munich 1995.
- 31 Walter Gropius, *Bauhausbauten Dessau*, Munich 1930, p. 11.
- 32 MoMA exhibition history, *Bauhaus: 1919–1928*. Press release, December 2nd, 1938; cf. Adrijana Sajic, *The Bauhaus 1919–1928 at the Museum of Modern Art New York 1938. The Bauhaus as an Art Educational Model at the United States*. Master Thesis at the City College of the City University of New York 2013; https://academicworks.cuny.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1182&context=cc_etds_theses (Consulted February 12, 2019).
- 33 Walter Gropius et al. (ed.), *bauhaus 1919–1928*, New York 1938, p. 38.
- 34 On criticism of the MoMA Bauhaus exhibition cf. Nerdinger, Gropius (as Note 2), pp. 294–298.
- 35 Walter Gropius et al. (ed.), *bauhaus 1919–1928*, Stuttgart 1955, p. 7.
- 36 Jörn Etzold, «Den toten Vater ehren? Die Situationisten als Bauhaus-Erbens», in: Philipp Oswalt (ed.), *Bauhaus-Streit 1919–2009: Kontroversen und Kontrahenten*, Ostfildern 2009, pp. 158–177, quotations p. 164 f.: «Letter from Asger Jorn to Max Bill», in: *Bauhaus imaginista*, Online resource: <http://www.bauhaus-imaginista.org/articles/5988-letter-from> (Consulted October 18, 2019).
- 37 Nicola Pezolet, «Bauhaus Ideas: Jorn, Max Bill, and Reconstruction Culture», in: *October*, Vol. 141, 2012, pp. 86–110; Ruth Martha Baumeister, «De l'architecture sauvage». *Asger Jorns Kritik und Konzept der Modernen Architektur*. Diss. Technical University Delft 2009.
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- 40 Quoted from Eric Mumford, *The CIAM Discourse on Urbanism, 1928–1960*, Cambridge/Mass. 2000, p. 194.
- 41 Walter Ulbricht, Rede zur Gründung der Deutschen Bauakademie am 8.5.1951, from: Ulrich Weissgerber, *Giftige Worte der SED-Diktatur, Sprache als Instrument von Machtausübung*, Münster 2010, p. 131; cf. Andreas Schätzke, *Zwischen Bauhaus und Stalinallee. Architekturdiskussion im östlichen Deutschland 1945–1955*, Braunschweig/Wiesbaden 1991.
- 42 Martin Bober, *Von der Idee zum Mythos. Die Rezeption des Bauhaus in beiden Teilen Deutschlands in Zeiten des Neuanfangs*. Diss. Universität Kassel 2006, <https://www.grin.com/document/163781> (Consulted March 2019).
- 43 Cf. Paul Betts, «Das Bauhaus als Waffe im kalten Krieg. Ein Amerikanisch-Deutsches Joint Venture», in: Oswalt, *Bauhaus Streit* (as Note 36), pp. 196–215.
- 44 Rudolf Schwarz, ««Bilde Künstler, rede nicht»». Eine (weitere) Betrachtung zum Thema «Bauen und Schreiben», in: *Baukunst und Werkform*, January 1953, reprinted in: *Die Bauhaus-Debatte 1953. Dokumente einer verdrängten Kontroverse*, (ed.) Ulrich Conrads et al., Braunschweig 1994, pp. 34–47; cf. Winfried Nerdinger, «Das Bauhaus zwischen Mythisierung und Kritik», in: *ibid.*, pp. 7–19.
- 45 Thilo Hilpert, «Nachkriegszwist in Westdeutschland. Die Erneuerung des Rationalismus», in: id., *Century of Modernity: Architektur und Städtebau. Essays und Texte*, Wiesbaden 2015, p. 239.
- 46 Schwarz (as Note 44), p. 43 f.
- 47 Habermas, *Moderne* (as Note 29), p. 447. [Habermas, *Observations* (as Note 29), p. 15].
- 48 Werner Bockelmann, «Laudatio», in: *Verleihung des Goethepreises der Stadt Frankfurt an Prof. Dr. h.c. Walter Gropius am 28. August 1961 in der Paulskirche. Reden*, Frankfurt am Main 1961, p. 4 f.
- 49 Cf. Philipp Oswalt (ed.), «Israel», *bauhaus*, 2. Die Zeitschrift der Stiftung Bauhaus Dessau, November 2011.
- 50 Claudia Heitmann, *Die Bauhaus-Rezeption in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland von 1949 bis 1968*. Diss. Universität der Künste Berlin 2001, pp. 48–97, following quote p. 225.
- 51 The Bauhaus Association 2019 is made up of the three Bauhaus institutions that maintain collections—in Berlin, Dessau and Weimar—along with the German Federal Government, represented by the Commissioner for Culture and Media, the Federal Cultural Foundation, and eleven German federal states.
- 52 Cf. Winfried Nerdinger, *Das Bauhaus—Werkstatt der Moderne*, Munich 2019.

Keynote

Olaf Scholz

- [A] Can we see in the Bauhaus as a whole—despite its apparent heterogeneity—a uniform stance or even something like the epitome of a social attitude?

modernist architecture

Morning Cleaning is the title of a photograph by Jeff Wall. It depicts the interior of the Barcelona Pavilion. The building is a reconstruction of the 1929 original, which Mies van der Rohe used to demonstrate the Weimar Republic's achievements in crafts and industry at that year's World Fair. Spanish architects rebuilt it in the 1980s. It is considered an iconic example of modernist architecture. Countless photos of the pavilion exist. But Jeff Wall's version stands out from the crowd: The carpet is rolled back, the row of designer chairs is awry, and the curtain also hangs somewhat askew. And then there is a cleaner with a mop and yellow bucket.

neues bauen [new building]

Jeff Wall's photo is a staged piece from 1999, but it says a great deal about the Bauhaus and the tradition of *Neues Bauen* [New Building]—or what has become of it. Because one thing is clear: The man doing the cleaning does not own this house, nor does he live nearby.

iconic symbolic value vs.
social utility value

- [A] Creating affordable high-quality products for the masses; thinking from an artistic perspective about objects that are part of everyday life and can be manufactured industrially; using up-to-the-minute technical skills to build good homes for workers—in a nutshell, democratizing what is good and beautiful, forms the quintessence of all the narratives that circulate today about the former *Neues Sehen* [New Vision], *Neues Denken* [New Thinking] and *New Building* movements. We realize that this is a somewhat one-sided interpretation. And we are also aware that chairs, sofas, and lamps shaped by that era's design have now come to symbolize the lifestyles of the upper middle class, who view them as something special. Similarly, housing once constructed for the working class is now rarely owned by low wage earners. In the cultural capitalism of our time, the «Bauhaus» label signals special merit; it adds value. An ironic transformation. At least when we think of some of the original goals.

bauhaus brand's effect of
social distinction

Have the workers been forgotten? Or do architecture and urban planning that pick up on the Bauhaus tradition today offer new, positive solutions for people like that man with the bucket? I am delighted to have an opportunity to discuss these questions with you.

A design language that still impresses us and brings new inspiration today was developed in response to the major questions confronting that era. It was a constructive movement. Rather than merely distancing itself from what had gone before, it created workshops replete with countless positive ideas—and some of those involved really went out on a limb.

- [E] What are the political prerequisites for socially engaged architecture or design?
 [O] What is the significance and relevance of the Bauhaus and Modernism today—a historical phenomenon or a resource for the present? And what, if anything, constitutes their current relevance?

- [O] These were women and men with new ideas and very precise visions of how to proceed, what they wanted to do, right down to the smallest detail. I like the passionate common sense that can be seen in so many places—in worker s' apartments, in fitted kitchens with a table for the family to sit around, in factories flooded with light, but also in designs for chairs and armchairs.

artistic and social renewal

Photographs from that time reveal that it is (also) a matter of perspective, the motto here being: New Vision. There were snapshots that nobody considered to be art, along with images that turned the art world on its head: close-ups of screws, a view through railings or a tree photographed from close to the trunk. These were completely different from the carefully orchestrated shots of the rich and beautiful that held sway at the time. The cameras seem to be curious. They ask: What does the world look like from below? What have we missed so far?

The concepts developed in Neues Bauen [New Building] also incorporate a different perspective. The old approach involved rigid class differences: metropolises that had mushroomed in the wake of the Industrial Revolution. Chimneys belched out smoke right next to residential areas, and workers lived in catastrophic, thoroughly unhygienic conditions. It was loud, cramped, and dirty.

modernist housing estates
affordable housing

It was against this background that progressive housing and modernist architecture emerged. The residential world was reinvented. In housing estates in Berlin, Hamburg, Stuttgart or Frankfurt you can still see today what that meant: There were now flats with central heating and hot water, offering an unusually high degree of comfort by the standards of the day—and actually inconceivable for the working class. People were proud that they could move into this housing. Even today it is generally very agreeable to live there.

new political, social, and
architectural awakening

- [E] A remarkable historical constellation of forces underpinned the construction of so many attractive housing estates: a combination of a social, political, and architectural new awakening. The projects were implemented under the aegis of mayors, councillors in charge of construction or senior building officers. In addition, new forms of ownership and credit were introduced in the form of cooperatives, the entire planning and building process was reorganized, and large numbers of impressively timeless apartments were constructed.

cooperatives as new forms
of ownership

- [B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?
- [I] What can we learn from the history of the Bauhaus and Modernism when facing current issues? And how can this enable us to gain new insights into the past?

Bauhaus as a social attitude

bauhaus centenary

lessons from the bauhaus

new building movement

resolving social issues through architecture

new political, social, and architectural awakening

emancipatory promise of modern architecture and design

social utopian aspirations

«new man» as a concept

bauhaus modernism under the national socialist regime

[B] A deeply social and democratic attitude is evident in this engagement with reality on the ground that is such a hallmark of the Bauhaus and *Neue Sachlichkeit* [New Objectivity] movements. Considering the way things should look for being good for those who use them—without forgetting half or most of those users in the process—is a progressive perspective. That is why it fits perfectly that you have conceived the Bauhaus anniversary year as an international learning space. Because we face comparable questions and once again need new forms and solutions.

[I] Architecture is the art that influences everyday life most directly. The New Building movement grasped that point. Chiming with that awareness, it developed concepts on how to build a community using architectural and design means.

Manifestos and quotations from that period convey remarkable confidence in the writers' own abilities and those of society. They were grounded in a conviction that it was possible to do better. And were written by men (and a few women) who were keen to engage with the future, for they knew they were on the threshold of something new.

However, the tenor of some texts makes you stop and think and is no longer at all appropriate nowadays: That desire I already mentioned to do everything from scratch, coupled with a firm conviction that one knows what is right: and for everyone else too.

Today, this didactic programme—seeking to revolutionize vision, to reinvent cities from the ground up, to change society, not to mention the whole world, and to create a New Man—and this kind of utopia are most disconcerting. There is a holistic imperative about it that seems authoritarian. Misjudgements and highly questionable actions are also part of the Bauhaus.

Its early days were rather esoteric and sought role models in the past. And although the National Socialists were antagonistic towards the Bauhaus and closed it down, some Bauhaus students and teachers made deals with the new ruling powers and committed dreadful deeds.

Against this background too, I think that we do well to celebrate the Bauhaus by asking, for example, what directions building should take in coming decades. How does architecture for an open society look? How should we build if it is indeed true that architecture is the art that most directly influences how people live together?

Today we are aware that cities and the ways in which we live together constitute highly complex structures. That means we need neighbourhoods where diversity feels at home and housing that suits different phases of life and a range of lifestyles.

Urban society is characterized by the most diverse milieus and cultures. Encounters between a whole host of very different people, friction, coexistence and the creative blend of hugely varied lifestyles are what makes cities worth living in. However, precisely this tradition of European urban culture faces major challenges.

Our cities are growing and there is a housing shortage. You can see in Berlin, Frankfurt, Hamburg or Munich how scarcity is causing rents to rise. In Copenhagen, Oslo, Stockholm, Helsinki or Paris and London, housing is already much, much more expensive. People on an average income there can no longer afford an apartment in the city centre. This urban boom is accompanied by social displacement and cultural impoverishment of inner cities. US economist Richard Florida has called this development «the new urban crisis». Yet we also want nurses, taxi drivers or teachers' families to be able to find a home in our cities.

A vibrant city needs affordable commercial space for small businesses and craftspeople. And there must be enough housing: owner-occupied homes, flats for the commercial rental market and social housing. In Germany, hundreds of thousands of apartments now need to be built every year.

I would therefore like to pick up on two aspects that are seldom addressed in the public debate, but for which valuable points of reference can be found here, in the context of the Bauhaus anniversary year: serial construction and mixed-use cities.

Firstly, prices for housing construction need to fall, which means we must draw on all the possibilities of industrial and digital production. A relatively high number of households in Germany can claim a certificate entitling them to live in publicly funded housing. That means we must maintain high numbers of social housing units and ensure that a decent proportion of social housing is built, particularly also in attractive locations.

Even today it would be possible to construct well-equipped housing that could be rented, without any subsidies, for eight euros per square metre (not including heating costs)—if buildings were also based on standardized models. And if the procedures involved were made more efficient. Climate-neutral construction and renovation can also be carried out much more economically

displacement processes

gentrification

new urban crisis

demand for
affordable housing

rationalizing housing
construction

mixed-use city

standardization

mass housing construction

affordable housing

- [1] What can we learn from the history of the Bauhaus and Modernism when facing current issues? And how can this enable us to gain new insights into the past?

climate protection

using mass-produced solutions. In future, both considerations must come into play: affordable housing and climate protection.

functional city

Secondly, before World War II and for many decades afterwards, cities were built according to the principle of functional separation: the idea was that there were centres where work concentrated, but that citizens wanted to live on the outskirts of the city. The legacy for urban areas took the form of transport corridors and isolated residential islands, giving rise to major problems for social cohesion, quality of life and the climate. It is hard to imagine that being «car-friendly» was once seen as a positive attribute for cities.

mixt-use city

European cities have summarized our current visions in the «Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities» (2007). We want a city in which there is a mix of functions and social backgrounds, a city which is compact and mobile, has a strong focus on urban development and at the same time takes sustainability into account. The legal framework is however still shaped by another model.

legacies of modernism

We should not forget that the legacy that modernist architects, including those from the Bauhaus, have left us is the model of the functional city, as described in the Athens Charter (CIAM IV, 1933). It still defines our urban planning. That is why it is difficult to create day-care centres or sports grounds in residential areas or to build apartments in Hamburg's docklands. Changing this is a laborious process. Nonetheless, in 2017, incidentally at Hamburg's initiative, a new paragraph was successfully added to the Baunutzungsverordnung (Federal Land Utilization Ordinance) (§ 6 a BauNVO). German zoning legislation therefore now reflects an awareness that urban areas exist and that it is good for urban culture if commercial uses and housing coexist.

Engaging with the tradition of the Bauhaus 100 years on can also mean not seeing the past as a utopia and not describing the future in apocalyptic terms, but daring instead to set out on a new path with all our capabilities and know-how.

- [1] We need to rediscover the creative restlessness, the confidence in craftsmanship and technical skills that characterize the Bauhaus and the New Building movement. We must combine them with the lessons we have learned over the last 100 years.

For example, the lesson that every city needs different answers. That when society is going through a time of upheaval, we must ensure everyone is on board as we move forward, but that no one should presume to speak for everyone.

The open society always starts with the principle that, at all times, we need to view people, be it ourselves or others, as an end and never as a means, irrespective of how fantastic some utopia may look.

You may agree with the view that, as a universal principle, a triangle should be yellow, a circle blue and a square red (Wassily Kandinsky), but you may also think that it is complete nonsense. In an open society, we must accept that cities are also a jumbled patchwork of styles. That they are in motion, marked by shifting attitudes towards what is considered beautiful and aesthetic.

The challenge we will face in future is how to find cohesion, and thus devise solutions for many different people, while living in this society of singularities, as Andreas Reckwitz calls late modernity. Because the issue is not just art, aesthetics, and culture, but ultimately also the stability of our democracy.

Opening Panel Discussion

with Olaf Scholz, Winfried
Nerdinger, and the Audience
chaired by Anh-Linh Ngo

[B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?

Anh-Linh Ngo

First of all, I would like to thank Andrea Bärnreuther and the Bauhaus-Archiv for giving us an opportunity to discuss the issue of socially engaged architecture and its political prerequisites with a political representative and a Bauhaus expert once again at the end of the Bauhaus centenary year. Because I think it would be too easy and unfair to simply fling social issues at architects and designers and expect them to solve them.

Mr Nerdinger, let us now start by looking at the title of this event: Taking a stand? Your former colleague Dietrich Erben at TU Munich described some time ago how architectural discourse appropriated the concept of *Haltung*—as used in the German title of the event i.e. taking a stand, or adopting a particular stance or attitude—, which originally comes from conservative cultural anthropology.¹ He pointed out that the term *Haltung* concerns both fundamental and demonstrative aspects, as well as oscillating between interior mindset and exterior expression: «On the one hand, it describes in a nutshell, so to speak, an ensemble of inner, mental or character traits of a person or a group and, on the other hand, it includes externally visible communication of these in the form of appropriate behaviour.» It is thus a term shaped by both essentialist and action-theory ideas, which is why it is often used in political discourse. Interestingly, Paul Schmitthenner introduced *Haltung* [attitude] as a programmatic term for architecture. In the second edition of his book *Das Deutsche Wohnhaus* we read: «It is self-evident that a building will stand firm, that it will remain standing, but what is decisive is that it takes a stand.»

«taking a stand» as a concept

[B] Mr Nerdinger, you were recently involved in a debate, via an article in *ARCH+* that addressed, to sum up briefly, how the New Right uses architecture as a meta-political argument.² Together with Stephan Trüby from the IGMA [Institute for Principles of Modern Architecture] at Stuttgart University, we examined right-wing spaces throughout Europe and found in the debate that, strangely enough, it is precisely the right-wingers who insist that architecture is neutral, that it is impossible to identify architecture of either the Left or the Right. I would like to ask whether it is possible to distinguish between architects' attitude and their work? Which points did you take away from this debate as a historian?

right-wing spaces

Winfried Nerdinger

I have a general difficulty with the term *Haltung*, even a certain aversion to it, because there is a great deal of discussion among

«taking a stand» as a concept

complex relationship
between formal
and political concerns

architects about «attitude», and usually it only refers to something formal, i.e. representing a very specific type of formal expression as an allegedly personal attitude, and what is meant however is ultimately only a hallmark. The purported architectural attitude is thus a sales model that is in line with the market. But there is also a type of attitude that links formal and political concerns. You mentioned Schmitthenner; in his architecture, he also represented a political view or attitude by emphasizing that architecture must grow out of tradition, that it must, in a sense, grow out of German soil. Conversely, the attitude we encounter when it comes to the Bauhaus or Neues Bauen is diametrically opposed to this. There was an attempt to find an internationally valid form of expression. This attitude was also based on the ideas of the Dutch artists' group De Stijl, which aimed to create universal harmony by paring designs down to basic forms and primary colours. De Stijl thus represented a kind of social utopia, which was however only continued in a watered-down version at the Bauhaus. The «international architecture» advocated by Gropius and later by Mies van der Rohe at the Weißenhof exhibition in Stuttgart was a kind of cosmopolitan creed directed against national expression in architecture and was thus also a political statement against nationalists like Schmitthenner. In this respect, architecture in the Weimar Republic was politicized due to the attitude adopted by some, but certainly not all, architects.

right-wing spaces

The debate about right-wing spaces takes us to an entirely different set of issues. Personally, I would not want to link right-wing thinking to architecture in the way that the debate on right-wing spaces does and I think it is a mistake to claim that it is specifically right-wing to declare that architecture is neutral. Right-wing thinking, which in part is rooted in the mainstream within our society, has little to do with architecture and certainly had nothing to do with reconstruction; it has focused more on occupying historical spaces for ideological instrumentalization of the history associated with these spaces.

Olaf Scholz

I do have some ideas concerning the question raised in the title of the symposium «Taking a stand?» For example: I have been appointed as a government minister twice, first as Federal Minister of Labour and Social Affairs and now as Federal Minister of Finance. When you take on this kind of position, you also assume responsibility for a building, and when I became Minister

[B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?

modern architecture vs.
nazi architecture

democratic architecture

of Labour, I realized that most of today's Federal Ministry of Labour was once Joseph Goebbels' Propaganda Ministry, with ministry premises also including, by the way, buildings that housed two Wilhelminian-era banks. Now, as Federal Minister of Finance, I am based in the former Reich Aviation Ministry. They both have architecture with a lot of granite, which means they look really threatening—there really is no other way to put it—and I somehow felt the need to make a small gesture in opposition to that, even back when I moved into the Ministry of Labour. And as I don't of course engage with architecture as intensively as some other people do, although I do deal with it occasionally, in the end I chose to hang some architectural photos showing the German Pavilion at Expo 58, the Brussels World's Fair, which Sep Ruf and Egon Eiermann designed as a counter-demonstration to the Nazi pavilion at the Paris World's Fair in 1937. When you see that and relate those buildings to each other, you realize immediately that very different attitudes are at play, and I think that this pavilion is much more of a manifestation of modernity and democracy than these two granite structures.

Winfried Nerdinger

complex relationship
between formal
and political concern

[B]

I can very much understand your comments about what you like about the transparent glass architecture from 1958 at the Brussels World's Fair. The German Pavilion in Brussels as well as the Chancellor's bungalow in Bonn were conceived as a direct counter-position to the kind of «blood and soil» monumental architecture in which you have your office now. Light, seemingly weightless architecture was supposed to demonstrate that this was a new democratic Germany, setting it apart from the ponderous monumental architecture of the Nazi era. However, this transparent architecture can also only be associated with a certain attitude within this deliberate state of tension. To that extent your photographic counter demonstration is also historically correct. Nowadays though you can find glass architecture everywhere, widely used, particularly to accommodate capitalist corporations and banks, and that has nothing at all to do with a specific attitude or with democratic architecture. Erich Mendelsohn already called this «architecture for rich moneybags» in the 1920s.

social democratic attitude

social democratic
construction schemes

However, there is definitely a type of architecture that was associated with a Social Democratic attitude, which you can find for example in Vienna, in blocks of flats in the municipal-funded social housing schemes (the best known is Karl-Marx-Hof, which

- [A] Can we see in the Bauhaus as a whole—despite its apparent heterogeneity—a uniform stance or even something like the epitome of a social attitude?
- [I] What can we learn from the history of the Bauhaus and Modernism when facing current issues? And how can this enable us to gain new insights into the past?

is over one kilometre long) and which, formally, is conservative architecture. The focus here was not on formal architectural experiments or new materials; the point about the attitude adopted here was that residential buildings were constructed to serve the goal of raising a new Social Democratic generation of young people, who would grow up around large courtyards in communities, where they would be socialized and develop a sense of solidarity. That was the architectural policy adopted by Red Vienna. The Social Democratic attitude was not articulated in new materials and modern flair, but in spatial constellations. A Social Democratic architectural attitude was not a special formal manifestation, nor was it a monolithic block, because the courtyard-based ensembles were each designed individually.

Anh-Linh Ngo

Mr Nerdinger has pointed out the many contradictions that emerge in a historical-critical view of the Bauhaus: There is not one Bauhaus, but at least four different versions. What is however astonishing, 100 years after the Bauhaus was first founded, is that the myth associated with it is more potent than ever, despite all the critiques. Although there is considerable scepticism about the myths surrounding the Bauhaus, there is something, some core, that fires our imagination, a positive energy. That led all political parties to invoke the Bauhaus' social dimension in the Bundestag debate on 15th January 2015: All the parliamentary groups—CDU/CSU, SPD, Bündnis 90, the Greens and even the Left Group—expressed a cross-party consensus that the Bauhaus is a positive, socially engaged idea and contains a humanistic blueprint for the future.

Mr Scholz, you have been a Member of the Bundestag, albeit with some interruptions, since 1998. Have you ever seen such broad agreement between all parties on a cultural policy issue? This unity gives us pause for thought because, in my view, it indicates a shortcoming, namely that we lack a blueprint for the future. Having such a strong sense of this shortcoming at present makes us so forceful in invoking a historical institution that symbolizes this positive vision of the future. And that is probably the real reason for the Bauhaus' posthumous success.

Mr Scholz, which lessons would you draw from engaging with the Bauhaus or, as Mr Nerdinger asked, which Bauhaus would you like to see?

different bauhaus versions

bauhaus centenary
bauhaus myths

bauhaus as a source
of inspiration

social relevance of
the bauhaus

lessons from the bauhaus

Olaf Scholz

Let me say first of all that it's not actually so rare for the parties in the German Bundestag to agree with each other; it happens quite often, sometimes it is carefully hidden, but it isn't necessarily such a bad thing in a democracy. I believe that the Bauhaus' success is more related to the way that more has ultimately been achieved with this school and the ideas discussed in connection with it, so that the whole thing has developed its own momentum. That is why it is also a screen for projections that political and social ideas can be transposed onto. At the end of the day, for all its esoteric beginnings, it did engage with modernity and its exigencies; that occurred in architectural terms, but also socially, with various people and varying attitudes, and this also played a role in reality. Because those involved in constructing housing in cities during the Weimar Republic, but also in the new Federal Republic, who were, incidentally, often Social Democrats, were always aware that what they were doing was not self-evident, but required them to engage with architecture and society. Like much of what happens in life, the new awakening ultimately achieved with the Bauhaus is a narrative that goes its own way and develops a life of its own, quite independently of the school's founders. There is no reason at all to deplore that; it should be taken as a productive initial precondition for the future.

bauhaus as a screen
for projections reflecting
our own aspirations

housing construction

social democratic
construction schemes

new political, social, and
architectural awakening

Winfried Nerdinger

I would agree immediately with that last point. The whole point about important ideas is that they provide an impetus for further developments, which then pick up new impetuses as history unfolds, undergoing constant transformations in the process. The Bauhaus provided sources of inspiration that have been developed fruitfully. The problem is that in many cases there is now simply a linear reference back to the Bauhaus as an ever-effervescent font of ideas, thus mythologizing the historical Bauhaus. Repeatedly drawing inspiration for the present by looking to the past and remodelling this input is a genuine principle in appropriation of culture, but the appropriation takes place in the light of contemporary interests, whereas Gropius used the historical Bauhaus to construct a transtemporal idea that would continuously impact manifold countries and eras. However, the historical Bauhaus's blind faith in progress has grown rather outmoded today, it developed hardly any social ideas—with the exception of the period when Hannes Meyer was director—and architecture played almost no

bauhaus as a source
of inspiration

bauhaus myths

interpretative power of the
bauhaus' founder

bauhaus idea of always up-to-date,
universally valid design

[E] What are the political prerequisites for socially engaged architecture or design?

role at the Bauhaus during two-thirds of its existence. We should therefore always reflect critically on references that look back to the Bauhaus, which need to be historically contextualized.

Anh-Linh Ngo

neues bauen [new building]

social democratic
construction schemes

resolving social issues
through architecture

industrialized building

rationalizing
housing construction

demand for
affordable housing

modernist housing estates

hauszinssteuer
[a weimar-era real estate tax]

public housing construction

Mr Scholz, as you mentioned, *Neues Bauen* [New Building] would not have been conceivable without a close alliance with the Social Democrats. In 1925, Heinrich Pëus, together with Fritz Hesse, then Mayor of Dessau, ensured the continued survival of the Bauhaus, which had no future after the political turnaround in Weimar. Pëus, who had from the outset been a Social Democrat, was convinced that the Bauhaus' views corresponded to Social Democratic goals and that social problems could be solved by drawing on modern means of production, along with industrialization and prefabricated construction methods to build housing. The ambition was to ensure social housing was available for many citizens. We know, however, that disappointment quickly set in, because Gropius did not manage to reduce costs as promised with the Dessau-Törten model housing estate. Residents protested due to the buildings' inadequacies. This example demonstrates that it is not enough to simply entrust architects with solving a social issue if

[E] there are no political flanking measures. At the same time, however, there were also a number of examples that demonstrate how it can work. You mentioned the large housing estates in Berlin and in other cities. Another Social Democrat, Martin Wagner, Head of Municipal Planning and Building, had been much more successful with his proposal concerning what was known as *Hauszinssteuer* [a Weimar-era real estate tax, revenue from which was used to help fund social housing]. This special real-estate tax was levied from 1924; the Minister of Finance was a Social Democrat, Rudolf Hilferding. In the first three years after its introduction, tax revenue from this source already amounted to 850 million Reichsmark and remained relatively constant. Between 1924 and 1931, this tax revenue was used to create an enormous amount of housing; public housing construction clearly exceeded private-sector construction of homes. We tend nowadays to discuss rent caps etc. instead. Instruments like that tackle the symptoms, but do not lead to new housing being built. They ease some of the pressure, which I think is right and important, especially in the kind of over-heated situation we have today, but that is not enough. I would like to ask you, as a politician dealing with fiscal issues, whether political constellations still exist nowadays in which something like that

hauszinssteuer
[a weimar-era real estate tax]

Hauszinssteuer would be conceivable? As Minister of Finance, what do you think about instruments of that kind, which evidently worked in the 1920s? Why are there no longer such ambitious reflections today?

Olaf Scholz

land use and
land management

Reflections like that do exist today. Just think of Hans-Jochen Vogel, who talks often and openly about these issues and has also just written a new book³ in which he calls for a new approach to land use and land management. In that sense, this is all topical. We have just been grappling with ensuring that property tax can continue to exist in Germany. And I am glad that I could make the legislation on this possible at the very last minute thanks to a constitutional amendment, with an agreement between the sixteen federal states and the German Bundestag. In other words, the political constellations of today differ very much from those of the past. However, I think it is in any event quite right to be giving more thought again to the question of building social housing. I remember very well that I was widely ridiculed in Hamburg in 2010 for saying that social housing should be a major issue. The regional government at the time—a CDU/Green coalition, incidentally—claimed there was no need, and back then the figures I proposed were described as absurd and far too high. The bold proposal in that period was for 6,000 flats per year, but now they are managing to build many more flats there, 10,000 to 12,000, and a substantial proportion is social housing. Someone once interjected in a debate with me that building social housing is so enormously important, and that we also need to learn this again, citing a not entirely scholarly figure: 400,000—more than half—of the over 760,000 flats built for rental in the city were once built as social housing.

social housing

demand for
affordable housing

It is a mistake to think that cheap housing can be created without us making any effort, without anyone having to take care of this issue, as the market will regulate everything. And that is why we need to make a new start in fostering housing construction today that can measure up to the commitment, élan and impetus of the 1920s, which produced housing estates that remain exemplary to this day. We need to achieve something in the order of magnitude of 300,000 to 400,000 new apartments per year in Germany, and at least 100,000 of those should be social housing if we are to solve today's housing problems. And in this respect, I believe we can still learn a great deal from what some people

public housing
construction

social and political
commitment

[E] What are the political prerequisites for socially engaged architecture or design?

cooperative housing
construction

have done on the basis of the Bauhaus' engagement with architecture, for example in cooperative, city-funded or local-authority housing construction.

Anh-Linh Ngo

hauszinssteuer
[a weimar-era real estate tax]

Housing associations and cooperatives could only build so much because the *Hauszinssteuer* existed, which meant they did not have to take out so many loans. Let me ask you again: Do you think a tax like that is conceivable today?

Olaf Scholz

I think the *Hauszinssteuer* is something worth considering. One point I would like to make: I have just ensured that we continue to tax land at all, because that could have been over by the end of this year. And it was a very laborious undertaking, as we have all realized. I would say that we do nevertheless have to generate income that will enable us to finance housing construction. The *Hauszinssteuer* is one proposed solution that I think could be discussed too, but you could also simply say that we must ensure that high earners pay correspondingly high taxes. Building social housing costs money; billions are required, and it needs to be subsidized, and that holds true today just as it did in the past. Taking up this challenge also means at the same time making clear that it is a challenge for our society, that tax revenue must be used for this purpose, and those resources need to be comprehensive. The challenge remains unchanged and the various options must be discussed. Because there is no question that we need to build.

Anh-Linh Ngo

land use and
land management

We need to build, but land is becoming increasingly scarce. You have already mentioned that Hans-Jochen Vogel has been fighting for a new land use and land management system for decades. In the context of the exhibition *1989 to 2019: Politics of Space in the New Berlin*, we looked at how much public land was privatized by the Berlin Senate after the fall of the Berlin Wall. A horrific figure emerged: 21 million square metres. That is an area the size of the entire Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg district. If a city privatizes such a large area, rising prices should come as no surprise to it. Hans-Jochen Vogel advocates a different land use and land management system, in which ownership and use would be separated. In other words, the point is not about social ownership and expropriation of land, but about introducing new provisions that would allow

[E] What are the political prerequisites for socially engaged architecture or design?

the public authorities to regulate social use of land. Where do you stand on this question?

Olaf Scholz

Hans-Jochen Vogel has addressed this issue previously, back when he was Mayor of Munich and triggered enormous discussions about the topic. Now he is putting it on the agenda again. Yes, the privatisations in recent years have been a huge mistake. Conversely, a positive effect is noticeable where this has not happened, for example in Hamburg, where about 300,000 apartments out of the total housing stock are still owned by the public sector or co-operatives. That is why I believe that we must ensure flourishing public land ownership to ensure this can continue. We need large housing companies that are not privatised, and they must also continue to build. When land is allocated, we need to make full use of the options available today. That means, for example, not always selling land outright, but insisting instead on a leasehold contract, which makes it possible to distinguish between a plot of land and a building's utilization, and allows national and local authorities to influence subsequent development when the leasehold ends, thus also ensuring that higher land prices are not reflected in an analogous rise in rent and house prices.

Winfried Nerdinger

In principle, I can also agree with Mr Scholz on this point, but I would like to state the argument somewhat more directly. The *Hauszinssteuer* was a state intervention that encroached on private property; real-estate owners were obliged to relinquish a certain percentage of their rental income to compensate for a large number of citizens having lost all their savings due to inflation, which did not affect real estate. The heyday of social housing in the Weimar Republic was based on this *Hauszinssteuer* and thus on political intervention in private property to help level out social disparities. During the Weimar Republic, the state became involved in housing construction for the first time and acted directly or indirectly, mostly through subsidized cooperatives, as the commissioning client. In the Federal Republic of Germany, national, regional, and local authorities continued to fulfil this role of creating homes for citizens by building social housing. However, they increasingly moved away from such home construction schemes in the course of liberalization driven by a market-economy focus, which proved disastrous in this respect, and even sold some of

hauszinssteuer
[a weimar-era real estate tax]

public housing construction

cooperatives as new forms
of ownership

neoliberalism
as a paradigm shift

- [B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?
- [E] What are the political prerequisites for socially engaged architecture or design?

social housing

land use and
land management

their own housing stock on the private market. Another point that links in here is that the public authorities have acquired less and less land for potential future development; today we face the problem that national, regional, and local authorities want to promote social housing again at last, but potential building land is now largely owned by private investors, with prices being driven ever higher. Attempting to influence the price of building land nowadays, as Mr Vogel, who, moreover, achieved nothing in this respect when he held political office, also proposes, can ultimately only be described as a cosmetic exercise. The only way to find genuine solutions to this sort of explosive development on the construction

- [E] market is through clear political intervention: firstly, by ensuring that the exorbitant increase in land value, which has occurred without any effort on the part of the owners, is redirected through taxation as fully as possible to fund construction of social housing, and, secondly, by public authorities once again acquiring and developing large areas of building land. To this day, Vienna City Council's social housing scheme remains an outstanding example of this approach.

Anh-Linh Ngo

Maybe we can come back to this important question later when we open the discussion for the audience. Mr Scholz let us briefly return to the way in which you contrast the two architectural attitudes that you position in analogy to different systems. I think you are probably preaching to the converted when you raise this point with architects, because, as architectural historian Karin Wilhelm put it in the debate on right-wing spaces, spatial formations and building constellations are per se also instructions for action, i.e. they specify or at least suggest possible uses. If this room we are sitting in were designed differently and if we were seated differently in it, a different constellation would come into being and a different statement about the community formed here. The situation here is very much focused on information coming from the front of the room and that is also reflected in the way we are discussing. More generally, spaces prepare and constitute forms of use and consequently have a corresponding impact on users. That is also confirmed by Mr Nerdinger's example, the only difference being that the idea of a Social Democratic upbringing that underlies the Viennese courtyard ensembles is now a historical phenomenon, so that it would be intriguing to find out how these courtyards affect today's users. You have given a very convincing

social impact of
architecture

[E] What are the political prerequisites for socially engaged architecture or design?

social democratic
architecture

description of how one feels in the different buildings that house the ministries and what is actually conveyed there in the sense of demonstrations of power. Arno Brandhuber, a contemporary architect from Berlin, once said that «architecture is the ordering of social relationships through buildings». That means that architecture is definitively political. However, the strange thing is that the political parties have hardly any programmatic approach to address architecture, as far as I can see. What should Social Democratic architecture look like today, from your point of view? A Neues Bauen [New Building] for the 21st century?

Olaf Scholz

functional city

[E] Well, I can tell you my views as a Social Democrat about how building should be addressed in future. I do not think anyone wants a scenario where a building has a stamp stating: This is the SPD style. Irrespective of that, though, I want to state my position on this very clearly: We somehow need to move beyond the Athens Charter (1933), which was very much devised with respect to 1920s and 1930s architecture. The neighbourhoods that we like, which were usually built much earlier, are not compatible with zoning laws that adhere to the model of a «functional» city in the sense of one that is function-driven or one that functions smoothly. I once said that half of the city I live in could not be rebuilt today with contemporary zoning laws, as the whole thing violates all the regulations we have now. That holds especially true when it comes to creating vibrant neighbourhoods with housing and workplaces side by side and everything blended together, because the entire approach is still based on a huge amount of separation, the idea that it is best not to see each other at all: You head off to work in the morning, so you're in the work district, then you go shopping, so you're in the shopping district, then it's time for leisure, so you're in the leisure district, then you go off to be at home, so you're in the residential district. Of course, that was never taken to quite such extremes, but the consequences of this way of thinking are still very tangible today. And that's why I think we still need a few more legislative changes to allow different functions to coexist, which also means that we have to address how they may interfere with each other, which would be the very first thing to consider.

mixt-use city

The second point is that we must engage with the need to build as something entailing societal reform. We cannot complain that there is a housing shortage and then do nothing to ensure that homes are built, and I believe that we must—and this

affordable housing

is something that we can draw on from the Neues Bauen movement, for example —tackle the question of how to build affordably. In this respect I believe some people are making things too easy for themselves, in fact I would say that holds true for quite a few of those currently active in this field. The very first simplification lies in claiming that everything would look monotonous. That kind of stance means we can now use practically none of the modern options available to us and every building must in a sense reinvent everything from scratch, although a great deal could be combined.

rationalizing housing construction

Thirdly, we need to agree on what it should all cost. Something has gone wrong somewhere when people start explaining to us today that rental space costs 12–13 euros per square metre in a building on a plot of land that they own, even though they paid nothing for the land. In my view, the first question to be asked is what someone can afford. That leads you to conclude that around eight euros [per square metre] is really the upper limit for most people. And that means that the economy and architecture and everyone involved in building must have an overriding ambition to build for a broader swathe of the population without construction quality deteriorating. My point is that this can indeed be done, and this has also been demonstrated. In this case, however, we need to aspire to reform, to find a way to actually get these 300,000 new homes every year, to issue building permits, designate sites for construction, make sure that what is built does not become monotonous but nonetheless taps into contemporary scope for rationalization to make it affordable. And one more point: The construction industry in Germany has benefited enormously from freedom of movement in the European Union. That is why first-class skilled workers were available very cheaply for long periods. And I am firmly convinced that is the reason why, at some point around 1980, people stopped thinking about what could be improved, as the only innovation still needed involved finding cheap labour. We are still suffering from this today, which means there really is a great deal that could be articulated from a Social Democratic perspective concerning construction and architectural policy, but the buildings wouldn't have some kind of «SPD style».

construction and architectural policy

social democratic attitude

Anh-Linh Ngo

You have mentioned all the political prerequisites, so why isn't this being implemented? With *ARCH+*, I moved into a building

[E] What are the political prerequisites for socially engaged architecture or design?

land use and
land management

construction and
architectural policy

where the Berlin Senate had, for the first time, decided not to sell the land to the highest bidder, but had instead awarded plots to important urban projects as part of a concept-driven tendering procedure, and for the first time, it became legally possible to combine housing and workplaces. Why is so little happening in terms of land policy or the Land Utilization Ordinance? These are all essential policy instruments for sustainability and traffic avoidance. What can you as politicians do to change this?

Olaf Scholz

[E] And now for a short commercial break if I may. First, we need to take measures and drive these approaches forward and second, I have already proved that this works. When I became Mayor of Hamburg in 2011, I decided we would use the concept-driven tendering method. We immediately abolished the highest-bidder system and made sure that plots were allocated according to quality criteria. I invented the one-third mix: For all construction projects with more than 20 apartments, one third must be publicly subsidized housing. And I was able to make this a binding requirement, either through our power to grant building permits or because we had access to the land. We immediately started drawing up new local development plans everywhere and issuing building permits, in order to ratchet up home building to the kind of order of magnitude that would at least start to respond to demand. We also took the plunge and once again built new districts, which we designed to ensure that housing and work could function in tandem. In other words, in practice—in the office I held for seven years—I have adhered to everything I have just called for here, and consequently the situation there is now quite different from elsewhere, so that although prices have increased due to a huge influx of people, this rise has been more moderate than in other centres—and all that in one of Germany's richest cities.

The thing that bothers me is when people just talk about how something or other does need to be done, although in progressive discourses that really amounts to not much more than empty words. The truth is that, as a matter of fact, all this can be done. You just must get going. Something along the lines of type approval for buildings, which saves EUR 600 to 1,000 per square metre, is almost non-existent in German building law and the construction industry hasn't been clamouring for its introduction; I was the one who initiated it in Hamburg. As the City of Hamburg holds legislative power, it could do that, and the municipal

rationalizing housing
construction

affordable housing

housing association developed something along these lines. And now everyone else wants to copy it, because they have realized that you can save an incredible amount of money if you have already planned certain basic elements, even if every building looks different. And that is important if you want apartments that a lot of people can afford.

Anh-Linh Ngo

As I mentioned earlier, I would like to involve the audience now and I hope that you have lots of questions.

Member of audience

need for a new image

Mr Nerdinger, I found your comments about Mr. Gropius and his attempt to reach out and make an impact on the world highly appealing. But now, when I hear Mr Scholz say that Social Democratic building means creating the legal and financial conditions for this to happen, I wonder whether we might not also need images that inspire us, images of a social or democratic urban district or of a completely new region? We are both from Munich, we know Neuperlach—there was an exhibition on Neue Heimat [the large union-led housing corporation] recently at TU Munich’s Architekturmuseum—I don’t know whether we want to have Neue Heimat and Neuperlach again today. Don’t we simply need a new image, a new design, something that must be carried out into the world, even if it comes from the President of the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts?

Winfried Nerdinger

socially engaged architecture

You are certainly right that we lack a model for democratic building to get the ball rolling on new socially engaged architecture. In my opinion, it is no longer possible today to pick up on Neue Heimat architecture in Neuperlach or the Märkisches Viertel in Berlin. However, the starting point should not be a new image of the city, however that may look, but instead we should first address the very fundamental issue of how we envision housing will look in future within a democratic society; on that basis we should then develop appropriate forms of housing, which also calls for political decisions. I do not have the answer either; there is still a great deal that needs to be developed on this front. However, I believe that we should be moving towards experiments with cooperatives, and there ought to be much more funding and experimentation in this area. It could make building cheaper if

cooperative housing
construction

cooperatives as a new form
of ownership

cooperatives constructed homes without seeking a profit; it would reduce the pressure on rents, because cooperatives regulate who is entitled to live there and rent increases on a social basis rather than in terms of market forces; in addition, cooperative architecture could lead to a new way of living together, geared not only towards individual self-realization, but also towards developing democratic and social behaviour. Bruno Taut's Hufeisensiedlung in Berlin was a prime example of this in the 1920s; that kind of quality would need to be transposed into present-day conditions. However, to do that, we would have to create the legal basis and fitting forms of architecture.

Olaf Scholz

Since you mention this exhibition about Neue Heimat, which is quite impressive, I would like to point out that it was the most important protagonist in housing policy in the Federal Republic of Germany. Over a 30-year period, around 700 architects and urban planners built approximately 460,000 modern apartments, most of them social housing. This example also shows that the market cannot achieve this on its own; there needs to be a political will and steps must be taken to ensure there is a sufficient, affordable supply of housing that city-dwellers would like to live in. We won't succeed if we work with nothing but restrictions that hinder implementation. I deliberately quoted Richard Florida's book in my speech; he always used to write beautiful books about the beautiful life of the urban creative class. However, he has also very rapidly—and this is really striking—written a second book, *The New Urban Crisis* (2017). In it, he notes that the impetus to add a more liberal dimension to how people live together in cities is not wrong, but that he had overlooked the fact that the city does not only consist of the creative class, whom he had described previously, but also of many other people. Incidentally, I think it is a great achievement for someone who works as an academic and has such international success to be able to look at his own views from a different perspective. I have not met many people yet who can do that, but it is an indication that something has happened. And if we don't take up this challenge of building affordable housing and if we fail to assert that society has a duty to ensure it works, simply declaring instead that it will work, or complaining that it won't work unless we do something about it, then we shall not manage to disrupt this development. Doing something to address this calls for democratic courage, because scant available land not

social housing

affordable housing

new urban crisis

- [O] What is the significance and relevance of the Bauhaus and Modernism today—a historical phenomenon or a resource for the present? And what, if anything, constitutes their current relevance?

only means that we have to keep land prices under control, but also that we need to grant building permits, for otherwise these additional dwellings will not exist.

Ulrich Hartung

I have a question for Winfried Nerdinger. It has been said that the new residential areas—which may perhaps be developed even in Berlin, where at least intellectually there is still a kind of building ban—should of course not cost much, but nor should they look cheap, to put it bluntly. That of course applies to a greater or lesser degree to every building project, but it is particularly pronounced here, as we are talking about mass housing construction. On the basis of your experience and your often systematic analysis of the Bauhaus, which you have presented again here with astonishing clarity, could you imagine managing to develop a positive attitude towards the Bauhaus, perhaps not ruling out the possibility that the Bauhaus may indeed be of some significance, perhaps even with regard to design issues, when resolving the question of how to build cheaply but well? Would you also rule that scenario out for yourself in the longer term? After all, didn't the Bauhaus to some degree produce a unified attitude that could be subsumed, for example, within the term Modernism? An attitude that could perhaps also to some extent serve as a role model for new housing construction in cities.

mass housing construction

modernism as an attitude

[O]

Winfried Nerdinger

If I consider Bauhaus and architecture in conjunction, that, first of all, brings me to Walter Gropius, who pursued the concept of reducing construction costs through rationalization, which you also mentioned. However, this hardly functioned even for his own housing estates, because far too few apartments were constructed. And they were not well-built either, as there turned out to be a lot of building defects. You need to produce large quantities of homes, if you want to build houses along a crane track with a perfectly organized time-plan and work schedule, otherwise you will not cut costs substantially. I would venture to question whether that is really the right approach for mass housing construction in future, as rationalization à la Gropius almost always leads to a certain degree of monotony, as shown particularly by the Gropius settlements.

rationalizing housing construction

mass housing construction

The most important Twenties housing was built in Frankfurt, Berlin, Hamburg and Altona by Ernst May, Bruno Taut, Fritz Schumacher and Gustav Oelsner. In Hamburg, by the way, this

kind of building is not so modernist at all, but is in brick, with courtyards too, mixed use and in some cases as perimeter block development. These forms of residential estate can certainly be developed further. You could also draw on what Hannes Meyer tried to create in terms of socially engaged architecture, for example the gallery-access homes in the Törten housing estate in Dessau. On the other hand, as you realized from my lecture, I do not think it would be appropriate to reactivate Walter Gropius' ideas on architecture today.

Member of audience

I would like to say something about the situation for architects, as they were not really mentioned enough this evening. If we want this much-proclaimed diversity and want to make a new start, architects should be given more opportunities to contribute their creativity. I am among those, probably like many people in this room, who has been struggling for decades to gain access to projects. To cite just one example: You can only build a school if you have already built one. Telling investors what they want to hear and not listening to good ideas is now standard practice in this country's architectural culture, and I think that if you really want something fresh and new, you should give creatively minded people in this country a chance. May I ask what your attitude to this would be?

Olaf Scholz

Firstly, I think that is right: We must ensure that new ideas can play a role. Good building in cities in Germany and everywhere is always also about holding architectural competitions in which someone can present their own competition entry, for example. That is important. Although it is not possible for every single project, we should do this frequently, if we want to be inspired anew again and again. Secondly, we must of course ensure that what is built is good. This means that, as clients commissioning architecture, we must also dare to make appropriate demands concerning price calculations and suchlike, and of course we must have a grasp of what constitutes good architecture. That does not mean that we should fool ourselves into believing that we are architects ourselves. That's a point I made in one of my first speeches to the Hamburg Association of Architects; I told them I was interested in this subject, but that I would not be drawing up designs myself or interfering with them, because that would be outside my skill-set and the results would be quite horrible.

Anh-Linh Ngo

Could I just interject something here? An institution is currently being founded that is intended to deal with architecture of the future and could be something like a new Bauhaus, namely the Bundesstiftung Bauakademie [Building Academy Federal Foundation]. And what has happened? The institution is to be led by a political appointee. The selection committee—including Johannes Kahrs, whom you know from the Hamburg regional association of your party—has appointed Florian Pronold as founding director.⁴ You were just saying that politicians are not architects. So why does something like this happen?

Olaf Scholz

I really cannot say because I was not a member of the selection committee, and it is also, quite seriously, information that I think one must accept. Incidentally though, I do however happen to know that the person you mentioned has been rather involved with this topic and is very committed and has considerable management skills. But I do not know what ultimately played a role in the selection committee and who else was on their list, so I really cannot pass judgement on that decision.

Philipp Oswalt

First a follow-up remark on how the position of Bauakademie founding director was filled. I thought what you said was a bit oversimplified; it's all very well that you managed to make positive comments about Mr. Pronold, but the position was not advertised as a managerial one but as a job for an expert, and he simply does not meet that requirement, so it is a very strange procedure.

But I actually wanted to address something else: We were just looking at the question of something along the lines of «Social Democratic architecture», and in recent years I have found it very striking that the Social Democrats were actually the main driving force behind many of the reconstruction projects. Looking at the Berlin City Palace, or now also at the Bauakademie, the Garnisonkirche in Potsdam, and other cases like Frankfurt's Municipal Theatre, I wonder what they are trying to tell us with these reconstructions? What kind of attitude is that? Is it somehow an attempt to counteract their traumatic experiences with Neue Heimat or what is it all about? I still do not understand why the Social Democrats of all people engage in this kind of historical production and identity production.

social democratic
architecture

reconstruction
as a controversial area

production of history
and identity

Olaf Scholz

social democratic attitude

construction and
architectural policy

demand for
affordable housing

I don't want to start evaluating individual projects now, because I have different views on the various projects, and I believe that for that reason too it must always be possible to discuss what one finds positive or negative. You may have gathered from what I said that I do not have a high regard for historicizing architecture, but that would be a completely different debate. The question I want to answer, however, is about what it means to build from the perspective of Social Democratic policy. That means, on the one hand, that there must be enough to go around for a large number of people, which is why we are building a lot of housing, and it means that we must also defend our decision to build as much as we do, and that the housing must be affordable and good and high quality—I think that's all part of it. However, it does not mean that there is no room or no need for places that stand out to some extent. For example, this category should in many cases include our schools, which ought to be very special places where we are quite right to invest a great deal of money, in order to create places where children can come together and grow up together. That was, at any rate, always important for me when I had responsibility for this area. But it also includes buildings related to culture, which stand out due to their special qualities. In any case, I realize how significant it was for my home city that the opera was rebuilt after the war, which really touched everyone, during a period when there really were a lot of shortages, and it even moved people who had no intention of ever setting foot inside it. I think that is part of this issue. And I believe that large cultural buildings can also be a part of urban society. I did not initiate the Elbphilharmonie project, but am simply associated with its completion, and I think that when you look at this building, you realize it is definitively an antithesis to earlier buildings. For example, think of a very famous opera house, the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires, which in some aspects emulates Versailles; the well-to-do in Buenos Aires would gather there in the early afternoon and start drinking champagne, yet would finally still get some idea of the piece performed. And then there is the Elbphilharmonie, where millions of people can visit the 30-metre-high platform and embrace this as a public building—in other words, a complete antithesis. I do not think you have to be opposed to marvellous architecture if you are a Social Democrat. I think we need a mixture of both: wonderful buildings that serve cultural purposes, for example, designed for use by

many people, and at the same time, of course, urban spaces with enough apartments—and the two must be combined.

Annemarie Jaeggi

hauszinssteuer [a Weimar-era real estate tax]

My question is for Mr Scholz and is about financing housing. Mr Ngo referred to the *Hauszinssteuer* introduced in 1924, which generated an incredible amount of money, but it should also be noted in this context that 50 per cent of what was an immeasurable sum did at least flow into the general budget later. I would like to ask how can we actually utilize such revenues (you mentioned the example of property tax) for specific purposes, so that they are used to build housing and not to compensate for shortfalls in other areas, so that we do not repeat the Weimar Republic's experiences.

Olaf Scholz

social housing construction

Well, property tax generates 14 billion Euro a year in Germany. Just to set the record straight: There is virtually no scope to earmark funds for special purposes—German law does not permit that with tax revenue. It must be a political decision. And that's why I think we were correct when we decided recently that social housing construction can continue to be supported by the Federal Republic of Germany, for one of the earlier versions of the constitution provided that this programme would expire in 2019, i.e. at the end of the year. That meant we had to amend the Basic Law during this legislative period so that we could continue with that policy, and the Federal Government is now allocating considerable funds to social housing construction throughout Germany. But there must be the will to do this on a suitably large scale. I think that we need to have vigorous debate on issues like this. In a large city, proper social housing costs 200 to 400 million Euro in subsidies every year, depending on the size of the city. It simply does not work unless we put this into practice by setting policy priorities. It is quite simple! In my view, there must be a will to ensure that affordable housing is available. I still surprise all sorts of people right across society by saying that half of all households in almost every medium-sized and large city in Germany are eligible for a certificate entitling them to live in publicly funded housing. That is the reality of income levels in this country, which is not as rosy as it appears on prime-time TV. And that is why I think part of the task involves saying that this is a political issue and that it is not just about the poor—although it should always be about them too—but actually concerns a fair number of us. That is why

construction and architectural policy

demand for affordable housing

social housing must be made a new priority and we should not look down on it. I think it's great to see what can be done with concept-driven construction, by the way, because it simply leads to social housing being created in wealthy districts, which otherwise would not have happened for many decades.

Member of audience

In the description of today's event, one sentence reads that attitudes inform processes of reception and repression in historiography and politics of memory. Minister Scholz, what do you think the many Bauhaus staff and students who had to leave Germany after 1933 for political and ethnic reasons would say today in 2019 about the decision taken by the Berlin Tax Office a few weeks ago to suspend the non-profit status of the Vereinigung der Verfolgten des Nazi-Regimes [VVN/ Association of Persecutees of the Nazi Regime], which clearly threatens its survival? And you have played a not insignificant role in this matter and even called for the rules concerning critical and politically active associations to be made more stringent. That is why I find it so remarkable that you are here with us this evening, in the context of this conference, and I would very much like to ask you what taking a stand means to you in this context, and what kind of attitude you think Bauhaus staff and students from back then would adopt towards the VVN?

«taking a stand» as a concept

Olaf Scholz

Thank you very much for this question! You did not have to take such a circuitous route via the Bauhaus but could have asked directly about the non-profit status. No, it's not true to say that the point is to make things more difficult, but the fact of the matter is that there is case law from the Federal Fiscal Court concerning non-profit associations that are also politically active on the side. That has led to enormous uncertainty and we are now trying to work out how to remove this uncertainty. I honestly think it is farcical if, while we are trying to salvage what must be possible to salvage, some people say we are doing the opposite, just because that suits them. It is simply untrue, a lie, a farcical drama, and that is not the right approach. We are working to find a solution for the non-profit legislation, without, in the end, creating a legal framework that will allow very reactionary, very rich people to set up mechanisms to collect money, as they do in the USA, and then make use of their non-profit status to influence the political process in Germany. It's not a piece of cake to get the system to

[E] What are the political prerequisites for socially engaged architecture or design?

work, ensuring that one scenario doesn't arise but the other category is protected, but we are working very hard on it and I am also quite confident that we will find a solution. And the second point about the VVN decision, I am trying to find out more about it, because it is a decision by the Berlin Tax Office and German fiscal confidentiality rules means that I also learnt about this decision from the press, as you did; I am not informed about this decision, it is not transmitted to me, just to make that clear. I do not know what reasoning is given for this decision. I am familiar with the legal framework for it, however, and if I have understood the information I was trying to find out correctly, then it is a problem that can be solved and could perhaps have been resolved by other means than making it public; however, as I have said, I do not know enough about it to be able to evaluate that myself. I cannot imagine that it would be correct to deny this body non-profit status. But no one asked my opinion; you are the first to do so.

Member of audience

Now a question from young people about what you think politicians or even architects or other people do to support young people? When it comes to sustainable living, or Fridays for Future, we do not feel understood by politicians at all. We young people, all of us sitting here, all living in Berlin, probably will not be able to live in Berlin any longer when we move out [of our parents' homes], because rents are so high. In your opinion, what do you think you are doing to ensure that we can continue to live in Berlin in future, with reasonable rents? Please reply in a way that we can understand!

demand for affordable housing

Olaf Scholz

First, making money available, secondly, drawing up local development plans, third, building apartments, fourth, convincing public housing companies to start building again, which they have not done for a long time. Fifth, I could imagine that we might at some point consider the question of whether all firms with a certain number of flats might also have some sort of permanent obligation to build, in other words, whether a company with five thousand dwellings might always have to keep constructing—as a certain percentage of its housing stock. That would also lead to increases, because essentially the worst thing is to build a lot all at once and then to reduce housing construction significantly. You need to build a lot at steady pace. And that applies to Berlin just as it

demand for affordable housing

does to all other attractive locations where many people want to live; it's not possible unless there are large numbers of additional apartments that are affordable, also because they are publicly subsidized. But all that is possible, it needs to happen.

Member of audience

And how long do you think it will be until you manage that?

Olaf Scholz

That is indeed a good question, and I find myself always coming back to my former position as First Mayor of Hamburg. I am completely stunned to see that it takes three to five years for a new local development plan in a major city in Germany. And I said to myself: That cannot be the way things are. It means you must start early. That is why it's extremely important that we insist on constant development of planning areas. If you wait too long, nothing will come of it. But I have the feeling that many people everywhere have come to a realization about this, and the same goes for the government in Berlin; I am convinced it views housing construction as a very central issue and is trying to identify corresponding areas throughout the city. That was also noted recently in the newspapers. And I think the question you have asked is completely justified. Because if someone says that they want to leave home soon, and then hears the development plan will be ready in five years and the apartment three years after that, they'll think to themselves that they actually wanted to have moved on twice by then. And that, I think, is not acceptable; something must change.

Member of audience

There was a big Fridays for Future demonstration today. I'd like to ask, just out of curiosity, if you feel pressured as a politician or if you have the feeling that it achieves something politically when young people take to the streets to fight for the future.

Olaf Scholz

I think it is great that it is happening. I think all those who are doing it deserve to have us address these issues seriously, not as slogans, but by discussing in tangible terms the points raised. And I think that it helps a lot. In my view, we have taken some considerable far-reaching decisions; they would not have been possible without this public pressure from the young people who take to the streets on Fridays for Future. It has given us incredible

strength, which we probably would not have had otherwise, enabling us to overcome all the resistance that emerges every day. So, it's right and positive that this is happening, and it is also possible to find solutions to respond to the concerns being expressed.

Member of audience

Coming back to a point, what exactly do you do to promote sustainable living in Berlin—and what do you do sustainably?

Olaf Scholz

I am the Federal Minister of Finance, so I can now report on what I am doing as Federal Minister of Finance. I ensure that houses are built and that is why we have increased funding for social housing. I have ensured that we have dramatically increased funding to expand local public transport in Germany and Berlin is also benefiting from this. We are building new suburban trains, new underground trains, we are developing new mobility concepts. We are ensuring that there will soon be zero-emission vehicles. That is a huge industrial feat that is now also essential. And for example, as First Major of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg I have ensured that many cities in Germany, including Berlin, have declared that from 2020 they wish to purchase only zero-emission buses for their public transport systems. This has put enormous pressure on the industry, as they could easily work out that from then on, they would not be able to sell any of the buses in their existing range. And through legislation we have now established the regulatory framework for this to happen. In the bill adopted by the Bundesrat today, we have done the groundwork to make buying emission-free or significantly reduced-emission vehicles more attractive. And we have ensured, for example, that cities will soon be able to pass laws stipulating that only zero-emission models will be permitted in future for certain categories of vehicles in frequent use, such as taxis or those used by car rental companies. I could go on and on with this list. We have got the ball rolling for almost EUR 90 billion for the railways to ensure this works nationwide. We are making sure that the electricity grid is upgraded to bear the load from electric mobility. We want renewable energies to be expanded so that they meet 65 per cent of our electricity needs by 2030 at the latest. And we're making sure that buildings are insulated so that they emit less, and we've now introduced such favourable tax incentives and subsidies for building renovation that we hope to see a dramatic drop in emissions

from buildings over the next ten years. And we are making it more expensive to use fossil fuels in buildings and likewise for vehicles, so that when people buy their next car, they can consider perhaps buying one that has less environmental impact.

In order to afford sufficient scope during the symposium's opening event for the unique opportunity to enter into a discussion with Olaf Scholz, Federal Minister of Finance and Vice-Chancellor, we focused the discussion on the first evening of the symposium on topical issues pertaining to the political course to be steered when tackling housing and urban planning issues in the 21st century, rather than, as originally envisaged, concentrating on Professor Winfried Nerdinger's opening lecture and the symposium programme. We should also like to convey our heartfelt gratitude to Professor Winfried Nerdinger, who agreed to an interview with the editor after the symposium, thus making it possible to include both nexuses of questions in the publication.

Winfried Nerdinger in an Interview
with Andrea Bärnreuther

resolving social issues
through architecture

Andrea Bärnreuther:

Anh-Linh Ngo says that you can't fling social issues at architects and designers and expect them to solve them, which is a statement I find surprising in view of our subject matter—Bauhaus and Modernism—because it sounds like an unreasonable demand and a mistaken aspiration. I would like to ask you, as an architectural historian in whose work an engagement with the self-image of the architect throughout the ages emerges as a recurrent theme, culminating in the opus magnum of your farewell exhibitions *Der Architekt—Geschichte und Gegenwart eines Berufsstandes* and *L'architecture engagée—Manifeste zur Veränderung der Gesellschaft*,⁵ if you could briefly sketch out the self-image of Modernist architects in this context and also shed some light on how much leeway architects have when it comes to shaping social policy?

social and political
commitment

Winfried Nerdinger

Social commitment, or rather resolving social issues through architecture, is not one of the characteristic traits of the architectural profession. On the contrary, looking back at history it repeatedly becomes clear that for long periods architects were simply acting as vicarious agents for those in power, those who rule and those who own property, as is still the case today. In the nineteenth century, there were only a handful of architects with social or political commitment, the great exceptions in this context being Gottfried Semper, William Morris and Tony Garnier with the Cité Industrielle of 1901.

history of architecture
as history of power/capital

It was only indirectly, if at all, that what we call modern architecture nowadays arose as an architectural response to social questions. The main focus was on engaging with 19th-century historicist «style-driven architecture», which was to be replaced by a new style based on structural concerns and function. The land reform and garden city movement, which aimed to attain cooperative lifestyles and housing, showed social commitment, but scarcely any of its plans could be realized before the First World War.

modern architecture vs.
historicizing architecture

The idea that «bare», unadorned buildings and open spaces would create a new hygienic, healthy city for the masses was only picked up by a handful of architects as a result of the political system-change in 1918/19 and the social obligations arising from land ownership laid down in the Weimar Constitution, as well as

social impact of architecture

- [1] What can we learn from the history of the Bauhaus and Modernism when facing current issues? And how can this enable us to gain new insights into the past?

modern architecture
and design as a response
to social modernization

with state intervention in housing construction. One could even say that the Weimar Republic was the first era in which a larger number of architects took up the challenge of having a social impact with their designs. The guiding concepts of light, air, sun and «liberated living» had been dictated by urban hygiene in the 19th century, but now architects such as Bruno Taut, Ernst May, as well as Walter Gropius were on the lookout for architectural forms that would make healthy living possible. In addition, they sought in their designs to respond to social developments such as the breakdown of the traditional family, the emergence of the nuclear family with wives taking on an independent role, and new forms of shared living. Taut in Magdeburg and Berlin, May in Frankfurt/Main and Gustav Oelsner in Altona, in particular, engaged with these issues in the sense of directly influencing, through architecture, the ways in which people can live together. The Bauhaus did not play a significant role in this context except for the period when it was directed by Hannes Meyer.

Andrea Bärnreuther

bauhaus as a call for change

learning to live differently
in the world

new building of the future
new everyday environment

interdisciplinary approach
collective living and working

social-utopian aspirations

- Essayist, researcher and exhibition curator Thierry Fabre, currently director of the Méditerranée programme at IMéRA, Marseille, considers the Bauhaus to be a model for the present in view of the urgent need to change the ways we live and to inhabit the world differently, namely with an awareness of limits and a sense of proportion—«un art d’habiter le monde autrement».⁶ He associates a visionary élan with the Bauhaus, the aspiration to redesign the future, the invention of the unknown, the reinvention of the everyday, interdisciplinary forms of artistic design and collective forms of production. Taking as our point of departure the utopian ideas or rather the verbal and aesthetic articulations of the Bauhaus’ founding phase, in which the Bauhaus’ founder and his colleagues also worked through their war experiences, can we derive a kind of wisdom about life, survival and coexistence that could be helpful to us in the face of the challenges of our time—from climate change to the coronavirus/COVID-19 crisis—and to which we could attribute a certain genuine historical efficacy, even if all the aspirations were not satisfied?

lessons from the Bauhaus

Winfried Nerdinger

If one reduces the Bauhaus to the way in which myriad experiments moving in all directions were conducted after the First World War, seeking to give shape to future forms of life and inspired

- [O] What is the significance and relevance of the Bauhaus and Modernism today—a historical phenomenon or a resource for the present? And what, if anything, constitutes their current relevance?

by the sense that this was a political turning point, then perhaps we could in principle learn something from it. What I think would

[O] be counterproductive would be to want to re-start the Bauhaus as a kind of historical dynamo, because the issues that are pressing for us today, such as climate change, sustainability, resource conservation, globalization etc., were not yet present at the Bauhaus at all—the Bauhaus was based on a completely intact faith in progress.

faith in progress

If we look at it from this angle, the experimental work at the Bauhaus would have to be pursued as processes and not as form-finding. Frei Otto, the most important German architect of the post-war period internationally, advocated precisely that at the opening of the Bauhaus-Archiv in Berlin in December 1979, in a speech that remains relevant today: «The idea of the Bauhaus is not necessarily in my view, and I do emphasize that this is my view, something that can be depicted in images. The Bauhaus itself was not a style, but a goal, a distant goal. The Bauhaus did not have a method for dealing with what was static, but for development, for the process driven. It was a far-reaching method.»⁷

bauhaus' process-driven approach

Forty years ago, Frei Otto radically opposed German post-war architecture and its senescence in the wake of the Bauhaus, and, in a brilliant speech, he appealed clearly to the conscience of the assembled German architectural celebrities. He described the historical Bauhaus as a method that liberated, expanded and opened up new possibilities, but for him the Bauhaus-Archiv was only a place where one could now view «the dreams of our grandfathers and great-grandfathers». He no longer considered the Bauhaus itself to be having any impact, in contrast to the Ulm Hochschule für Gestaltung (HfG) [Ulm School of Design], which had closed ten years earlier.

hfg ulm's criticism of the bauhaus

According to Frei Otto, contemporary architects only concealed the unresolved problems of the time behind «artificial facades». This was how he aptly characterized the entire Postmodern movement and its successors. Two years earlier, he had already opposed the architectural community in a tirade during a speech to mark the Schinkel Award, declaring «You have to finally stop building architecture that is so contrary to nature!»⁸ In Berlin, he demanded that building should at last be treated as a field for experimentation, because «opportunities and possibilities are reflected in questions». He went on to cite a whole series of challenges, such as fair use of the Earth's surface, more communication with less traffic, building without money, participatory planning, building with as little material as possible, adaptable building,

building as a field for experimentation

- [O] What is the significance and relevance of the Bauhaus and Modernism today—a historical phenomenon or a resource for the present? And what, if anything, constitutes their current relevance?

problems of habitat

self-sufficient housing without external energy sources—and, last but not least, «reflecting on the problems of habitat in all countries, in Europe too, without wanting to export solutions from here to there». His appeal to the architectural community met with practically no response, and the Bauhaus did not pick up on any of his points either, although Frei Otto recalled that Walter Gropius had visited his «Entwicklungsstätte für den Leichtbau» [Development Center for Lightweight Construction] in Berlin-Zehlendorf in the early 1960s and had apparently been impressed by the interdisciplinary research work conducted there.

interdisciplinary approach

Lessons could still be learned from Frei Otto's tirade today, for his diagnosis of the architectural scene and his criticism of «artificial facades» are not outdated. His reference to the plight of the competition system, where architects «sit in authoritarian judgement [over colleagues] on democratically packaged competitions», was also apt. That means that if the Bauhaus were treated as a place where questions are asked of the present and solutions are sought, it could still have an invigorating effect today; however, in today's investor-driven billion-dollar construction industry, asking questions while at the same time fundamentally questioning the architectural business seems to be possible only in very restricted areas, if at all. Incidentally, Frei Otto experienced this first-hand, for he was never able to gain a foothold in the German architecture scene and always remained an outsider. Modern architecture, which once set out to improve life by building, has largely—exceptions confirm the rule—degenerated into corporate modernism, a hollow shell and embellishment of capital interests.

[O]

refusing architectural
business-as-usual

modern architecture

loss of emancipatory promise

Andrea Bärnreuther

relationship to history

In the case of Walter Gropius, utopian thinking is combined with a difficult relationship to history. How should we imagine Walter Gropius' relationship to history, what were his ideas on how to deal with it and on tradition and continuity in architecture? Gropius, this architect who—to coin a phrase—invokes the Gothic cathedral and the medieval masons' lodges and guilds of skilled craftsmen while standing amidst the ruins of the First World War, who creates a collection (of glass slides) showing modern architecture together with so-called «world architecture», who wants to create a new style and then wants to establish a new ultimate tradition independent of time and place, when he realizes that in so doing he could risk losing his role as an innovator. Is Gropius' attitude comparable to that of Jean Jaurès, who once declared that

the right way to deal with the past or tradition is to carry over into the future the vibrant forces that have been at play in the past—or, roughly translated into English, «tradition means to keep the fire alive and not to admire the ashes»?

Winfried Nerdinger

Although Gropius repeatedly invoked Gothic cathedrals and masons' lodges, and hung a copy of a Gothic plan of Ulm Minster in his study even in the USA, Gothic was not a historical architectural reference point for him, but only a term that referenced an erstwhile cultural unity, legible in a unified work of architecture created jointly by craftsmen and artists. Analogously, he wanted, in the spirit of the Deutscher Werkbund, to give unified expression to the technical and economic forces of the day aiming at creating a unified culture again and ultimately finding a modern style. Since technology and industry do not stop at national borders, he advocated «international architecture» that would stand out from all historical, nationally influenced forms. He fought against and denigrated 19th-century historicism, i.e. the use of historical forms, as a weak «pseudo-tradition», asserting that design should be grounded solely in the spirit of the present. Other modern architects, such as Otto Wagner, Adolf Loos or Henry van de Velde, also lambasted historical references but Gropius was the most dogmatic propagandist in disseminating this way of thinking, which has shaped many architects to this day. In his lectures and writings, he rigorously proclaimed that every era should express itself in keeping with its times and to that end should, if necessary, eliminate the defunct past. This attitude led him to justify the demolition of New York's Penn Station, one of the most important historical buildings in the USA, claiming it was only «superficial fake art». He did not have the slightest understanding of the historical growth and the fusion of forms. Space should and must be made for the new. In his lectures on «Tradition and Continuity in Architecture», he repeatedly emphasized that the architect must educate the average citizen, who still clung to the past, to grasp today's parameters for determining value, without ever reflecting that these alleged parameters were for the most part merely a reflection of economic conditions and interests, and that his reference to the supposedly imperative forces of the present—in this he thinks like Jean Jaurès—was pure ideology, because the exigencies of the present cannot, on the one hand, be separated from history at will and, on the other hand, cannot be defined according to

international architecture
and global world economy

modern architecture vs.
historicizing architecture

modern movement
relationship to history

postmodern attack
on modernism

claim to universal validity

relationship to traditions
and cultures

cultural imperialism

modernist imperatives

demand to decentralize
the bauhaus

demand to decolonize design

relationship to traditions
and cultures

architects' actual ideas. Gropius' role as a self-appointed educator for architecture directed against history and tradition meant that in the 1950s architects from the younger generation, such as Aldo van Eyck or Ernesto Rogers, were already turning against the modern movement's hostility to history. For advocates of Postmodernism, the Bauhaus directors Gropius and Mies van der Rohe then became figures of hatred and the Bauhaus became a negative foil against which to define building as a dialogue with history.

Andrea Bärnreuther

Mr Nerdinger, you have just explained Gropius' relationship to history. There is another component of the Bauhaus idea too: it claims international or cross-cultural validity. In your lecture, you mentioned that Alfred Barr, Director of MoMA, criticized Gropius' glorification of the Bauhaus and his ignorance of artistic and educational achievements in the USA—«the Bauhaus ideas should not be imposed upon American schools. The tyranny of the Paris Beaux-Arts tradition which until recently dominated our architectural schools is a warning.»⁹ In your intellectual Gropius biography, you refer to Gropius' claims to priority as a GSD teacher at Harvard vis-à-vis the Dean, Joseph Hudnut.

Olaf Scholz addressed the authoritarian-seeming imperious stance of modernist utopian thinking in his lecture that partly appears strange today, and sought to change society, indeed the whole world, and create a «New Man». As an exponent of the Modernism complex, the Bauhaus today increasingly faces accusations of colonialism as well as of hegemonic and colonial thinking, combined with demands to decentralize the Bauhaus and decolonize design.

Do you also understand Gropius' attitude here to be more or less a monolithic block—like his approach to history—or can we also identify a learning curve, such as we see for example with Arie Sharon and his design for the University of Ife in Ile-Ife, Nigeria, which responds to the country's climate and reflects local cultural traditions aesthetically? Gropius seems, at least on an ad hoc basis, to have argued in favour of reflecting traditional values—for example with reference to one of the first projects from his architectural office TAC (The Architects Collaborative), founded in 1946, namely his former student I. M. Pei's design for Hua Tung University, Shanghai. Should this be viewed as an exception, or are there further examples in this vein of Gropius revising his architectural or urban planning ideas in the light of an appreciation of other cultures?

international architecture
and global world economy

relationship to history

relationship to traditions
and cultures

Winfried Nerdinger

The «international architecture» represented by Gropius originates from the nexus of ideas associated with the Deutscher Werkbund and, like it, also has colonialist traits; it reflects a development urging forward the move to a global world economy and takes no account of national or regional traditions. References to place and history can only be described as marginal for Gropius throughout his life; he ultimately lacked a historical awareness of traditional values. When he emigrated to England in 1934, he planned a contrasting modern new building in the midst of the time-honoured University of Cambridge, declaring that the best way to establish a link to the historical buildings was to use the same material for the facades; he completely rejected any kind of formal adaptation or adjustment to the historical ensemble. He took the same approach when it came to building his own house in New England; this new-build house has nothing to do with the region's architectural tradition apart from its use of wood and white paint. Gropius was hardly involved with the aforementioned design for Hua Tung University, but when planning the Graduate Center in Harvard with his architectural firm TAC, he stated that the tradition of the university campus lay in a succession of yards, the open courtyards. That structure was the only element that he picked up on, but it did not give rise to any dialogue with the surrounding buildings and the Graduate Center remained a foreign body. Even when he planned the huge university in Baghdad with TAC, there was no engagement whatsoever with the country's building tradition; it was only a matter of using concrete structures to get to grips with the local climate. In contrast to Le Corbusier and Frank Lloyd Wright, who in their late work engaged intensively with various building traditions and with each specific location, Gropius, or rather his studio, TAC, ultimately—to put it in drastic terms—transplanted buildings as if they were off-the-shelf refrigerators that you can put in place and plug in wherever you want. In this respect, he is comparable to Mies van der Rohe, whose buildings are at least of high aesthetic quality.

reconstruction as
a controversial area

production of history
and identity

Andrea Bärnreuther

Mr Nerdinger, perhaps you would like to comment from an architectural historian's perspective on Philipp Oswalt's question about the reconstruction projects and their production of history and identity? I would also be interested to hear how you see the connection in the present day between the longing for reconstruction

[A] Can we see in the Bauhaus as a whole—despite its apparent heterogeneity—a uniform stance or even something like the epitome of a social attitude?

reconstruction and anniversary culture

paradigm shift from the future to the past as resource for renewal

politics of memory

and the anniversary culture, where, it seems to me, the paradigm shift from the future to the past as an «inexhaustible resource for renewal and change», as noted by Aleida Assmann, is expressed in a similarly excessive way in both cases. As far as I can see, both are about a new—often also short-circuiting—construction of history, as well as relating to identity formation, with both reconstruction and anniversary culture located in the realm of a culture or politics of remembrance.

Winfried Nerdinger

I do not view the relatively few reconstructions of the past decades as having been driven forward by Social Democrats, as Mr Oswalt believes. The Berlin City Palace is a national project, democratically legitimized by the Bundestag and approved in the light of political interests, so I shall not consider it for now, but if you take a look at the history of the reconstructions in Hildesheim, Dresden, Wesel, Potsdam or Frankfurt, it's clear that citizens' initiatives were the driving force. I find it completely absurd to discredit these democratically legitimized initiatives or even to defame them as right-wing. Civic engagement was first and foremost aimed, entirely legitimately, at recovering or reiterating a public space that had been shaped by history, in other words at a kind of liveability that modern architecture had in many cases not created and which was lacking, precisely because there is a historical dimension to being human. If it is about identity at all, then it is a matter of finding regional identity by references back to the history where one lives, and it is not about national identity construction. The real problem is how unwelcoming our rebuilt cities are, with historical references that have often been driven out almost as if they were being exorcised.

identity formation

reconstruction and anniversary culture

As to the connection between the motivation for reconstruction and activation of the Bauhaus, you could perhaps actually say that these are of two sides of the same coin. There is a search for renewal by looking to the past and projecting this into the future.

Andrea Bärnreuther

[A] I understood from your lecture that you would like, albeit not unreservedly but to some degree, to associate the «social attitude» that is often applied as a generalizing label to the Bauhaus in the anniversary context with Hannes Meyer's admittedly brief and unsuccessful impact at the Bauhaus, his struggle against the

bauhaus as a social attitude

- [M] What are the criteria for being included in history or excluded from it, and for historical relevance? What kinds of stand do they reveal, and which blind spots and cognitive shortcomings do they generate?

bauhaus historiography

processes of oblivion
and repression

bauhaus centenary

interpretative power of
the bauhaus' founder

Bauhaus style and efforts to promote the social relevance of design and teaching. Approximately thirty years before Hannes Meyer's rediscovery in the Bauhaus anniversary context, you have drawn attention to this «repressed chapter of architectural history» under the title «Anstößiges Rot. Hannes Meyer und der linke Baufunktionalismus». ¹⁰

Would you have wished the Bauhaus centenary to challenge Gropius' interpretative power more vigorously than it did and to shed new light on this chapter, ensuring it has a broader impact? Considering an object that has become a screen for projections to the degree that the Bauhaus has, with such a complex entangled history, is it at all possible to question, supplement or even replace a relatively entrenched dominant image in the context of an anniversary which, although the initial conceptual focuses were sparked by the Bauhaus institutions that hold collections, is actually configured in a participatory vein? And if you think it would be possible to do so, how should we imagine this?

Winfried Nerdinger

I would have hoped that in the course of the anniversary, in other words, a hundred years after the Bauhaus was founded and eighty-six years after it was closed down, it would have been possible to gain a more acute grasp of the Bauhaus' contradictory phases and to weigh these up against each other, in order to arrive at a fitting historical appraisal of the significance of this multifaceted construct, the «Bauhaus». Johannes Itten has long been over-emphasized and the colourful, esoterically overstated Itten Bauhaus received a great deal of attention—far too much, as a matter of fact, because it was only a preparation phase of fermentation; practically nothing remained of Itten after 1922.

heterogeneity of
the bauhaus

different bauhaus versions

- [M] Too little attention is still being paid to the socially committed Bauhaus under Hannes Meyer, although we could learn the most from it today. I have repeatedly emphasized the repressed «left-wing architectural Functionalism» of Karel Teige, Jiří Kroha, Hannes Meyer and others and explored this in greater depth again in the exhibition *L'architecture engagée*. ¹¹ There was an incomparable combination here of social, political and architectural commitment, but these ideas and concepts were not taken any further. For the first time, Meyer developed an architecture and design training grounded in social relevance. From the first semester on, students were trained to work cooperatively, to develop objects cost-effectively and to design for the masses. Under Meyer,

social and political
commitment

left-wing architectural
functionalism

architecture engagée

social relevance of design
and teaching

co-op design

interpretative power of
the bauhaus' founder

a completely different Bauhaus would have emerged, with a social approach that could still be a source of inspiration today—perhaps especially in training architects, who are still largely educated today as pragmatic proxies of the market. Instead of emphasizing the significance of Meyer's Bauhaus, however, the interpretation given by Gropius held sway for long periods. As was already the case back in 1968 at the anniversary exhibition in Stuttgart, the founding father continues to dominate and directs the gaze to «his» Bauhaus.

Andrea Bärnreuther

self-image of the historian
and researcher

What is your attitude or your understanding of yourself, the world, and history as an architectural historian and art historian, and what has shaped this? As the long-standing director of the Architekturmuseum der TU München,¹² as well as initiator and founding director of the NS-Dokumentationszentrum München [Munich Documentation Centre for the History of National Socialism], you have made an outstanding contribution to raising public awareness of the importance of architecture and to a critical historical consciousness. Do you see yourself as a historian who wants to initiate processes of change in the present?

Winfried Nerdinger

I don't see the historian's role as involving a desire to change social conditions, but rather as providing fact-based information on both historical and current issues, taking a stand against dogmas and entrenched opinions, and in the process having the courage to articulate and represent truths publicly, including uncomfortable truths. In my lectures, publications and exhibitions, I have always been concerned with providing architects and the general public alike with food for thought through facts, in order to initiate a critical historical awareness not only about architecture but also about its connection with society. This also includes the recognition that our concepts and judgments have taken shape over time.

value judgments

Johann Gustav Droysen already offered this fundamental insight to historians and it also encompasses a central aspect of the architectural historian's role, as architects usually do not reflect on their value judgments as having been shaped by history and determined by the particular era in question. Rigid dogmatic standpoints and conceptually deadlocked discussions about reconstruction provide a striking example of this. I presented comprehensive historical information on this topic in an exhibition¹³ and

history as perpetual reshaping
contemporaneity of history

- [L] How did widespread ideas about the Bauhaus evolve? How do they relate to historical facts and which stances, interests and mechanisms do they reveal?
- [N] How do our own cultural, social, and political beliefs and stances affect our understanding of the Bauhaus, Modernism, and modernity?

questioning entrenched
value judgments

have received broad public support. For architects, however, being nudged towards development of critical awareness often merely triggered polemical debates. Questioning entrenched value judgments, especially when these are paired with economic interests, is a lengthy process.

history as perpetual reshaping

contemporaneity of history

- [L] I have always attempted to grasp problems and themes in a way that moves beyond simply addressing their historical genesis, so that gradually emerging interpretations and conceptual formations, which in turn are guided by interests and patterns of interpretation, become comprehensible in a kind of double reflection. Max Weber described this entanglement as a process of reshaping—by means of the terms and interpretations we use, history is continuously «reshaped» or constructed. Architectural history is also a constant process of reshaping; the point is to call into question the emergence of interpretations, terms, and values, to go against the grain in interpreting history. Over the years, I have repeatedly opposed pre-determined patterns of thought, constructed hate figures and the ways in which history is repressed. Taking that approach entails being at odds with entrenched views and ways of thinking, or rather ideologies, and means you make enemies or are treated as an adversary.

questioning modern design's
power of resistance

self-image of the historian
and researcher

- For example, presenting the activities of former Bauhaus teachers and students in the National Socialist era in the context of a symposium at the Bauhaus-Archiv / Museum für Gestaltung led to a legal controversy and to fierce attacks directed at the organisers, because legends about the Bauhaus were thus called into question. Similar phenomena can be seen not only in the context of references to the National Socialist era, but also when historical myths, such as the alleged patronage of Ludwig I., were queried in an exhibition. The role of the historian is not to seek to change anything but instead to analyse historical and current contexts and concepts, as well as insisting, even in the face of entrenched dogmas, that concepts and judgments are historically determined constructions. Seeing oneself, with one's own judgments and evaluations, as part of a historical process: that kind of historical consciousness ought to help against dogmatism and tenets of faith—and I view conveying this insight as one of the historian's central roles.
- [N]

Notes

- 1 See Standpunkt/Opinion: Dietrich Erben, «Haltung»—zu Karriere und Kritik eines Begriffs in der Architektursprache. «Haltung»—a critical analysis of the career of a term and its use in architectural language», in: *Jahrbuch 2014. Fakultät für Architektur Technische Universität München*, Munich, <https://www.ar.tum.de/ltg/mitarbeiter/prof-dr-phil-habil-dietrich-erben/schriften/> (Consulted March 12, 2019).
- 2 See also: «Rechte Räume. Bericht einer Europareise», in: *ARCH+*, Vol. 52, May 2019.
- 3 Hans-Jochen Vogel, *Mehr Gerechtigkeit! Wir brauchen eine neue Bodenordnung—nur dann wird auch Wohnen wieder bezahlbar*, Freiburg i. Br. 2019.
- 4 The appointment caused a great deal of controversy, which led to legal actions against the procedure, and, in the end, to Florian Pronold's decision in March 2020 that he would not take up the post.
- 5 Winfried Nerdinger (ed.), *Der Architekt. Geschichte und Gegenwart eines Berufsstandes*, 2 vol., Munich 2012; Winfried Nerdinger (ed.), *L'architecture engagée—Manifeste zur Veränderung der Gesellschaft*, Munich 2012.
- 6 See his contribution «Bauhaus-Méditerranée. The Art of Dwelling Differently in the World» in this publication.
- 7 Frei Otto, «Chancen (1980). Festrede zur Eröffnung des Bauhaus-Archivs Berlin», in: *Frei Otto. Schriften und Reden 1951–1983*, (ed.) Berthold Burkhardt, Braunschweig/Wiesbaden 1984, pp. 188–195.
- 8 Op. cit., pp. 140–149.
- 9 Cf. Winfried Nerdinger, *Walter Gropius. Architekt der Moderne 1883–1969*, München: C.H. Beck 2019, p. 296.
- 10 Winfried Nerdinger, «Anstößiges Rot»: Hannes Meyer und der linke Baufunktionalismus. Ein verdrängtes Kapitel Architekturgeschichte, in: *Hannes Meyer 1889–1954: Architekt, Urbanist, Lehrer*, (ed.) Bauhaus-Archiv and Deutsches Architekturmuseum in conjunction with Institut für Geschichte und Theorie d. Architektur an der ETH Zürich, Berlin 1989, pp. 12–29; in: id., *Geschichte, Macht, Architektur*, Munich 2012, pp. 129–148.
- 11 Nerdinger 2012, *L'architecture engagée* (as Note 5).
- 12 See Winfried Nerdinger, *Architektur ausstellen 1977–2012*, Vol. I–III, München: Architekturmuseum der TU München 2011.
- 13 Winfried Nerdinger, Markus Eisen, Hilde Strobl (ed.), *Geschichte der Rekonstruktion—Konstruktion der Geschichte*, Munich: Prestel 2010.

Taking a Stand.

A Film Project of the Nelson Mandela School,
Berlin, and the Paula Fürst School, Berlin

The videos are made available on the YouTube channel of the Bauhaus-Archiv / Museum für Gestaltung, <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL0dx1-02TAZVKnqyoFqMWTr3yQEzldN-2>

Introduction into the Film Project of the
Nelson Mandela School, Berlin

Florentine Baumann

How do we want to live in future?

That is the question that we addressed in our advanced art course at the Nelson Mandela School, drawing on Thomas Elsaesser's documentary film *Die Sonneninsel* [*The Sun Island*]. Engaging with Bauhaus photography awakened our interest in the Bauhaus and the fascinating 1920s and 1930s. The film *Die Sonneninsel* was not only well-suited to our interest in focusing intensively on events during that period and gaining a particularly creative and sensitive impression of life at that time, but in addition also depicted various possible options for engaging with visions of life in our world. We decided to answer the question of our ideas about life in the future in our own short films—and in the process to examine our current lifestyles with a critical eye too.

Working in groups of three, we created three roughly five-minute films, which we conceived, shot and edited independently, mostly in our free time. During this process, we were guided by specific jointly defined criteria that formed the basic framework:

- × Thematization of a complex of issues from *Die Sonneninsel*
- × Clear engagement with the question raised
- × Integration of a film sequence from the original film
- × Uniform film length
- × English subtitles

The link to the documentary film was particularly important to us, because we found the Sun Island's founders—Leberecht Migge, who wanted to experiment with a self-sufficient circular economy on the island, and Lieselotte Elsaesser, the wife of architect Martin Elsaesser, who supported him in this endeavour—admirable for

their courage in constructing an alternative and autarchic life for themselves in such difficult times, far from the city. The original footage compiled in the documentary film conveyed a sense of everyday life on the island, along with the very particular approach to life pursued there. In our films we would like to present our ideas, opportunities, but also fears about life in the future. To that end, we shot scenes that deal with our everyday life and combined these with statements that describe our ideas.

Our films formed the prelude to the «Taking a Stand?» symposium. Scholars from all over the world entered into discussions with us about our ideas about life and housing today and in the future and, against this backdrop, considered the past and present significance of the Bauhaus and *Neues Bauen* for housing design and thus for how we live. We believe that housing initiatives from the 1920s and 1930s have an enormous influence on our lives today and also on our ideas about functional, economic and indeed environmentally friendly ways of living.



Sive Chambers, Maya Dejean,
Julius Führ, Finn Killing,
Victoria Kruse, Maya Levine,
Mina-Giselle Rüffer, Luisa Shahin



Visions For The Future

A fairytale castle forms the point of departure for considering future prospects for living independently in Berlin. On the cusp of adult life, confronted with reality, the future is envisaged primarily *ex negativo*, as a rejection of what is clearly not desirable.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o5rZ37q1bFI&list=PL0dx1-02TAZVKngyoFqMWTr3yQEzldN2&index=3>



Utopia

Having fun, enjoying yourself and wanting to live sustainably. Living in a small space in harmony with nature is the answer for a generation that has grown up surrounded by excess. The motto: cause as little harm as possible. For having too much does not make anyone happy and destroys the planet.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v8WOOLNuEPg&list=PL0dx1-02TAZVKnqyoFqMWTr3yQEzIdN-2&index=3>



Urban Jungle

The film depicts the urban jungle of Berlin, turning the spotlight on attractive lifestyle options that the big city offers. Particularly in the light of rising rents, the film's proposition that we understand and discover the city of Berlin as an extension of our own homes inspires viewers to reconsider the need for individual and shared living space.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bR_-xq3gq30&list=PL0dx1-02TAZVKnqyoFqMWTr3yQEzldN-2&index=8

Introduction into the Film Project of the
Paula FÜRST School, Berlin

Kirsten Zenns

How do we want to live in future?

The topic «Utopia and Attitude», viewed in relation to the question: «How do we want to live?», proved very challenging for us as participants in the first semester of an advanced art course, at a time when Fridays for Future and #me too are triggering a mood of change and new beginnings. We began to address the following questions:

- × What role does Berlin's architecture play in our lives? What stories does it tell and how does it affect us in everyday life?
- × What role has Modernism played in Berlin's urban development?
- × Would we prefer to live in an old or new building?
- × Do we have prejudices against life in anonymous-looking housing estates?
- × Why were new buildings and housing estates built?
- × What alternatives exist and which changes could be made?
- × Finally: How do our utopias look and what attitude do we need to put them into practice?

A number of groups emerged, each dealing with a different issue. The assignment was to make a short film for the symposium that would visualize the focus of interest in each case and put it up for discussion.

We worked out and developed the ideas for the films and the storyboards in portfolios, in which we also documented our research on contemporary approaches such as Tiny Houses, urban gardening etc.

Before we started filming, we needed to acquire an understanding of film, finding out more about cinematic means, cinematography,

editing, dramaturgy etc. Drawing on an analysis of the opening sequence of Wolfgang Staudte's 1945 film *Die Mörder sind unter uns* (*The Murderers are Among Us*), we built on our existing knowledge of film and dramaturgy, while also developing a clear awareness of the post-war situation in Berlin, which had such a strong influence on urban development.

Our assignment also involved integrating a quote from this film—and we all found the famous shot of the two protagonists looking out of the window at Berlin's cityscape the most striking scene. That is why a window motif now plays an important, knowledge-oriented role in each of our films.

A total of seven different project ideas were developed and we decided that we would work together in groups on three project days to shoot and edit four of these ideas for the symposium, as well as setting the films to music:

Schöne Neue Welt [Brave New World]

This film begins by depicting a dystopian Berlin: People live in estates devoid of all individuality, nature has vanished, and the air is so polluted that everyone needs to wear respiratory masks (September 2019!) A young man decides to take action and starts planting flowers. This triggers a miracle in the metropolis, as the once so dystopian-looking city starts to change as if by magic ...

Small Changes Are Bigger Than You Think

This film was made by school students who live at Jakob-Kaiser-Platz and have often lost their way there because all the houses look so similar. Once again, young people take the initiative and start to bring about changes ...

Less Is More

In this film, prejudices against life in modern housing estates, such as Gropiusstadt, Siemensstadt or Märkisches Viertel, are called into question. Along with her parents, who hardly have any time in their usual daily routines, a girl who lives in a detached house visits a friend and her family in Siemensstadt, where things are much more fun and with a much stronger sense of community. There's a particular twist here: the family members in both families are played by the same actors/ school students, which can also lead to confusion at first glance.

Time For Change

The pupils who made this film find Berlin's architecture monotonous and boring. They would like to see even more modern, future-oriented and striking architecture for Berlin, inspired, for example, by Dubai. They take to the streets and demonstrate to try to achieve that.

Our wish for a world of creativity and imagination and our awareness that we must do something ourselves to achieve that are common strands shared by all our ideas. And we very much hope that we can also continue to develop this attitude in this COVID-19 era.



Mohamad Abed, Nergis Al-Ali, Sara Bolghak,
 Maryam Chehade, Arzu Demirtas,
 Leticia-Lucia Dudzik, Amani El-Batraoui,
 Oskar Eumann, Jakob Isermann,
 Celine Kouchmeshki, Sibel Latifova,
 Nina Anna Nadziak, Melody Prinz,
 Saskia Schäfer, Marie Elisabeth Siganur,
 Jale Töremis, Lara-Joanne Wurzbacher



Schöne Neue Welt [Brave New World]

Change requires an initiator, a beginning, because even a <miracle> needs someone to make it happen. The film depicts a miracle in a grey frustrating world and how a small effort can turn into something larger.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qRR8NNI7HIU&list=PL0dx1-02TAZVKnqyoFqMWTr3yQEzIdN-2&index=5>



Small Changes Are Bigger Than You Think

The film portrays a sense of disorientation and loneliness triggered by modern housing, which is perceived as monotonous. This isolation is so pronounced that even the wish for change, nourished by dreams of a more colourful world, gives rise to action that is taken alone.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kh1i-47YfDI&list=PL0dx1-02TAZVKnqyoFqMWTr3yQEzldN-2&index=2&t=11s>



Less Is More

The film brings two contrasting forms of living face to face, along with the mindsets associated with them. It comes to a realization that prosperity does not bring happiness, which can instead be sparked anywhere by human interactions.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JMso487eCo0&list=PL0dx1-02TAZVKnqyoFqMWTr3yQEzldN-2&index=7>



Time For Change

«Something's got to change right now» calls for a future that is completely different and draws on the image of Dubai. But what do we actually lack and what do we project into the image of technologized luxury?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-O1Bu4Eos-s&list=PL0dx1-02TAZVKnqyoFqMWTr3yQEzldN-2&index=6>

Exercises in Holding a Stance with School Students and Researchers. A Call for Cross-Generational Dialogue

Carina Kitzenmaier

Taking a stand? The German word «*Haltung*» [attitude/stance/posture] contains the terms «*Halt*» and «*Halten*» [hold/holding]; we hold something and it holds us. One important point is that we can let go of what we hold at any time. Metaphorically speaking, holding an attitude or a stance signifies assuming a position, an expressive moment, from which we pass on to a new movement and arrive at a new position. In our exercises on holding a stance, we have understood this stance or posture as a communicative process and by no means as a manifestation of a universally valid concept.

Two advanced art classes at the Nelson Mandela School and Paula Fürst School have made short films about living in Berlin. Thomas Elsaesser's film *Die Sonneninsel* [*The Sun Island*] (2017) formed the reference point for the Nelson Mandela School, which drew on the example of an alternative way of life in the 1920s to develop its own visions. Similarly, school students at the Paula Fürst School took as their source of inspiration the opening sequence of Wolfgang Staudte's 1945 film *Die Mörder sind unter uns* [*The Murderers are Among Us*], especially the view through the window of Berlin in ruins. The seven films offer glimpses of the settings where the pupils live, from the vantage point of their personal perceptions—with points of criticism, concerns, wishes and potential solutions. These formed the point of departure for a discussion with researchers, the other, teachers and Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin staff.

We view the films as being akin to a ball that is bounced back and forth, with the emphasis not on imparting knowledge, but rather on offering a way of looking at the world and one's own situation. The Fridays for Future movement demonstrates that young people, who make up a large swathe of our society, want to be actively involved in politics. There is a growing demand for participation, especially when it comes to shaping our built environment. After all, how can we deal with architecture and the life-worlds within it if we do not subject our findings to constant scrutiny, by comparing them with other social groups' perceptions?

Life experience is not a continuous process that can be understood in intersubjective terms but is instead a personal framework of experience; to attain a more nuanced view of the world, we must enter into contact with one another and with people beyond our immediate reference group, our circle of relatives, professional group and generation. As we can never know the full extent of all life-worlds, we cannot claim to find a universally

valid solution to questions about housing, lifestyles, and building. Constant change always requires new visions from different perspectives.

The films made at the Nelson Mandela School share a reflective attitude towards questions about life and housing that envisages new ways of dealing with one's existing environment or everyday surroundings, rather than dreaming up wishful utopian visions. In this respect, the films from the Nelson Mandela School seek to conserve; the camera is used to search for something that keeps us well-grounded and merits protection. *Visions for the future*, *Utopia* and *Urban jungle* use documentary means to show spaces through which the school students move, the problems they deal with and what fascinates them. The films made at the Paula Fürst School, on the other hand, express a resolute desire for change, highlighting shortcomings and presenting potential solutions. *Schöne neue Welt [Brave New World]*, *Time for changes*, *Less is more* and *Small changes are bigger than you think* are fictional narratives that render dreams of change tangible on various levels—in the built environment as well as in one's own behaviour.

Modernist architecture often has a problem in terms of reception and is perceived by many as too monotonous. This point of view is reflected in particular in the films *Time for changes* and *Small changes are bigger than you think*. In order to be in the right spot to catch the ball of the film as it bounces towards them, the viewer should always ask questions. Where is the interaction between life and architecture and to what extent is our built environment a symbol and a screen for projections for the life contained within it? Is it that symbolic image that needs to be altered or human interactions or both? How can we avoid isolation and bolster a sense of self-efficacy and community? What needs should architecture fulfil?

It proved interesting in the discussion to consider the occasionally contradictory statements made by the individual films. Particularly when it comes to housing and living environments, different needs are expressed depending on how we grew up, what we miss or what we want to free ourselves from. Something that is completely different is used as a screen for projections, without a reality check. In *Visions for the future*, for example, a toy castle serves as a metaphor for a carefree, happy future, i.e. exactly what the protagonists lost when they left childhood behind. *Time for changes* also calls for high-tech architecture, and something large-scale and ambitious is also emblematic here of the objectives

of change. It reveals that we need an interesting image that makes us dream, taking us far from our own reality.

But how do we deal with these visions? Often, we carry with us throughout our lives images that we find full of kitsch as some kind of dream vision, even though we have long abandoned them intellectually. There is a desire for luxury, even if it is the luxury of being a drop-out, abandoning affluence or having the option of doing so, the desire for a radiant life that promises light-heartedness and joy. The film *Utopia* offers a very direct depiction of this desideratum: It celebrates self-indulgence, with life in the world of nature, which in this context appears almost exotic, serving as the screen for projections, along with attempts to find pleasure and moral strength by concentrating on basic needs and renouncing excess. Change means life and wishes arise from the situation. When we feel bored or empty, we hope for rapid «redemption» in another lifestyle. «The grass is always greener on the other side», as the saying goes and the resplendent unknown almost always exudes fascination.

Architecture, however, does not give us the gift of happiness; it is simply a proposition. Human interaction and deeds lead to changes in the image and thus also influence our perception of architecture. The film *Less is more* considers how helpful it can be to explore other ways of living and to reconsider our prejudices. But how and where do we actually move beyond our own frame of reference? Ultimately, only other people can motivate us to move out of our comfort zone. Perhaps it is not increasingly scarce private space that determines our quality of life; what if we were to appropriate urban space as shared space and a never-ending source of discoveries, in the process satisfying our need for community, as the film *Urban jungle* suggests? Where can one glean new experiences as a young person? What does it mean to own space, use it privately or share it? Isn't having access to public space at all and feeling safe and valid within it already a privilege?

Change always requires a driving force—even if nothing but a miracle can save us, that miracle also needs an initiator or, as in the film *Schöne neue Welt*, someone who switches to the role of caring. Even the respiratory masks—the film was shot in September 2019—remind us of the COVID-19 era. «Take care!».

Section I

Planning and Building for a «New World»?
Conflict Situations, Areas of Tension,
and Learning Processes

Reflections on Hannes Meyer's trajectory of displacement and the idea and potential of a «marginal counter-history»

Ryan Fred Long

It is hard to say where Hannes Meyer's home was. He was born in 1889 in Basel, Switzerland, into a family whose association with architecture extended two centuries into the past; and his own schooling as a builder began when he was about sixteen years old.¹ Meyer moved away from and returned to Switzerland on a number of occasions throughout his life, often spending years studying and working in foreign nations. Perhaps most famously, he worked at the Bauhaus Dessau for more than three years, first as a teacher of architecture then as director.² After his dismissal from the position of Bauhaus director Meyer spent several years in the Soviet Union, during which time he also traveled to many Western European countries delivering lectures.³ Aside from his childhood and adolescence in Basel, Meyer spent no lengthier continuous period of time anywhere else than in Mexico, where he lived until five years before his death in Switzerland in 1954. Though Meyer frequently found himself separated from the places he might have called home the path traced and forged by his lifelong trajectory suggests a comprehension of both home and homelessness that is critical of the borders and walls that too often define home, especially as an idealized destination.

homelessness as a concept

Was Mexico at home with itself when Meyer lived there? Two mid-century philosophers help us understand the postcolonial dilemma of the desire to build a national home, Octavio Paz (1914–1998) and Leopoldo Zea (1912–2004). One year after Meyer left Mexico Paz published *The Labyrinth of Solitude* (1950), much of which the Mexican poet planned and wrote in Paris, where he moved in November 1945. For Paz, distance is essential to comprehension; but that comprehension becomes then distanced from its apparent subject: «Distance helped me: I lived in a world far from Mexico, immune to its ghosts. [...] Upon writing I took revenge on Mexico; an instant later my writing turned against me, and Mexico took its revenge.»⁴ The tensions among subjectivity, comprehension, distance, and proximity that Paz considers in relation to living in Paris reach, at the conclusion of *Labyrinth*, a still-relevant meditation on post-coloniality. In Paris, Paz witnessed first-hand the destruction of Europe, which may have influenced his observation that Mexicans «have exhausted the historical forms Europe possessed».⁵ At the end of his essay, this exhaustion is clearly part of a narrative of postcolonial homelessness: «All that remains for us is either nakedness or falsehood. After this general defeat of Reason and Faith [...] there remain no new or even old intellectual systems. [...] Nakedness and abandonment await us. There, in

open solitude, transcendence also awaits us: the hands of other solitary beings. We are, for the first time in our history, contemporary to all of humanity».⁶

being contemporary with the world vs.
european ideologies of progress

Being contemporary with the world coincides with the bankruptcy of teleology as understood in European Enlightenment ideologies of progress; thereby calling into question what contemporary might even mean. Paz's response is akin to saying: «I'm not sure, but it's open and exposed and lonely». Solitude for Paz is comparable with the accident for Zea, who, in *La esencia de lo americano* (The Essence of the American) (1971), juxtaposes universality with something difficult to define and that exposes the limits of teleological reason. Referring to the Conquest, Zea writes: «The question of the peculiarity of culture and humanity in America takes as its point of departure a consciousness of the accidental. And, precisely that which emerges as peculiar to one and the other is that selfsame accidentality. The American, unlike the European, has never felt universal. His concern has been, precisely, a concern for incorporating himself into the universal, to insert himself in it».⁷

accidentality vs. universality

Solitude, abandonment, exposure, and accidentality are key terms from these two thinkers of Mexican and Latin American identity, thinkers for whom identity is certainly not a simple question of origins and definitions but instead a dialogic concept whose development and potential, or impossible realization functions always in terms of irresolvable tensions between such poles as solitude and communion, distance and proximity, exposure and shelter, local and universal, and accidental and teleological.

identity as a dialogic concept

Transnationalism, as a scholarly approach, provides a way of contextualizing the postcolonial dilemmas that Paz, Zea and so many others have wrestled with. As the term suggests, transnational describes a dynamic process of intermingled and overlaid moments and places, in contrast to, say, the negotiations among discrete entities suggested by the term international. Unlike the word global, transnational avoids easy association with universal and dominant. Also clear in its contrast to global, transnational elucidates more the particular than the general. Its attention to processes that cross borders in unequal ways, to my mind, gives transnational more of a critical edge than cosmopolitan tends to imply. To remain critical, transnationalism should be a scholarly approach that resists the exchange-driven annulment of difference inherent to the global capital flows idealized by transnational business. On the other hand, transnationalism should avoid

transnationalism as a method



Fig. 1-3
Siedlung Freidorf, Photographs:
Ryan Fred Long, 2012

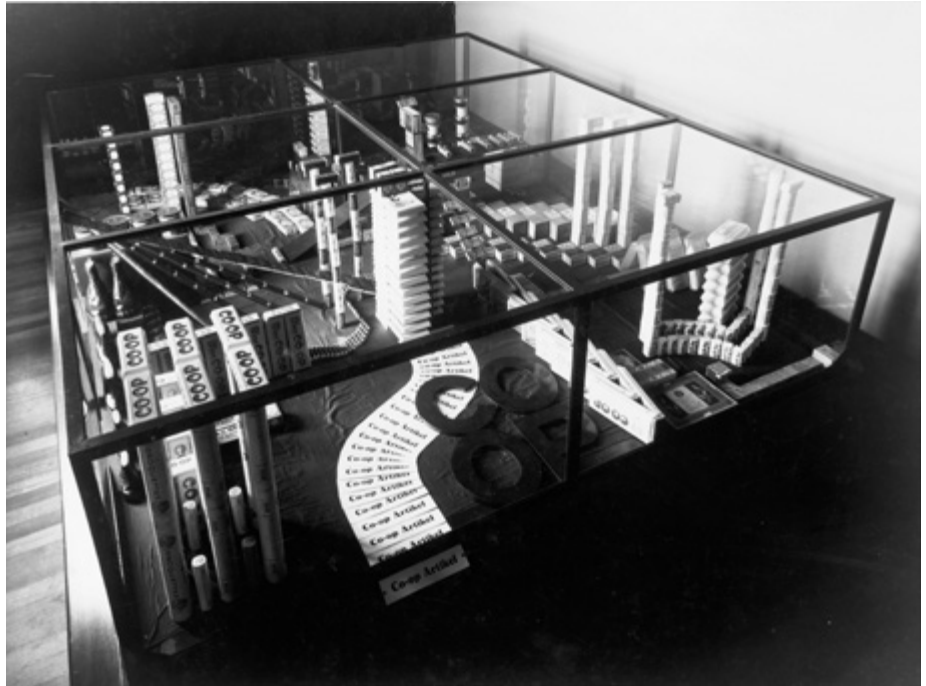


Fig. 4
Co-op Vitrine by Hannes Meyer,
Photograph: Theodor Hoffmann, 1924

Figs. 5, 6
ADGB Trade Union School, Photographs:
Andrea Bärnreuther, 2019



reifying difference in the form of poorly considered or defined national-cultural specificity.

transnationalism as a method

Regarding the Bauhaus, Meyer is certainly a case in point for the phenomenon and, I argue, scholarly importance of transnationalism as a method. His first major architectural accomplishment was the community housing development in MuttENZ, Switzerland, which, in 1919, was «commissioned by the Swiss Co-operative Union» and fully completed in 1924 ^{Figs. 1-3}.⁸ Meyer lived in the Siedlung Freidorf, as it is known, from 1921 to 1926, was a member of its housing co-operative, and the «head of its building commission».⁹ In the Swiss pavilion for the International Exhibition of Co-operatives in Ghent, Belgium, in 1924 Meyer spread the message of the Co-op in the form of theatrical productions and sculptures. His Co-op vitrine ^{Fig. 4} makes a city and an assembly line out of Swiss Co-op goods in order to promote collective production and socialization.¹⁰ The vitrine is also a visual allegory of transnationalism, with its multiple layers, implied dynamism, and entrances or exits that appear to move through its glass borders.

cooperative housing

co-op design

During his time as Bauhaus director in Dessau, Meyer completed together with Hans Wittwer the Trade Union School in Bernau, not far from Berlin, in Brandenburg ^{Figs. 5, 6}. This place, meant to educate workers and promote trade unionism, was in a sense made homeless without going anywhere when, under the Nazi regime, it became a training facility for the SS and the Gestapo. Between 1939 and 1949 Meyer lived and worked in Mexico City, where he continued his dedication to collectivism and the promotion of laborers, perhaps most significantly through his work with the socially critical printmaking collective known as the Taller de Gráfica Popular, or People's Graphic Workshop, best known by the acronym TGP. Its arguably most prominent figure was printmaker Leopoldo Méndez, whose 1945 print *What May Come* ^{Fig. 7} is another representation of a dynamic crossroad, this time with the artist still working on its necessarily unfinished image. *What May Come* is one of Méndez's best-known prints. It places its artist on the near side of the border between life and death, looking to an unknowable place with his back to different incarnations of repressions and state terror. It is an image of the artist at a revolutionary, postcolonial, and transnational intersection.

collectivist ethos

Meyer's time in Mexico includes an exhibition project about school construction. Referring to this work for a federal government school-construction committee in Mexico, Meyer

place-based approach
integrating buildings into their
respective regions

critical regionalism as a concept

emphasized the importance of integrating buildings into their respective regions, a process for which windows and light were often of primary concern: «[...] in terms of construction in Mexico there is a great deal of freedom in relation to the development of regional culture, which reflects the wealth of forms and construction structures in accord with the economic and social situations of each region [...]. In the [...] tropical zone glass windows are to be avoided and the strong solar light must be shielded [...]. In the highland zone classrooms are almost always oriented toward the south».¹¹ Here the intersection of building and light is the window, which Kenneth Frampton also emphasizes, specifically in his discussion of how architecture negotiates place. In «Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance» Frampton writes, «The generic window is obviously the most delicate point at which these two natural forces [light and climate control] impinge upon the outer membrane of the building, fenestration having an innate capacity to inscribe architecture with the character of a region and hence to express the place in which the work is situated».¹²

Through his development of the concept of «Critical Regionalism» Frampton has delineated a theory of an «architecture of resistance» in a «more directly dialectical relation with nature» based on «topography, context, climate, light and tectonic form».¹³ This theory is in opposition to a conception of «modern building [that] is now so universally conditioned by optimized technology», and to a praxis of architecture that «seems to be increasingly polarized between, on the one hand, a so-called «high-tech» approach predicated exclusively upon production and, on the other, the provision of a «compensatory façade» to cover up the harsh realities of this universal system».¹⁴ Returning to the importance of the window, Frampton has emphasized the need to consider a «principle that applies to all fenestration», namely «the appearance of a place-conscious poetic—a form of filtration compounded out of an interaction between culture and nature, between art and light».¹⁵ I suggest that «fenestration» here is similar to transnationalism as a scholarly method, in a critical vein, one that foregrounds both connection and disconnection, or in Frampton's terms the joint and the dis-joint.

transnationalism as a method

place-based approach
critical regionalism as a concept

In a later publication, «Rappel à l'ordre, the Case for the Tectonic», Frampton complements the place-based architectural theory he developed in «Towards a Critical Regionalism» by formulating a way of avoiding what he calls, «the current tendency to

architecture as a mass medium

homelessness as a concept
accidentality vs. universality

reduce architecture to scenography»,¹⁶ in short, to risk alienating a structure's relationship to place through extreme commodification. I propose that Frampton's emphasis on the need to see «built form [as] a presence rather than something standing in for an absence»¹⁷ can be read not only as an insistence upon the importance of construction against postmodern architecture's tendency to provide interesting façades but also as a response to something akin to the homelessness and accidentality Paz and Zea negotiate. Emphasizing presence highlights the relationship between a building and its site, a relationship characterized by continuity and interruption, a «constructional articulation». ¹⁸ Frampton's method is worth noting, especially his use of etymology. He remarked that in Sappho, «the *tekton*, the carpenter, assumes the role of the poet»,¹⁹ or, citing Marco Frascari, that the word «joint» shares a history with the word «art». ²⁰ Frampton concludes by observing that, «the poetics of construction arise, in part, out of the inflection and positioning of the tectonic object». ²¹ The relationship between the tectonic object and its site, however, is not just one of joining. As Frampton writes, «something has to be said about the signification of the <break> or the <dis-joint> as opposed to the signification of the joint. I am alluding to that point at which things break against each other rather than connect; that significant fulcrum at which one system, surface or material abruptly ends to give way to another. Meaning may be thus encoded through the interplay between <joint> and <break> and in this regard rupture may have just as much meaning as connection.» ²²

third space between center and periphery

In his discussion of Latin America's relation to purported universality (for example in a discourse of modernity), a discussion influenced by Frampton, Alberto Moreiras calls for the consideration of a third space, which emerges from the contact of center and periphery: «the space of intermediate localizations [...] locales of the zone of contact». ²³ For Moreiras the <joint> offers a promise, and the <disjoint> reveals the remains of failed connections, a failure, however, that may lead to a different possibility, one that acknowledges not just the failure of the disjuncture but also the failure of the promise. The promise's teleology distorts our understanding of history and its remains. Emphasis on the disjuncture and the presence of the tectonic, Frampton suggests, may help us «acquire entry to an anti-processual world wherein the <presencing> of things will once again facilitate the appearance and experience [of humankind]. Beyond the aporias of history and progress and outside the reactionary closures of Historicism and the

- [O] What is the significance and relevance of the Bauhaus and Modernism today—a historical phenomenon or a resource for the present? And what, if anything, constitutes their current relevance?

marginal counter-history

Neo-Avant-Gardes, lies the potential for a *marginal* counter-history». ²⁴ Marginal here connotes at least two things: the articulation, the connection, the joint and the dis-joint; and the non-centric (if not eccentric), or perhaps the minor; both of which relate to Hannes Meyer's trajectory of displacement.

displacement as a concept
homelessness as a concept

- [O] Leading to my conclusion, I turn now to Meyer's correspondence with Méndez and the theoretical value of distance, displacement, dis-jointedness, or homelessness suggested therein. In the summer and fall of 1948 Méndez toured Europe, including trips to Portugal, Poland, Czechoslovakia, France, and Italy. Writing to Meyer from the World Congress of Intellectuals in Defense of Peace in Wrocław on August 28, 1948 ^{Fig. 8}, Méndez described the Hala Ludowa, or People's Hall, as «where earlier, as you know, Hitler held his meetings». Méndez continued: «The hall was truly impressive, with a real *pueblo*, 20,000 people, who before arrived walking from all corners with their banners both red and white, and this isn't a figure of speech, but they gave me the impression, seeing them along the destroyed streets, that they emerged from the very ruins of a silent protest».

Much of the letters Meyer and Méndez exchange while the latter is in Europe detail problems regarding the politics and leadership of the TGP. At one moment in a December 14, 1948 letter ^{Fig. 9} from Venice that reveals a particular aspect of Méndez's concerns, he writes, underlining the words «graphic workshop», that «the Workshop is far from being a graphic workshop. Maybe it's popular. Propaganda can make the popular but that other thing [...]». The ellipsis that follows «that other thing» (lo otro) in Méndez's letter becomes in a way akin to the space signaled in the August letter as the «ruins of a silent protest», and also akin to the unknowable horizon toward which Méndez's self-portrait looks in «What May Come».

Bauhaus as a collective call for action

The collective call to action that the Bauhaus embodied, that Meyer's work consistently promoted, and that Méndez praises in his assessment of the 1948 World Congress for Peace is a call that finds origins in the ruins of projects like the Bauhaus, the Trade Union School, and, more hopefully, in the defeat of Nazism in Méndez's print and in his allusions to the previous speaker in the Hala Ludowa. These are calls from displaced places, poetic, joined and dis-jointed, as in the figure of speech Méndez denies while mobilizing. They are also calls toward places not yet placed, destinations in something much less specific, but for that no less important: «lo otro», silence's ruins, and the artist's and architect's horizons.

Notes

- 1 Claude Schnaidt, *Hannes Meyer: Bauten, Projekte und Schriften. Buildings, Projects, and Writings*, Stuttgart: Hatje, 1965, p. 9.
- 2 *Ibid.*, p. 11.
- 3 *Ibid.*, p. 13.
- 4 Quoted from Enrico Mario Santí, «Introducción», in: Octavio Paz, *El laberinto de la soledad*, ed. Enrico Mario Santí, Madrid 2001, pp. 43–44. English translation: by the author.
- 5 Paz 2001 (as Note 4), p. 34.
- 6 *Ibid.*, p. 340.
- 7 Leopoldo Zea, *La esencia de lo americano*, Buenos Aires 1971, p. 16.
- 8 Robert A. M. Stern, David Fishman, and Jacob Tilove, *Paradise Planned: The Garden Suburb and the Modern City*, New York 2013, p. 572.
- 9 *Ibid.*, p. 572.
- 10 Klaus-Jürgen Winkler, *Der Architekt Hannes Meyer: Anschauungen und Werk*, Berlin: Verl. für Bauwesen, 1989, p. 52.
- 11 Quoted from Patricia Rivadeneyra Barbero, *Hannes Meyer: Vida y obra*, Mexico City 2004, p. 190.
- 12 Kenneth Frampton, «Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance», in: *The Anti-Aesthetic*, (ed.) Hal Foster, Seattle 1983, p. 26.
- 13 *Ibid.*, p. 26.
- 14 *Ibid.*, p. 17.
- 15 *Ibid.*, p. 27.
- 16 Kenneth Frampton, «Rappel à l'ordre, the Case for the Tectonic», in: *Architectural Design* 60 (1990), 3–4, p. 19.
- 17 *Ibid.*, p. 20.
- 18 *Ibid.*, p. 24.
- 19 *Ibid.*, p. 21.
- 20 *Ibid.*, p. 24.
- 21 *Ibid.*, p. 25.
- 22 *Ibid.*, p. 25.
- 23 Alberto Moreiras, *Tercer Espacio: Literatura y duelo en América Latina*, Santiago de Chile 1999, p. 118.
- 24 Frampton 1990 (as Note 16), p. 25.

Planning for «The New World». Hannes Meyer in the Soviet Union and Mexico

Raquel Franklin

- [B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?

Architecture as a «Weapon»—
Convictions of a Marxist Architect

architecture as a weapon
history of architecture as history
of power/capital

capitalist planning and buiding
socialist planning and building

«Architecture is a weapon. A weapon the dominant class used to take advantage, for its very exclusive interests. We have stated that the destiny of architecture is indissolubly linked to the fate of the society of its epoch.»¹ This was Hannes Meyer's opening statement to his lecture «Experiences in Urbanism» held at the Academy of San Carlos in Mexico City in October 1938. In this lecture, he stressed the differences between planning under the capitalist and the Socialist systems as he had experienced them. In the former, though recognizing past contributions of the capitalist city, he saw speculation with the land, in construction, with power sources and real estate as the leading socio-economic force in nineteenth-century imperialism.

- [B] Although he supported garden cities and had studied them first-hand, as well as participating in their design, in his lecture he strongly condemned their development by large enterprises as a means of controlling the working class. In his view, industries that developed garden cities to «mitigate the housing crisis, [had as a second goal] to reinforce the workers' dependency on the patron and, through petit-bourgeois ways of life, take the interest in class struggle away»,² as in the case of the scheme developed by Krupp in Essen, a project on which Meyer had once worked. In contrast, he saw himself in the role of a Marxist architect and pointed out «how different the creative forces of national planning and urbanism act in every single sense in a Socialist society as presented to us today in the Soviet Union [where there is] no private property of the land and subsoil, speculation in energy and productive sources, contradictory interests between the state, the society and the individual, and real-estate rentals, these being determined by the tenant's income, amounting to between 3 and 5% of his salary.»³

Paradoxically, what sounded fantastic in paper was far from ideal in real life. Throughout the almost six years the architect spent in the country between 1930 and 1936, he was unable to get an adequate apartment beyond the 15 m² he shared with his wife Lena in what was known as the Bauhaus commune on Moscow's Arbat Square and was marginalized, with little scope to work on construction and architectural design; those were a couple of the reasons that convinced him to leave the Soviet Union in June 1936.⁴ Nevertheless, he agreed, out of either conviction or

[B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?

necessity, to play an active role in defending and promoting Soviet interests abroad.

housing

This kind of propaganda-like lecture in which he argued in favour of state control was not new for Meyer and neither was his interest in housing, enhanced by the thorough work he had done in that sense while in the USSR. As an outcome of his trip to Western Europe between 1932 and 1933, including Oslo, Stockholm and Copenhagen, he arrived at a primarily economic analysis of housing in the sixteen cities he had visited, highlighting, as in the case of Berlin, how impossible it was for many to afford the rent in new housing estates, thus condemning them to live in slum-like accommodation.⁵ He criticized, for instance, the disappearance of the kitchen, not as the product of collectivization as in Socialist architecture, but as a result of economic shortages.

demand for affordable housing

Between 1934 and 1935, he continued researching and reflecting on such topics, including developing plans for housing quarters that could serve as models, as he was entrusted with heading the housing department at the newly established Academy of Architecture in Moscow. As a Marxist architect, he reiterated his conviction that an architect never works alone, his role being that of an organizer of the scientific processes of construction.⁶ In Socialist practice, the building was never conceived in isolation but as an integral part of the productive or recreational centres of a *sozgorod* or *agropunkt*.⁷ In that sense, the construction systems in the Socialist city, in the housing areas, industrial complexes, information and recreational centres should have been as elastic as possible. The more elastic they were, the more useful they were as the masses progressively adopted a socialized use of space.⁸

collectivist ethos

social, functional, and scientific approach

socialist planning and building

[B]

Meyer recognized the power of architecture as a «weapon» in the defence of culture. He accepted Socialist Realism as a means of «national expression» and even defended it among his European friends, although, he understood that, as a foreigner, he had nothing to contribute in that sense.⁹ One such opportunity to engage with national expression came in 1933, when he was commissioned to develop the regional and urban planning of the Jewish Autonomous Region of Birobidzhan as Chief Architect and Head of the East-Siberian and Far East Section at the GIPROGOR Planning Institute, Moscow.

socialist realism

«socialist in content and national in form»

- [C] How can we explore the kinds of stand taken by Bauhaus and Modernist architects and designers and their consistency?

The Jewish Autonomous Region of Birobidzhan—
Identity Building Rooted in the Dialectics
of Jewish Values and Socialist Consciousness

identity formation

- [C] The idea underpinning the Jewish Autonomous Region (JAR), launched in 1928, was a renewed Stalinist attempt to settle Jews on the land after previous efforts had failed, both during Tsarist Russia and in the early 1920s, for example in Belarus, the Ukraine and Crimea. By allotting Jews a land of their own, a right they had been deprived of for centuries, the authorities believed they would be transformed from *Luftmenschen* with their petit-bourgeois «air professions», mainly retail, handicrafts and services, into productive peasants and would therefore «normalize» their national status, just like any other nationality.

The proposal of a secular, Socialist Jewish nation within the USSR to solve «the Jewish question» relied on the support and control of both Russian and foreign Jewish organizations,¹⁰ and even attracted Jews from countries as far as away as Argentina or the United States. In 1928, an area approximately the size of Belgium and the Netherlands, located between the Trans-Siberian railroad, the Bira and Bidzhan rivers (both subsidiaries of the Amur), and the Sino-Russian border was made available for Jewish colonization. However, it was not until 1934, «in spite of the slow migration of Jews to the area (totaling far less than 20 % of the population) and the disenchantment and desertion of most of the pioneers»,¹¹ that it was officially designated as an Oblast, a Jewish Autonomous Region with its capital, Birobidzhan (formerly the city of Tikhonkaya) in the Khabarovsk District.

Hannes Meyer arrived at Tikhonkaya Station on May 31st, 1933 along with two other comrades, as head of a brigade of specialists from the GIPROGOR Planning Institute. They were commissioned to inspect the site and produce a planning proposal to be presented to the authorities in Moscow in September of that year. What they found on the spot was far from what Meyer had imagined. He expected a «tight settlement and found [instead] a ragged place».¹²

The site, despite all the difficulties arising from a swampy region, had, in Meyer's view, favourable economic geography. Up in the Maly Khinghan mountains, there was a wealth of gold, graphite, and iron. Forests with cedar woods and plenty of agricultural possibilities, a «favourable climate behaviour» and good communications, thanks to the Amur river and the railroad, were

[B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?

among the aspects the architect highlighted in his first appraisal;¹³ nevertheless, in his private correspondence he recognized the hardship of life in the region, the struggle against flooding, the inhospitable conditions in summers with temperatures over 45°C and a meagre diet due to poor harvests and inefficient distribution.¹⁴ The landscape was of overwhelming beauty Figs. 1, 2. He enjoyed the views from the *Sopka*, an extinguished volcano, and bathing in the Bira river. There, he was fine. There, he could let off steam as he had done back in Ziebigk.¹⁵

relationship to the landscape

integration buildings
into their respective regions
place-based approach

identity formation

[B] Hannes Meyer's relationship to the landscape was remarkable. During his childhood, he used to go walking with his father around the outskirts of Basel and developed a passion for hiking. His architecture was, thus, embedded in his understanding of place, not only in the physical sense, but as the cultural construction of identity. For him, «all creative action is determined by the fate of the landscape which is unique and unparalleled for the one settled down, the work being personal and localized. If a moving population lacks this native land, its work easily becomes stereotyped and standardized».¹⁶

collective building

Perhaps that sense of uprooting and transplanting a people alien to the site was the one Meyer perceived when arriving in Birobidzhan: «During our daily wandering through the site of Tikhonkaya, we unsuccessfully looked for an expression of a desire for collective building among its ca. 350 timber or adobe houses and almost 5,000 inhabitants. The preference for individually decorated, detached houses and the petty garden partitions are worthy of a Jewish theatrical piece with petit bourgeois tendencies!—with its colourful catalogue of different types of building methods, the village looks more like a somewhat chaotically erected housing exhibition of the different peoples on earth. The basic national materials for house construction are timber, reed, straw, adobe, sand, gravel, lime and limestone. Yet, during the process of the individual or collective enterprise of self-construction, they are transformed in the hands of the dweller, depending on his origin, into the block-houses of Latvian or White-Russian Jews, the lime-plastered clay buildings of Ukrainian Jews or the two-story adobe structures of German Jews.»¹⁷

national identity construction

How to achieve the «national character» of the Jewish Oblast? What would define it in the light of such diversity, not only among Jews but among the rest of the peoples that inhabited the region? Meyer did not see the answer in an artistic conception of



Fig. 1
Bridge over the Bira River in Birobidzhan

Fig. 2
Landscape in Birobidzhan



Fig. 3
Construction in Birobidzhan

Fig. 4
Urban scene in Birobidzhan

relationship to the landscape

architecture, this being, probably, what he meant as his incapacity to contribute anything «national» to Soviet architecture. Instead, he understood that «national pride» could only find a place by creating ties to the new landscape. In Birobidzhan, it was only after members of the community were taken up to the viewing platform to admire the location of their future city at their feet that they were able to connect it to an idealized expression of Jewish values. The architect's goal was to foster those values as part of the Soviet policy of nationalities within the framework of a Socialist country. He noted that «they all exalted at the beauty of the natural park that covered, up the river, the depression between the «big and the small Sopka» and that formed the natural connecting element between the future city, the Bira river and an island covered with willows. In this scenic park, hardy flowers grew and flourished, so carefully cultivated as seen in English gardens. The comrades had rightly referred to the particular significance of the new city's architecture as an artistic creative expression of the Jewish people. We, constructors, were asked to collaborate with the large masses of Jewish workers in the projecting process that had to conclude with a work that would equally represent the values and cultural peculiarities of Judaism and the capital's role in a Socialist country.»¹⁸

architecture as a collective practice

identity formation

social, function, and scientific approach

socialist planning and building standardization

If the construction of a Jewish identity with local roots dealt with its connection to the landscape, building in a Socialist state had other implications, such as fostering class consciousness Figs. 3, 4. Meyer's conviction that architecture is not an aesthetic product but a scientific one also remained valid in his approach to the Socialist system: «Building is not a matter of feeling but of knowing. Hence building is not an act of composition dictated by feeling. Building is an act of premeditated organization».¹⁹ Standardization and typing were conceived as key elements of Socialist architecture, all under a strict economic plan. Proletarian architecture was not art in itself; its artistic mission was «to produce certain architectural solutions which lend themselves to the most varied manifestations of proletarian art».²⁰ In Socialist construction practice, the building was always conceived as part of a larger plan; it was never alone but «part of a productive or recreational centre in a *sosgorod* or *agrocenter*».²¹ Collective consciousness could consequently be enhanced by making use of the psychological organization of public space, developing, for instance, wide avenues for mass demonstrations, monuments and the like, culminating in the November 7th and May 1st parades, all made with

every possible elasticity, as «[t]he greater the elasticity of such centers of industry, housing, education, and recreation, the greater is the practical effect on the continuous process of socializing the life of the masses».²²

Birobidzhan was conceived in the light of dialectics concerning Jewish character and Socialist consciousness. The old town was connected to the housing areas through a timber bridge and a large avenue led to the administrative, social, and commemorative section of the city at the foot of the large and small *skopki*. The residential section, set on the second terrace on the opposite bank of the Bira, adhered to a grid of mega-blocks with a maximum height of four storeys, in contrast to the old town, where only two storeys were permitted. Even though some of the kolhozes were already taking shape, agriculture became inconceivable as the basis of economic development in the long run. The brigade concluded that Birobidzhan would only have a chance of surviving if light industry was established in a first stage, and later heavy industry, particularly given the wealth of minerals and raw materials found in the surroundings.

In spite of all the efforts, the establishment of a Jewish Republic based on Yiddish and Jewish culture under the Soviet Union was condemned to fail from the outset: Competition with the Zionist proposal and above all the problems inherent to the project itself, such as the huge distance from the traditional places of Jewish life, the frequent flooding, which made agriculture especially difficult, the lack of training and infrastructure, relations with the indigenous peoples in the region and subsequently the change of policies, which led to the great purges of 1937, prevented Birobidzhan from flourishing.

Meyer saw the project of Birobidzhan as a commission like any other; however, he devoted particular attention to promoting it among European Jews in his conference tour of 1936. Two of the twenty-two lectures he delivered dealt specifically with the topic of the Jewish Autonomous Region, one in Prague and the second in Brno. As soon as he returned to the Soviet Union in May of that year, he published his article «The Jewish Autonomous Region and the Czechoslovakian Jews» in the official Yiddish newspaper *Der Emes*.²³ In these lectures he answered questions regarding the way of life in the city, the possibility of sustaining religious practice, or the place of women in the Socialist realm, almost always with a question in return in order to avoid direct answers. In his article, Meyer blamed Zionism for prejudices against the Soviet project;

- [C] How can we explore the kinds of stand taken by Bauhaus and Modernist architects and designers and their consistency?

nevertheless, years later, it sparked his curiosity about how Jewish nationalism was expressed in architecture, as he asked Arieh Sharon about this.²⁴

The Lomas de Becerra Cooperative Housing Estate in Mexico City—A Compromise between Socialist and Capitalist Planning

In 1938, after attending the 16th International Congress on Planning and Housing in Mexico City, Hannes Meyer accepted the challenge of setting up an Institute of Planning and Urbanism within Mexico's National Polytechnic Institute, relocating there the next year. The Socialist orientation of Lázaro Cárdenas's government, the exciting cultural and political atmosphere surrounding the various exiles, including the German speakers, and the opportunity to develop both in the professional and the ideological sense made Mexico a suitable destination for emigration, since he had no opportunities in rightist-oriented Switzerland, where he was living after leaving the Soviet Union. Nonetheless, the process was harder than he had imagined. The Institute only opened in 1940, then closed a year later, facing pronounced pressure from within the Polytechnic Institute and beyond. The political panorama had changed with Manuel Ávila Camacho's presidency and the plans for this institute were dropped due to «budgetary reasons».

A year later, a new opportunity to work in the field of housing and urban planning arose as he was invited to the housing section of the Secretariat of Labour. An amendment to the labour law demanded that enterprises with more than 150 employees provide housing for their workers. The Secretariat, through its Department of Housing, developed a model scheme for an estate that was to have Meyer in charge of the design and was planned for a site in Tacubaya in Mexico City, close to the industries for which it was envisaged.

- [C] The Lomas de Becerra Housing Estate was conceived as a cooperative. It is not clear whether this was Meyer's proposal or was a socio-economic scheme suggested by the authorities or industries involved; nonetheless, it was a model Meyer knew well and could easily adjust to both his and the country's political orientation.

Back in 1919, when designing the cooperative housing estate of Freidorf in Muttenz, near Basel, he understood that a cooperative was as far to the left as he could get within a capitalist system.

emigration and exile

thinking from the perspective of diasporic conditions

cooperative housing construction

capitalist planning and building

Once again, when confronted with the Mexican reality of a country heavily dependent on the United States, especially after the Good Neighbor Agreement was signed, a cooperative could have represented such a compromise and enabled Lomas de Becerra to incorporate all the facilities he envisioned with the necessary elasticity foreseen in Socialist planning. As in Birobidzhan, he tried to incorporate the local populace's cultural background and way of life into his scheme of a housing unit supplied with educational, commercial, recreational and health facilities. The architect studied the urbanism of Mexico City and the history of Mexican dwelling in order to understand the social behaviour of the future inhabitants of the complex. He was positively impressed by the interactions of people living in the traditional *vecindad*, though criticizing the economic origin of its model: «This type of block is characterized by its great depth, by its considerable spaciousness and by its high economic proportion between the used surface and that of transit. The nucleus of the proletarian house of this kind does not intermingle as in the individualistic neighborhood, but they are grouped around an inner courtyard, organically incorporating some collective services such as laundry, warehouses, toilets, etc. Although the factor that has created this kind of block is the speculative element in plots and houses, it cannot be ignored that this type of family grouping represents the first step of a new urban coexistence that is already expressed in the traditional neighborhood party. Therefore, we believe that this type of collective housing is of vivid interest to the Mexican people.»²⁵

The estate consisted of six blocks designed under three different schemes with densities that varied between 331 and 550 inhabitants per hectare, from single family houses to blocks of three to four levels Figs. 5-8. The constructed area amounted to 14 to 20% of the block, making ample provision for open spaces for sport and recreation. A wide green corridor containing community services ran through the centre, and a green belt surrounded the estate. Circulation and infrastructure were peripheral as well. As for the buildings, the form resembled Meyer's gallery-access buildings in Dessau-Törten, with an external staircase connected to the apartments by open corridors. Lomas de Becerra was never realized. Meyer's boss, Ignacio García Tellez, left the Secretariat to lead the Mexican Institute of Social Security when it was established in 1944, inviting Meyer to serve as Head of the Hospitals and Clinics Planning Department, and as a result the entire Lomas de Becerra project was abandoned.

[C] How can we explore the kinds of stand taken by Bauhaus and Modernist architects and designers and their consistency?

When describing his work in Freidorf, Meyer frequently used the term «compromise». Lomas de Becerra, a cooperative just like Freidorf, was again a place to reach compromises. It was clear to Meyer that Mexico was not the place for radical politics. In Lomas de Becerra there were no wide avenues, loudspeakers and lights for popular demonstrations to foster class consciousness, but nor was it the place for abusive exploitation of the land in the hands of speculators. It was conceived as a place where a community could develop freely, surrounded by green areas, sporting and recreational spaces, supplied with all the necessary facilities to ease the burden on the working class.

complexity of taking a stand

socialist planning and building
architecture as a weapon

capitalist planning and building

social, functional,
and scientific approach

relationship to the landscape

[C] In both the Soviet Union and Mexico, Meyer had to make compromises with the political system. In the former, he understood the power of architecture as a weapon in the hands of those in power and, thus, accepted Socialist Realism. In the latter, he had to soften his ideological discourse, at least in his architectural and urban planning approach, to accept the reality of working in the capitalist world. The elements that remained consistent throughout his life were a reliance on thorough research and scientific rigor as the basis of any enterprise, a commitment to serve society through architecture and the «fate of landscape» as a determinant of his creative contribution.

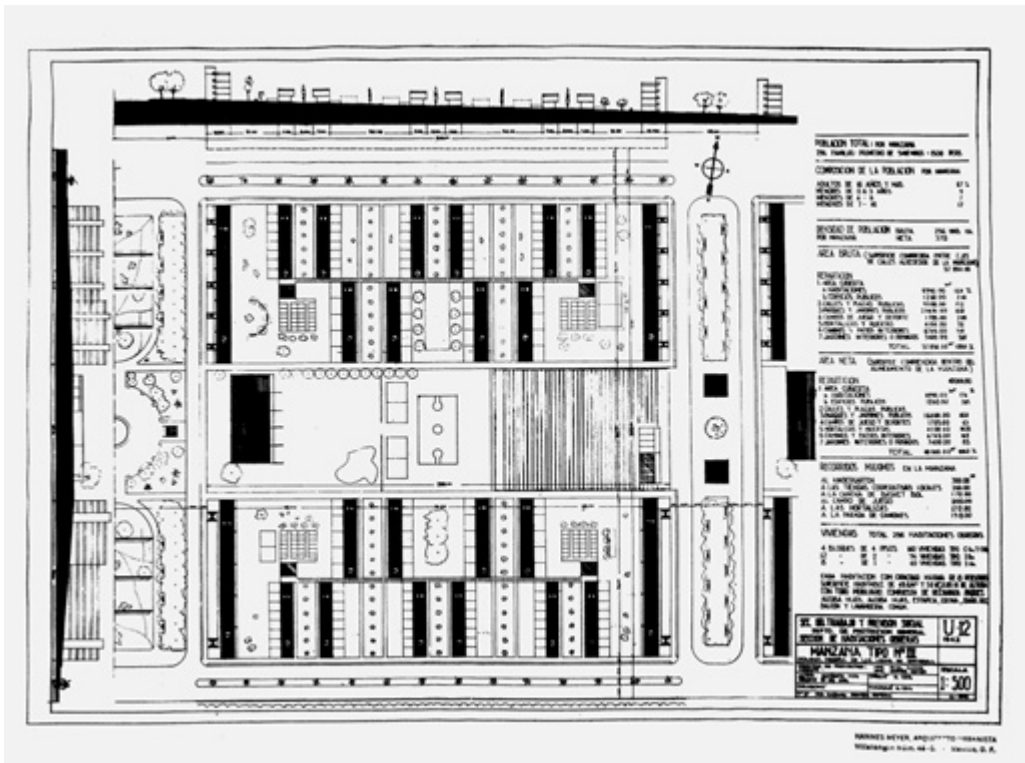
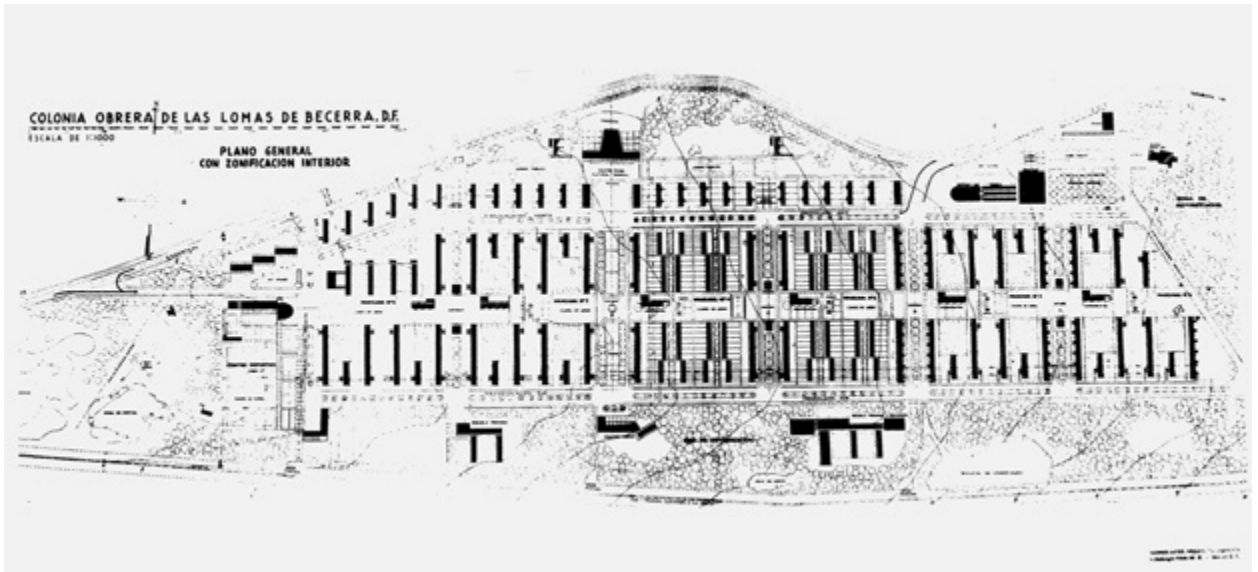


Fig. 5
Lomas de Becerra, master plan, 1942

Fig. 6
Lomas de Becerra, plan of block 3, 1942

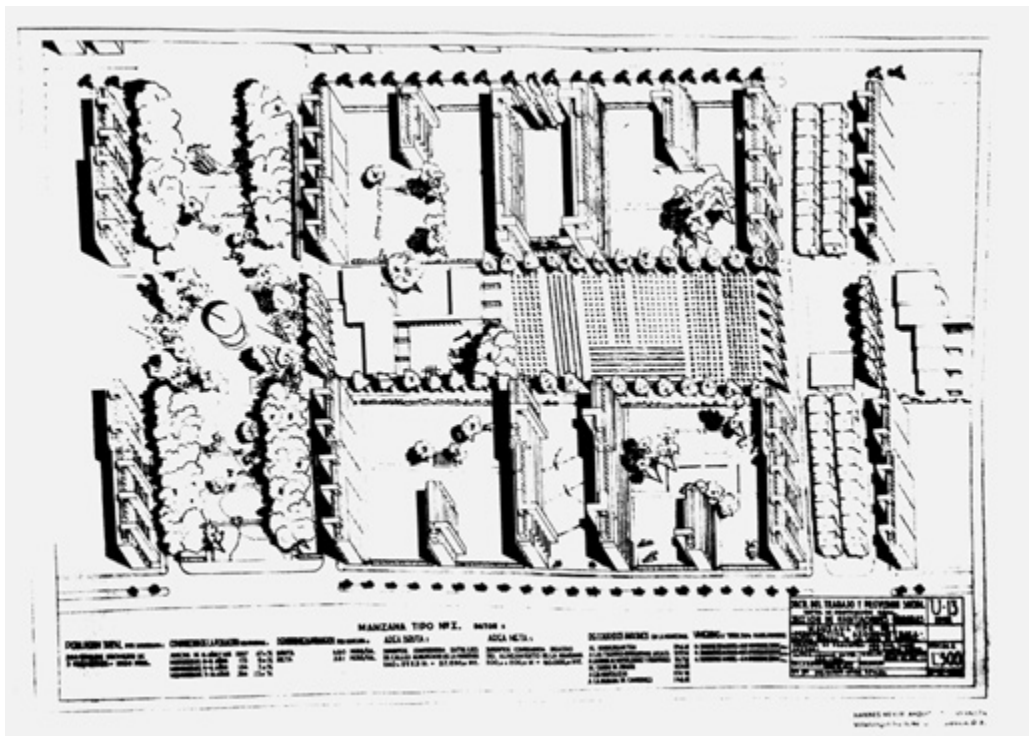


Fig. 7
Lomas de Becerra, isometric view
of block 1, 1942

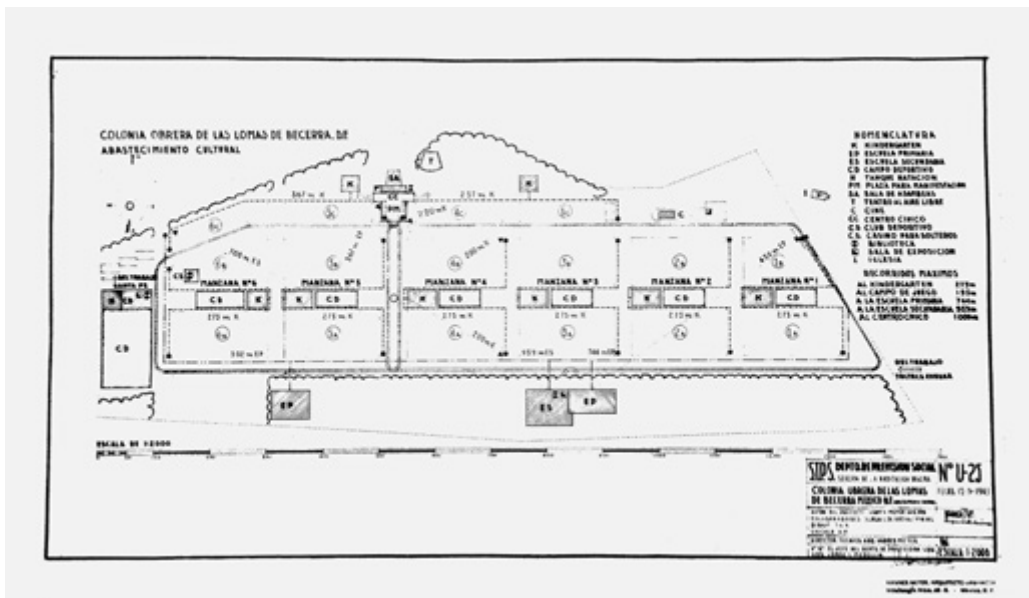


Fig. 8
Lomas de Becerra, cultural supply
diagram, 1943

Notes

- 1 Hannes Meyer, «Experiencias de Urbanismo», in: *Arquitectura y Decoración* (1938), 12, p. 252.
- 2 Ibid., p. 253.
- 3 Ibid., p. 254.
- 4 Hannes Meyer, «Brief an Nikolai Kolli», July 29, 1937, in: Lena Meyer-Bergner (ed.), *Hannes Meyer. Bauen und Gesellschaft. Schriften, Briefe, Projekte*, Dresden 1980, pp. 197–198.
- 5 Hannes Meyer, «Aus dem Reisetagebuch eines Architekten. Reise nach dem Westen», in: *ibid.*, p. 119.
- 6 Hannes Meyer, «Thesen über marxistische Architektur», in: *ibid.*, p. 97.
- 7 Ibid., p. 98.
- 8 Ibid., p. 98.
- 9 Hannes Meyer, «Letter to Nikolai Kolli» (as Note 4), p. 198.
- 10 Including the KOMZET (Committee for the Settlement of Toiling Jews on the Land), the OZET, (Society for Settling Toiling Jews on the Land), and the American ICOR (Association for Jewish Colonization in Russia).
- 11 Raquel Franklin, «The Jewish Autonomous Region and the Czechoslovakian Jews: Hannes Meyer writes on Birobidzhan», in: *Architektúra & urbanizmus. Journal of Architectural and Town-planning Theory* 47 (2013), 1–2, p. 76.
- 12 Hannes Meyer, «Gorod Birobidzhan», in: *Bauen und Gesellschaft*, (as Note 4), p. 139.
- 13 Ibid., p. 140.
- 14 Hannes Meyer, «Auf Kommandierung im Ferner Osten», in: *ibid.*, p. 131–139.
- 15 Hannes Meyer, «Brief an Lisbeth Oestreicher» n/d, Bauhaus-Archiv, Berlin, Inv. 117–12/6.
- 16 Hannes Meyer, «Bauhaus and Society», in: *the co-op principle—Hannes Meyer and the Concept of Collective Design* (German edition: *das prinzip coop—Hannes Meyer und die Idee einer kollektiven Gestaltung*), exhib. cat., Stiftung Bauhaus Dessau, Edition Bauhaus, No. 48, (ed.) Werner Möller in cooperation with Raquel Franklin, Leipzig 2015, p. 15.
- 17 Hannes Meyer, «Gorod Birobidzhan» (as Note 12), p. 143. Also quoted in Franklin 2013 (as note 11), p. 77.
- 18 Hannes Meyer, «Gorod Birobidzhan» (as Note 12), p. 146.
- 19 Hannes Meyer, «Über marxistische Architektur», in: *Bauen und Gesellschaft* (as Note 4), p. 94. [English translation: https://thecharnelhouse.org/2015/08/10/hannes-meyer/#_ftn7 (Consulted May 25, 2020)]
- 20 Ibid., p. 98.
- 21 Ibid., p. 98.
- 22 Ibid., p. 98.
- 23 Hannes Meyer, «Di Yiddische Autonome Gegnt un di Tschekoslovakische Yidn», in: *Der Emes*, May 28, 1936, p. 4.
- 24 Hannes Meyer, «Letter to Arie Sharon», September 26, 1937, in: <https://www.ariesharon.org/Archive/Bauhaus-and-Berlin/Letters-from-Hannes-and-Lena/i-BXKjgFJ> (Consulted May 10, 2020).
- 25 Hannes Meyer, «La Ciudad de México: fragmentos de un estudio urbanístico», in: *Arquitectura* (1943), 12, p. 103. Quoted also in: Raquel Franklin, «Experiencias de Urbanismo: los proyectos urbanos de Hannes Meyer en México», in: *DeArq* (2013), 12, pp. 38–57.

The Formalism and the Real: Bruno Taut's Translation of Neues Bauen in Exile

Paola Ardizzola

- [K] There are many facets of Modernism and modernity as well as many ambivalent aspects. What does that mean for our own concepts and visions?

«All nationalist architecture is bad,
but all good architecture is national.»
Bruno Taut, *Türk Evi, Sinan*,
Interview with the architect, 1938

emigration and exile

processes of transfer, translation,
and transformation

dialogue between modernity and tradition

Although Bruno Taut did not take part directly in the making of the Bauhaus, his theoretical contributions—«Eine Notwendigkeit» (1914) and «Ein Architekturprogramm» (1918), to name just two—were crucial to Walter Gropius. Both architects took advantage of this productive mutual exchange, and when Taut was forced to flee—first to Japan (1933) and then to Turkey (1936)—, he brought his vision of Modernism to the East. This contribution aims to analyse the way Taut translated his aesthetical and ethical vision of architecture while in exile, his educational approach in the Middle East and his influence on the coeval society. Indeed, starting from formalism, he succeeded in establishing a sensitive dialogue between modernity and tradition without neglecting Functionalism and rationalism, but rather integrating those components he had already referenced while working in Germany, such as topography, climate and the psychological needs of individuals.

Bruno Taut's Oeuvre in Exile—A Seminal Contribution to Re-defining the Architectural Historiography of Modernism

marginal counter-history

architectural historiography of modernism

- [K] Bruno Taut's oeuvre in exile appears as a seminal contribution.

social and political commitment

In 1918, Taut published «Ein Architekturprogramm», a short provocative text that was printed on flyers, in order to easily reach the working class. This example clearly shows his social commitment related to architecture: «Art—that is one single

dismantling arts' hierarchical order

thing, when it exists! Today there is no art. The various disrupted tendencies can find their way back to a single unity only under the wings of a new architecture, so that every individual discipline will play its part in building. Then there will be no frontiers between the applied arts and sculpture or painting. Everything will be one thing: architecture.»³ In February 1914, in the article «Eine Notwendigkeit» in the journal *Der Sturm*⁴, Taut had already written about this issue—and again in 1918 in his article «Ein neues künstlerisches Programm» in the journal *Die Bauwelt*: «The ultimate goal is the gathering of the arts under the wings of a great architecture.»⁵

In these articles, Taut was proclaiming the credo that in 1919 became the programmatic foundation of the Bauhaus! To what extent is Walter Gropius, who followed Bruno Taut as a leading member in the «Arbeitsrat für Kunst», founded in 1918, indebted to the architect from Königsberg? If we follow Gropius' own words, then they shared this idea and were acting in concert.⁶ The productive mutual dialogue between the two architects was to be longstanding, as is reflected in a photo of them ^{Fig. 1} sunbathing on the roof terrace of Gropius' house in Dessau.

The Japanese Years (1933–1936)

In 1933, Taut moved to Japan, fleeing Nazi Germany. He started to record his impressions of Japanese art and architecture and, by summer 1933, he had already written his first essay on the topic *Nippon mit europäischen Augen gesehen*,⁷ a critique of cultural development in Japan during the early 20th century, which emphasized the considerable architectural choices that came from reinterpretation of tradition. Later, the full-bodied volume *Houses and People of Japan*⁸ with hundreds of photographs was presented as the chronicle of a journey towards the traditional architecture and historical urbanism contextualized in the Japanese people's cultural significance. The book ends with an account of the visit to Katsura Villa ^{Fig. 2}, a 17th-century residential building. Its simplicity, purity, and proportion were further celebrated in *Gedanken über Katsura*,⁹ a collection in sixteen sheets of drawings and explanatory captions ^{Fig. 3}; one of them states *Kunst ist Sinn* (Art is sense), a minimalist statement that perfectly epitomizes his approach to architecture as a form of art. Taut found in Katsura the antecedent features of Modernism. In the Fifties, Gropius visited the Japanese



Fig. 1
Bruno Taut and Walter Gropius (together
with Erica Wittich and Ise Gropius)
sunbathing on the roof terrace of Gropius'
house in Dessau, 1926, reproduction 1993,
Photograph: unknown

Fig. 2
Bruno Taut, photograph of Katsura
Palace, Japan

Fig. 3
Bruno Taut, sketches and writings on
Katsura Palace, Japan

connecting architecture and
nature/environment

adapting architecture
to local conditions

functionism as a concept

villa as well, confirming Taut's perception in relation to modern Western architecture.¹⁰ According to Taut, the perfect integration of construction and environment arises from an earthly adaptation to local climatic and social conditions, by means of a justified Functionalism that is combined with the aesthetic dimension: «The very protruding canopies of the houses have (therefore) the dual function of protecting the interior from the rain and shielding the excessive brightness of the sky, at the same time inducing the gaze to direct itself towards the soil and vegetation.»¹¹ On the other hand, Gropius found the value that sublimates the imperial villa in the collective spirit that generated it, by reaching a level of perfection in which «man and his way of life were the focal point of its conception.»¹² The two architects, though only distantly related in terms of their architectural practices, found the rigour, purity, simplicity and balance of this architecture similarly appealing.

A grounded erudition emerges from Taut's texts, combined with penetrating observational ability, dictated by that intellectual curiosity which has always distinguished him. Although Taut's Japanese projects were never built, they allowed him to develop a specific sensibility towards the architecture of Japan.

Turkey, Final Destination of the Exile (1936–1938)

In November 1936, Taut moved to Turkey, where he found a fertile environment for building his projects, leaving behind his «vacation from architecture», as he defined his years in Japan. With the fall of the Ottoman Empire in 1919 and the end of the Turkish War of Independence in 1923, crucial changes had taken place in Turkey that had given rise to a new state, born from the ruins of an empire that had lasted around eight centuries. As the first president of the new Turkish Republic, Mustafa Kemal, later named Atatürk—Father of the Turks—, reorganized the state according to secular criteria, which called for a clear separation between the political and religious spheres. Great efforts were made to modernize the administrative apparatus, reform the law, and develop the education system.

Contributions by foreign architects played a key role in this complex process of renewal. Atatürk had invited people to conform to Western civilization—his decision that only European classical music should be broadcast on Turkish radio is famous in this respect—and opened the doors to secular Western culture

- [B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?

international style
 functionalist approach
 rationalist approach

integrating buildings into their
 respective regions
 place-based approach

by welcoming European intellectuals, especially from the German-speaking world to whom he presented the compelling offer of prestigious positions in the cultural and academic fields. The German architects who helped bring about what was dubbed the «Second National Style» took three different paths: The first involved transposing the International Style mainly according to the characteristics of Functionalism and rationalism (Ernst Egli, Martin Elsässer); the second entailed using a monumental style based on markedly square-shaped geometries, rigorous symmetry, very high colonnades for a state architecture of clear nationalist inspiration (Clemens Holzmeister); the third path opted to mediate between the matrices of modernity and the reinterpretation of specific features of the place, for buildings that were contextualized by and could be referred to the cultural values of both countries.

- [B] Bruno Taut adhered to this last path. He designed several buildings in Turkey, mainly schools, only a few of which were realized,¹³ but also the Faculty of Literature, History and Geography in Ankara ^{Fig. 4}—his first task as Chief Architect of the Government Construction Office of the Ministry of Education (since 1936)—which he created fully aware that «it will become a focal point of modern Turkish culture», as we know by a letter he wrote to Isaburo Ueno, a friend and colleague in Japan.¹⁴ In this letter he also expressed his happiness that he not only had access to «excellent stone and top quality materials» but also enjoyed «complete artistic freedom». The building should thus be read in all its components as the result of a design idea freed of specific expectations, yet nonetheless controlled in every detail, as confirmed by the architect Franz Hillinger, Taut's assistant, in a letter to Walter Segal: «For this building more than 300 detailed drawings have been made, which he [Taut] has managed with great diligence.»¹⁵ The building, still a powerful presence within the city due to its dimensions, presents peculiarities that lighten its monumental impact, primarily the outcome of the architectural concepts that can be observed in the German projects, mediated by the influence of Japanese culture and a tribute to Ottoman building tradition, the latter evident above all in the details. The long main volume is closed on both ends by two transversal blocks, a contrivance used for several housing estates in Berlin, while the entrance is placed at approximately 2/3 of the length of the entire elevation ^{Fig. 5}. Its imposing mass is initially interrupted by the southern, two-storey end block that contains the conference hall, and above all by



Fig. 4
Bruno Taut, Faculty of Languages,
History and Geography, Ankara, 1937–
1939, Photograph: Paola Ardizzola

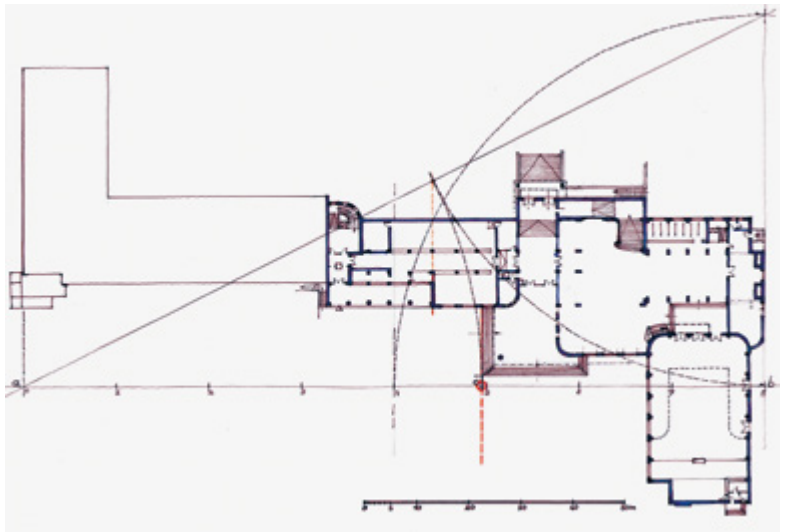


Fig. 5
Bruno Taut, Faculty of Languages,
History and Geography, Ankara, 1937–
1939. Plan of the ground floor with golden
ratio, Drawing: Paola Ardizzola



Fig. 6
Bruno Taut, Faculty of Languages,
History and Geography, Ankara, 1937–
1939. The main entrance, Photograph:
Paola Ardizzola



Fig. 7
Bruno Taut, Faculty of Languages,
History and Geography, Ankara, 1937–
1939. The main hall. Photograph:
Paola Ardizzola

the episode-entrance, which resembles the entrance to a Shinto shrine: A column stands above the stairway-stylobate, supporting the wide roof with its Samurai sword profile, clad in copper plates, a characteristic theme of the domes of many mosques, while the edges of the two volumes that define the compressed space, in this case the lobby, bend along a gently curved radius that serves to emphasize the entrance ^{Fig. 6}. In Berlin, Taut had often used the contrivance of the curved wall in correspondence with the corner. However, the rounded corner, a main theme for many Expressionist architects, is used here with a different meaning: not at the end of the building, but doubled, in order to define a space which does not yet lead to the main hall, but to a vestibule with several features. First of all, it is a passing space, connecting the main façade with the east elevation, reached by a double stairway overlooking a small park. Its Functionalist character asserts itself as the point of intersection for accessing various rooms: the hall, offices, archives, and front desk. Yet the Functionalist aspect is a pretext for asserting a spatial conception that Taut undoubtedly learned from Sinan, the builder of the great Ottoman mosques in the 16th century, which have no main entrance to reach the grand prayer hall: From the exterior, they resemble an impregnable fortress, and it is only possible to enter into the magnificence of the enormous domed spaces by taking an almost hidden passage. Their complexity can be perceived only through movement, a perception that implies the presence of man as the completion of architectural space. This attribute, sought by many masters of the Modern movement, is celebrated by Taut in the shadow of the Ottoman tradition when he refuses to offer an immediate and total perception, denying the direct epiphany of the architectural organism, revealed only through movement. The unifying dimension of Western perspectival observation is opposed to the plurality of points of view that is characteristic of the Ottoman culture of representation and settlement, implying a user in motion, free to discover space through time. Avoiding the placement of a direct entrance in the main hall, Taut searches for the same sense of astonishment; for example, via a side door to the vestibule-corridor—in reality a glazed surface flanked by two pillars entirely clad in thin and extremely refined turquoise majolica—, one approaches an unexpected and disarming space, an absolute temple to civil society ^{Fig. 7}. As the mosque was historically the place where all activities of traditional Muslim society were carried out, the large hall of the Faculty of Letters is the nerve centre that characterizes

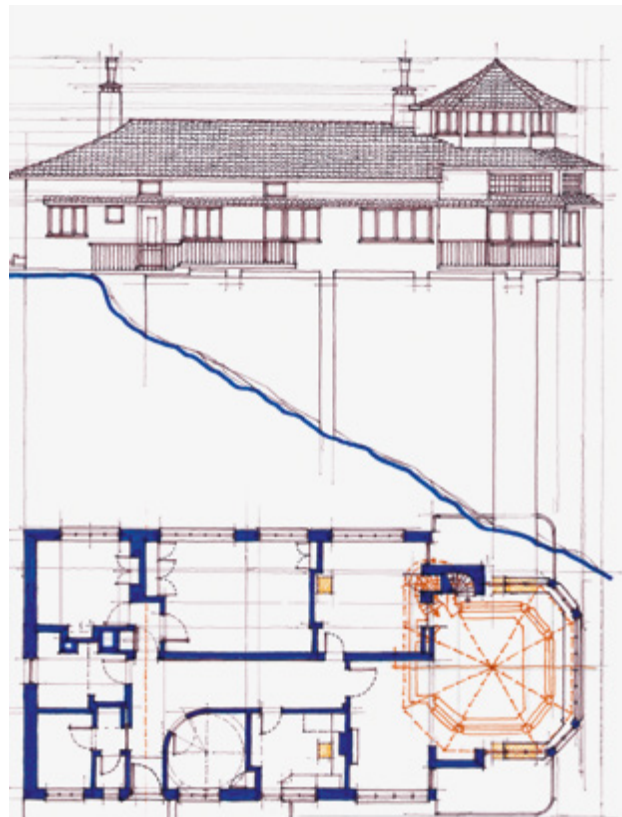


Fig. 8
Bruno Taut, House on the Bosphorus,
Istanbul, 1938. South/east front towards
the sea, Photograph: Haruhiko Fujita

Fig. 9
Bruno Taut, House on the Bosphorus,
Istanbul, 1938. Plan and west elevation,
Drawing: Paola Ardizzola

- [C] How can we explore the kinds of stand taken by Bauhaus and Modernist architects and designers and their consistency?
- [K] There are many facets of Modernism and modernity as well as many ambivalent aspects. What does that mean for our own concepts and visions?

the function of a public building fit for containing mankind's noblest activities.

functionalist approach

dialogue between modernity and tradition

Within the Ministry of Education, Taut's main activities were working as Professor of Architecture and designing school buildings—five of these were realized, which is a significant number, considering that he spent only two years in Turkey. Their Functionalist layout, in line with modern educational theories, is accompanied by details and arrangements studied in relation to each site, in a balanced synthesis of modernity and tradition. The school building also played a paradigmatic role in the politically important task of disseminating the republican ideology. The German architect had arrived in a country where architects, as Manfred Speidel pointed out, «were involved in a decade-long debate on what the architecture of the new Turkey should be. Taut demonstrated his response through the projects for the schools whose special features were innovative for the time: respect for the inherent characteristics of materials, proportions, quality and functionality as guarantors of continuity between past, present and future.»¹⁶ Taut's schools became a point of reference for school buildings all around the country.

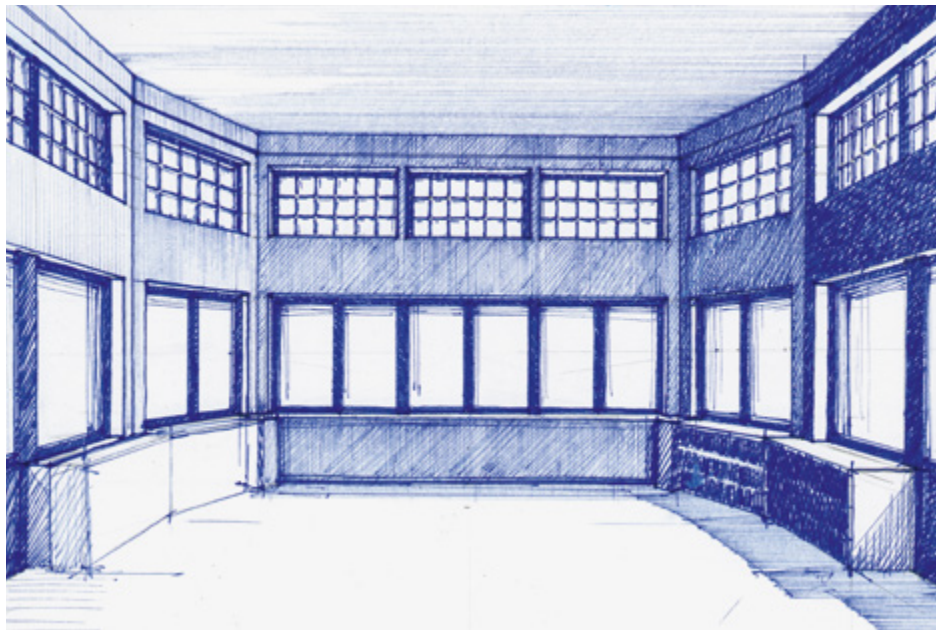
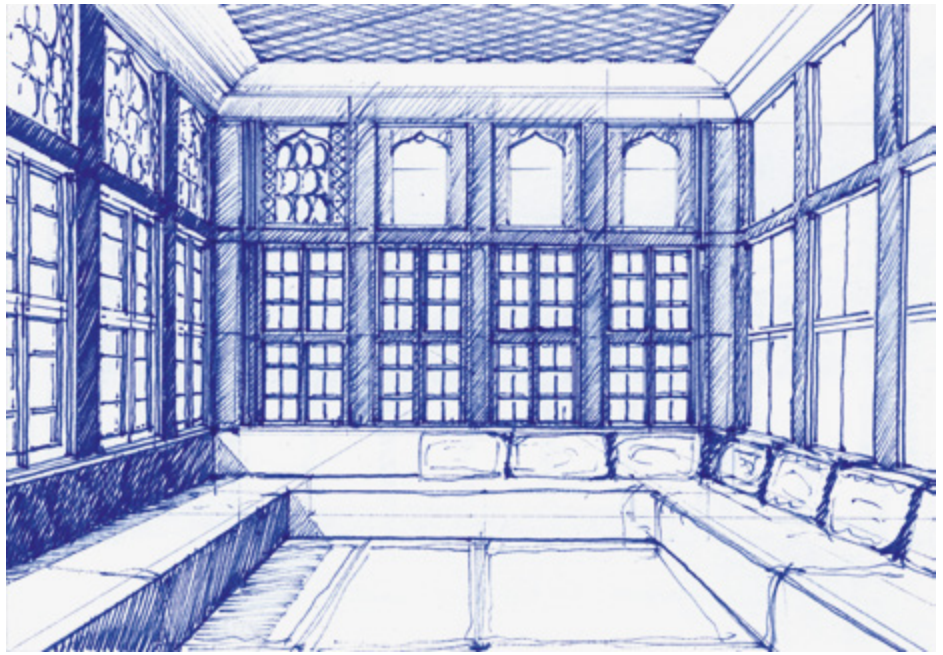
- [C] demonstrated his response through the projects for the schools whose special features were innovative for the time: respect for the inherent characteristics of materials, proportions, quality and functionality as guarantors of continuity between past, present and future.»¹⁶ Taut's schools became a point of reference for school buildings all around the country.

«Perhaps the most beautiful and undoubtedly the most human construction built by Taut», to cite Bruno Zevi, is Taut's own house in Istanbul (1938) set on a hill overlooking the Bosphorus and deploying a daring cantilever ^{Fig. 8}. «This small villa raised up on four high columns evokes, in the undulating play of the roofs, the rhythms of Japanese domestic architecture. Its red walls stand out amidst the green of nature; the living room is connected by an inner staircase to the turret-studio wrapped by a continuous semi-hexagonal window that brings together all the panoramic axes of the Bosphorus.»¹⁷ For any scholar of *Neues Bauen*, this house is the most disconcerting work of architecture one might stumble upon. Its adherence to the criteria of the Modern movement is apparently legible only in its plan, where the functional distribution of the spaces dominates as forcefully as in the homes designed for the housing estates ^{Fig. 9}.

- [K] stumble upon. Its adherence to the criteria of the Modern movement is apparently legible only in its plan, where the functional distribution of the spaces dominates as forcefully as in the homes designed for the housing estates ^{Fig. 9}.

The double-height living room references the architect's climatologic conception, which notes that it is a good idea to filter the intense light of the Mediterranean: For this reason, the same room features different typologies of windows, depending on whether they are positioned above or below the sun-breaker that runs the entire length of the building. The roofing echoes the traditional Turkish pavilion roof, with a simultaneously Japanese flavour.

rethinking modern architecture
dialogue between modernity
and tradition



Figs. 10a, b
Bruno Taut, House on the Bosphorus,
Istanbul, 1938. Typological comparison
between the typical living room of the
Turkish vernacular home, the diwan,
and the living room in the Taut house.
Drawings: Paola Ardizzola

- [B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?
- [K] There are many facets of Modernism and modernity as well as many ambivalent aspects. What does that mean for our own concepts and visions?

relationship to history
relationship to traditions and cultures
adapting to local conditions

self-critique of modernism

The German architect certainly acknowledges the characteristics of Modernism in his project; otherwise he would not have written, in a letter to Carl Krayl, fully aware of the revolutionary impact of his residential project near Berlin: «A new Dahlewitz is being born here».¹⁸ Nevertheless, in a very refined way he also took into consideration the features of traditional architecture, coming from specific concerns like local climate, as a means of generating an effective continuation with the past, by denying a Modernism with no relation to history and past culture, fully aware that Modernism *tout court* had failed worldwide to give a proper answer to human needs within the modern city.

For Taut, the synthesis of *Kultur und Zivilisation* [culture and civilization] continued to be the primary target. For example, in the living room of his house in Istanbul, there is also a sense of warmth and intimacy through its interior space ^{Figs. 10a, b}, which reflects that of the *diwan*, the Turkish living room, the main space of the house, whose inner perimeter surrounds comfortable seating while the continuous horizontal glazed surfaces refer to the 18th-century Ottoman residence.

Conclusion

dialogue between modernity
and tradition

reinterpretation of tradition

identity as a dialogic concept

self-critique of modernism
diversity of modernism

- If Taut took a stand in Turkey, we might say that it was in the form of an attempt to mediate between the matrices of modernity and the reinterpretation of specific traditional architectural features.
- [B] In line with Modernism, a revised consideration of localism was conducted in the light of a reinterpretation. Taut's buildings look properly contextualized, carrying a dual cultural value which epitomizes two apparently antithetical components, modernity and tradition, in an effective synthesis of a different Modernism. Deprecating both the superficial imitation of previous historicism as well as devotion to the International Style, Taut adhered to the process of the growth of Turkish architecture without seeking the identity of the «Second National Style». He instead placed his architecture at the service of the individual, as per his compelling logic according to which where there is no individual, there is no architecture. In the light of this analysis, Taut was aware that modern architecture found its real quality not in exterior forms, personal style, dogmas and schematism but rather in the confrontation between tradition and industry, topography and materials, and between functionalism and community.
- [K]

- [B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?
- [I] What can we learn from the history of the Bauhaus and Modernism when facing current issues? And how can this enable us to gain new insights into the past?
- [O] What is the significance and relevance of the Bauhaus and Modernism today—a historical phenomenon or a resource for the present? And what, if anything, constitutes their current relevance?

Entrusted with heading the Department of Architecture at the Fine Arts Academy in Istanbul, Taut did not wish to gain followers shaped by their master. For the students, he wrote the book *Mimari Bilgisi*, which was divided into seven chapters and provided with numerous illustrations ranging from contemporary architecture to ancient Eastern buildings. The book aimed to suggest the steps to achieve good design: proportion, technique, construction, Functionalism and quality, and referred to «rationalist theories» as «the headache of the hangover. [...] They fight what existed before and, like any opponent, are on the same level of what they want to oppose».¹⁹ The book strongly opposed Westernization of modern architecture, viewed as cultural introversion and capable of generating that International Style towards which he always looked with great suspicion.

It is evident, through his plethora of publications, that Taut used to look back to history, and not to historicism, in order to acquire architectural knowledge in relation to the design processes of the old masters—and among them he held in particular esteem architects of the Far East and anonymous medieval architects—rather than just the stylistic code of their final buildings. Gropius went further when he excluded history teaching at the Bauhaus, because he was against uncritical teaching of sterile styles. Although arriving at different architectural outcomes, the two architects had a common ideal related to the medieval guilds (inspiration for the school system of the Bauhaus), namely, art and architecture at the complete service of the people, in order to generate a better future society. Furthermore, both believed in the free expression of the future architects they were training, avoiding recruiting disciples: «It would be an absolute horror for me if my appointment would result in the multiplication of a fixed idea of «Gropius architecture». What I do want is to make young people realize how inexhaustible the means of creation are [...] and to encourage these young people in finding their own solutions.»²⁰ The common traits reveal how powerful the season of Expressionism was for both of them, as an utopian-intellectual project to be reified in the long run.

«All nationalist architecture is bad, but all good architecture is national»—unlike Gropius, Taut taught us significantly and convincingly that it is possible to pursue an approach of conciliation between tradition and modernity.

«good design» as a concept

critique of international style

relationship to history
learning from design processes

new unity of art and the people
modernist promise of a better future
social-utopian aspirations

dialogue between modernity
and tradition

Notes

- 1 For a study on the subject see Paola Ardizzola: «History will teach us everything. Bruno Zevi and the innovative methodology for future design», in: *EdA—Esempi di Architettura*, monographic issue on Bruno Zevi for the centenary of his birth, vol. 5, n. 1 (2018), pp. 5–12.
- 2 Bruno Zevi, «La storia come metodologia del fare architettonico», in: *Bruno Zevi per l'architettura*, (ed.) A. Muntoni, Rome: La Sapienza University, 2002, p. 25.
- 3 Bruno Taut, *Ein Architekturprogramm*, Flugschriften des Arbeitsrats für Kunst Berlin, Berlin (1918) 2nd edition, early 1919, Akademie der Künste, Berlin, Archive, AfK 9, http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/deu/ARCH_TAUT_GER.pdf (Consulted April 9, 2020); Engl. (ed.): «Bruno Taut: A programme for architecture», in: Ulrich Conrads, *Programs and manifestoes on 20th-century architecture*, Cambridge: The MIT Press, Massachusetts, p. 41. [Original quote: «Die Kunst!—das ist eine Sache, wenn sie da ist. Heute gibt es diese Kunst nicht. Die zerrissenen Richtungen können sich nur zur Einheit zusammenfinden unter den Flügeln einer neuen Baukunst, so, daß jede einzelne Disziplin mitbauen wird. Dann gibt es keine Grenze zwischen Kunstgewerbe und Plastik oder Malerei, alles ist eins: Bauen.»]
- 4 Bruno Taut, «Eine Notwendigkeit», in: *Der Sturm*, 1914, 4/II semester, pp. 174–175.
- 5 Bruno Taut, «Ein Neues Künstlerisches Programm», in: *Die Bauwelt*, 1918, 9/52, p. 5.
- 6 In a letter to Osthaus on 02.02.1919 (Walter Gropius, letter to (Karl Ernst) Osthaus, dated 02.02.1919, Akademie der Künste, Berlin, Archive, AfK 17, folio 3(–6); Gropius described Bruno Taut as «the first architect who really grasps the idea that I have already been pursuing for many years: uniting all arts related to building and we are now acting in concert in this respect», op. cit. Marcel Bois, «Die Kunst! —Das ist eine Sache!, wenn sie da ist», <http://www.bauhaus-imaginista.org/articles/3207/the-art-that-s-one-thing-when-it-s-there/de>. (Consulted on April 9, 2020)
- 7 Bruno Taut, *Nippon mit europäischen Augen gesehen*. [Geschrieben Juni-Juli 1933], (ed., epilogue and notes) Manfred Speidel, Berlin 2009.
- 8 Bruno Taut, *Houses and People of Japan*, Tokyo: Sanseido 1937, 21958.
- 9 Bruno Taut, «Reflections on Katsura», in: *Katsura: imperial villa*, (ed.) Virginia Ponciroli, Milan 2005, pp. 330–348; *ibid.*, Manfred Speidel, «Bruno Taut and the Katsura Villa», pp. 319–329.
- 10 *Ibid.*, Walter Gropius, «Architecture in Japan», pp. 349–358.
- 11 Bruno Taut, «Architecture Nouvelle au Japon», in: *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*, 4/1935; «Architettura nuova in Giappone», in: *Casabella*, 676/2000, p. 9.
- 12 W. Gropius, *Architettura in Giappone*, Milan: Görlich, 1965, p. 33.
- 13 Considering that he lived in Turkey for only two years, he left an important legacy in terms of built architecture, although some buildings were completed after his death: the Culture Pavilion for Izmir International Fair (1938); the Faculty of Letters, History and Geography (1937–39), the Atatürk Gymnasium (1937–38), the Cebeci Middle School (1938–39), all in Ankara: the Institute for Girls, Izmir (1938–42); the High School for Boys, Trabzon (1937–39); and Taut's own house, Istanbul (1937–38).
- 14 Bruno Taut to Isaburo Ueno, letter dated 11/06/1937, in: *Thinking for Atatürk. Two Works: the Catafalque and Anitkabir. Two Architects: Bruno Taut and Emin Onat = Für Atatürk gedacht. Zwei Werke: Katafalk und Anitkabir. Zwei Architekten: Bruno Taut und Emin Onat = Atatürk için düşünmek. İki eser: Katafalk ve Anitkabir. İki mimar: Bruno Taut ve Emin Onat*, exhib. cat. (ed.) Afife Batur, Istanbul, 1997, p. 63.
- 15 Franz Hillinger to Walter Segal, letter dated 04/16/1939, *ibid.*, p. 57.
- 16 Manfred Speidel, «Bruno Taut, work and effect» (*Wirken und Wirkung*), in: *ibid.*, p. 60.
- 17 Bruno Zevi, «Uno storico italiano in Turchia—Nel nome di Allah misura il tardo antico», in: *L'Espresso*, 25 January 1955, later in: *Cronache di Architettura*, volume 2, Laterza, Roma-Bari 1978, pp. 274–279.
- 18 Bruno Taut to Carl Krayl, letter dated 06/05/1938, Akademie der Künste, Berlin, Archive.
- 19 Bruno Taut, *Mimari Bilgisi*, Istanbul 1938, introduction. Taut's book was written in German as *Architekturlehre: Grundlagen, Theorie und Kritik, Beziehung zu den anderen Künsten und zur Gesellschaft* and was translated into Turkish by Adnan Kolatan as *Mimari Bilgisi*. There is no complete English translation of the book, but the title is usually translated as *Lectures on Architecture*.
- 20 Walter Gropius, *Scope of Total Architecture*, New York: Collier Books, 1970, p. 17.

Richard Paulick: From the Bauhaus to the Stalinallee and Back. An Enquiry into the «Evolution» of a German Architect

Ulrich Hartung

planning and building in the gdr

emigration and exile

functionalist approach

mass housing construction
rationalizing housing construction

doctrine of «national tradition»
«socialist in content and national in form»
socialist realism

architectural historiography
of modernism

Richard Paulick's name triggers associations with the work of Dessau's «Hochschule für Gestaltung» and circles close to that institution, as well as with the chequered development of GDR architecture, ranging from what were known as «residential palaces» in the National Tradition style to modern urban planning blueprints for Hoyerswerda, Schwedt and Halle-Neustadt. Paulick entered the arena at an early stage with independently designed buildings, influenced planning after 1933 while in exile in Shanghai, and had a significant influence on construction and planning in the GDR during the state's first two decades.

Even in his youth, he was very much inspired by the analytical thinking of the Bauhaus Functionalists under Walter Gropius. Throughout his entire architectural career, Paulick was concerned, not continuously but persistently, with the conception of residential buildings for the masses based on prefabricated components. The economic and ideological conditions in which he was active in the various places he worked cannot, however, be regarded merely as conditions that either hindered or fostered his architecture, for they clearly influenced the objectives pursued in his designs.

In this sense, his post-1952 designs for housing typologies can be read as products of adapting to the stipulated stylistic parameters, while his later work was more informed by compliance with political and economic directives. Paulick, who had been an SED member since 1954, turned away from Modernism and towards the architectural doctrine of «National Tradition» just as noticeably as his rival Hermann Henselmann, although he continued to advocate this doctrine even after it had been replaced by the dictates of down-to-earth thrift. Paulick's biography makes particularly clear the problematic aspects of a concept of an architect's oeuvre that starts from an immanent telos and imagines the continuous «evolution» of a personal architectural concept.¹

Richard Paulick's lifework should be considered in its entirety for conducting a fair appraisal of it within the historical context. The shortcomings of research into architectural and planning history make this difficult. In this context, there is also a clear tendency to dispute that Paulick designed various early buildings and indeed to contest his involvement in drawing up plans for the new towns.² In these circumstances, insight into the architect's oeuvre as a whole leads to a more nuanced historical assessment, which has generally been lacking to date.



Fig. 1
Dessau-Törten, Steel house, 1926–27 by
Georg Muche and Richard Paulick.
Photograph: Erich Consemüller, 1927

Fig. 2
Dessau-Törten, DEWOG apartment
blocks, 1930–31, with Hans Waloschek

- [K] There are many facets of Modernism and modernity as well as many ambivalent aspects. What does that mean for our own concepts and visions?

Lessons Learnt from Hans Poelzig and from Walter Gropius' Studio

Paulick was born on 7th November 1903 in Roßlau/Elbe and grew up in an atmosphere of politically and aesthetically progressive attitudes and concepts. His father, Richard Paulick Senior, was a Social Democrat, the editor of the *Volksblatt für Anhalt und Umgebung*, and later a Dessau City Councillor, Mayor and SPD Regional Director. He always supported his oldest son, let him participate in his work as a party official working for the opposition and introduced him to Marxism. It was his father who triggered a key turning point in the young Richard's art historical interests by advising him to study architecture, i.e. something practical.³

During his studies—at the Technical Universities of Dresden and Berlin (1923–27)—Richard Paulick was much influenced by Hans Poelzig, who taught him at the TH Berlin-Charlottenburg from 1925 to July 1927. Like many of his generation, he was impressed by Poelzig's approach to teaching architecture as well as by his penchant for the monumental. Paulick would later take on responsibility for «collective» discussion of the designs, with substantial guidance from the architectural maestro.

The Bauhaus put down roots in Dessau while he was studying. Paulick got to know the Bauhaus crowd around Walter Gropius, was promptly welcome into their circles and realized the Stahlhaus as an experimental building with Georg Muehe in 1926–27 Fig. 1. After completing his studies, he was involved in many avant-garde projects developed by Gropius' studio. Drawing on his father's connections and with Gropius' support, he constructed his first buildings in his own right in Dessau between 1929 and 1931 Fig. 2. Wolfgang Thöner has succinctly summarized the dynamics of this development: «Richard Paulick learned decisive lessons and had formative experiences during his time working for Gropius' architectural studio. He is not a member of the Bauhaus in the narrower sense of the term; he never taught or studied at the Bauhaus, but was intimately connected with life at the Bauhaus from 1925 to 1928 and worked in Gropius' office as its director from 1927. He actually studied somewhere else; that is already apparent in a contradiction or rather a particularity in his mode and method of designing. He was taught by Hans Poelzig in Berlin, at the Technical University, and Poelzig was someone that you might almost say oscillated between the various camps, including Modernism, and went his own way, which is actually what Richard Paulick did too.»⁴

bauhaus school

learning processes

diversity of modernism

neues bauen [new building]

His imprimatur is already clear in the first designs he realized. In the Stahlhaus, the exterior wall panels with vertical window strips underscore the components' mass-produced nature. In Dessau, the Hahn House and Naurath House from 1929, with their rather solid appearance, are examples of *Neues Bauen*, while the 1929–30 garage building in Berlin's Kantstrasse, its tall glass strips poised between symmetry and asymmetry, bears witness to Paulick's development as an architect, even if he apparently only made Hermann Zweigenthal's design «buildable». In 1930–31 he built the DEWOG houses in Dessau with Hans Waloschek: seven blocks of flats, arranged in a comb pattern along Heidestrasse.

Exile in Shanghai—Activities as an Interior Decorator, Planner, University Professor, and Architectural Consultant to the Railway Authorities

national socialist politics
emigration and exile

After an involuntary pause due to the economic crisis, Paulick's career as an architect temporarily came to an end—in 1933 he had to flee persecution by the National Socialists. Followed by his younger brother Rudolf, he headed to Shanghai, where his friend and colleague Rudolf Hamburger had preceded him. All the circumstances of his rapid departure into exile show that Hartmut Frank's assumption—«in the overwhelming majority of cases, exile was the result of life-threatening racial or political persecution rather than being caused by architectural paternalism»⁵—does not hold true for Paulick: he fled from both.⁶

bauhaus representing modernization
bauhaus symbolizing modern life

In Shanghai, he earned his living at first as an interior decorator in the luxury residential market; together with his brother, he designed interiors with echoes of the «Bauhaus style» and Bauhaus art, and in some cases with historical details if the clients so desired Fig. 3. Alongside his business activities, he was involved in émigré cultural organizations. His political convictions became apparent in 1939, when he began to support resistance to the National Socialist regime by collecting and passing on information. This went hand in hand with increasingly independent planning work. In the early 1940s he started teaching at the American St. John's University as a Professor of Interior Design and Urban Planning. In 1945 he played a significant role in drawing up the first master plan for the Shanghai region and influenced planning for a whole series of stations as architectural consultant to the railway authorities. In his dissertation on Hamburger and Paulick in

- [K] There are many facets of Modernism and modernity as well as many ambivalent aspects. What does that mean for our own concepts and visions?

Shanghai, Eduard Kögel has intensively examined the work of both architects.⁷ His knowledge of local conditions enabled him to clarify many details, including correcting Paulick's exaggerated self-portrayal as an influential architect. As Kögel's investigations reveal, although Paulick did not manage to realize a new building independently during his Shanghai period, he was able to gather a wealth of experience in planning residential areas, transport infrastructure and entire urban districts.

Reconciling «Socialist Realism» with
Industrialized Construction Processes:
Paulick at the Bauakademie, Berlin,
and as Chief Architect in Hoyerswerda,
Schwedt, and Halle-Neustadt

In spring 1950 Paulick moved to the newly founded GDR, but only after some of his preferred options, in Gropius' circles in the USA or in West Germany, had failed to materialize. He must have realized what might await him because his father, who had returned from a concentration camp, had warned him about conditions in the Soviet-occupied zone. It was the prospect of working in an influential position on major social construction programmes that made up his mind. Those hopes were indeed realized at first. After a short period of familiarization at the Institut für Bauwesen [East Berlin's Institute of Construction Engineering], then still under Hans Scharoun's leadership, on 26th July 1950 Paulick presented his vision for the new state's most important building project, which he had been officially commissioned to plan: the redesign of the Berlin-Mitte district ^{Fig. 4}. The plans show a «Forum of Democracy» with modern parliament and administration buildings around a wide plaza in front of the Rotes Rathaus [«Red» Town Hall], beyond which the Stadtschloss or City Palace is visible, reconstructed without its original cupola or the Apothecary Wing. Incorporating the tower of the FIAPP (International Federation of Resistance Fighters) monument, the Forum symbolizes an «anti-fascist democratic» order that aspired to more than just national

- [K] validity. With this design, Paulick put forward a vision of a renewed, monumental Modernism. The centre's functions were conceived to serve the people during festivities and in everyday life, while at the same time «once again making it possible to be one with nature, humankind's most natural and primitive joy in life».⁸

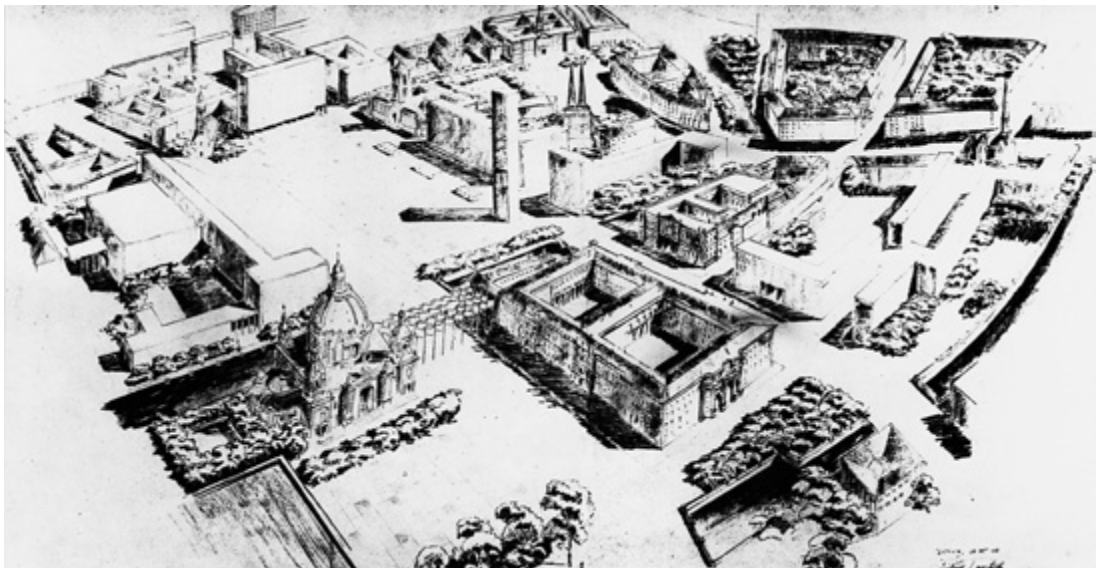


Fig. 3
Shanghai, home furnishing with murals,
1946–49

Fig. 4
Berlin, centre as «Forum of Democracy»,
with Berlin Palace, new square at the
Rotes Rathaus townhall and tower of
the «FIAPP» monument, aerial view from
the west, signed, 26th July 1950

Fig. 5
Berlin, centre as «Berlin Forum», with
central square, high-rise building, and the
reconstructed Lindenforum, mock-up
in south-west perspective, autumn 1951

Paulick's November 1950 plan for the «Wohnstadt Friedrichshain» [Friedrichshain Residential Ensemble] seems similarly remarkable. New apartment blocks, in some cases free-standing and slightly curving, are set in spatial relation to the existing building fabric, which is largely preserved, with no dogmatic obsession with right angles. Only two of these blocks were constructed and were realized in conjunction with Werner Schmidt and Dieter Zahn along Graudenzer Strasse in 1950–51. The high-rise building at Weberwiese was also originally a Paulick project, integrated into his plans for the Friedrichshain Residential Ensemble. The first, still purely modern design from January 1951 reflected international discussions on high-rise residential buildings in keeping with the times and at the same time responded to contemporary demands for «realistic» propaganda art with large-format public art on the cruciform building's north-facing side.

It was only his refusal to adapt his high-rise building entirely to the required silhouette effect derived from on the Soviet model that cost Paulick the commission at the end of July 1951: Hermann Henselmann, all of whose «proposals» had previously failed, came up with the design for the new symbolic structure and thus found his way back into the leading group of top architects.

Richard Paulick had in the meantime given in to demands to incorporate «valuable national traditions» into architecture. The Deutsche Sporthalle, constructed from March to August 1951 as the first new building on Stalinallee, hinted at the «critical working-through» of Berlin's classicist architectural heritage. Until autumn 1951 his further designs for the city centre moved closer to the Moscow-skyscraper typology ^{Fig. 5}; however, the Central Building he envisaged for that setting was always intended as an antithesis to the Lindenforum, which Paulick began in 1952 with his sumptuous reconstruction of the State Opera and completed by 1970. Winning second prize in the Stalinallee competition proved his suitability for monumental yet simultaneously «people-friendly» urban development. He coordinated the avenue's overall design and even managed to integrate Henselmann's unconventional designs into the ensemble of the «first socialist street». His monumental apartment blocks in section C combined a process of working-through historical building forms and systematic utilisation of such forms to structure space with similarly consistent experimentation with industrial assembly techniques. This contradiction between exterior design and structural «formation» can hardly be interpreted in Paulick's oeuvre as a consequence of a move away

doctrine of «national tradition»

«socialist in content and national in form»

socialist realism



Fig. 6
Hoyerswerda, mock-up, top view, 1960,
with Rudolf Hamburger and others

Fig. 7
Halle-Neustadt, 2nd Residential complex,
centre seen from the west, 1967–68,
with Hans-Joachim Gürtler. Photograph:
Gerald Große, 1969



Fig. 8
Halle/Saale, Thälmann Square with elevated road, high-rise buildings and the «Haus des Lehrers», seen from the south-east, 1964–70, Felix Riehl, Richard Paulick and others



Fig. 9
Merseburg, High-rise building with Bodenreform-Denkmal (land reform monument), seen from the north-east, 1969–70 by Gerhard Berndt, Herbert Gebhardt, Max Kurzawa; artists Gerhard Lichtenfeld, Dieter Rex, Martin Wetzel. Photograph: Martin Wimmer



Fig. 10
AMLO Academy for Marxist-Leninist Theory of Organisation, Berlin Köpenick, 1968–69, with Erich Rank, Hermann Korneli, Kurt Weitsch, and Dieter Balow

- [B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?
- [C] How can we explore the kinds of stand taken by Bauhaus and Modernist architects and designers and their consistency?

industrialized building
standardization

[B] [C] from architectural Modernism's principles of analysing function. As early as 1950 he had called in an exposé for housing construction to be industrialized.⁹ In his essay «Typus und Norm in der Wohnhausarchitektur» from autumn 1953,¹⁰ he sought to combine the postulates of «Socialist Realism» with generous functionality in the standardized buildings, and his Berlin experimental block of flats using large-panel construction methods,¹¹ the eastern section of Block C-South, built using prefabricated elements assembled on a concrete skeleton, and the planned continuation of this experiment as a «pilot series» on the Ringstraße development north of Strausberger Platz, designed in 1955, reveal ongoing efforts to industrialize residential construction.

rationalizing housing construction
standardization

Paulick's ambitions soon extended beyond his influence on the East Berlin building scene. Between 1955 and 1960, he helped shape the development and design of prefabricated housing and public buildings to a greater extent than any other GDR architect. However, his stance as an advocate of rigorous standardization, who at the same time adhered to all the positions of the «National Tradition» architectural ideology, made him unpopular in many circles. He was particularly criticized for two articles, published in autumn 1957¹² and spring 1958,¹³ in which he attacked the individualism of «free» building forms in standardized planning and insisted that existing architectural policy was fundamentally correct. Paulick even advocated retaining ornamentation and flatly refused to design according to functional elements: «Although certainly very few of our architects have read anything that Adolf Loos has written, his coffee-house philosophy with all its errors still continues to have an effect among them. The best peddlers of Loos' quarter-truths were those Bauhaus students who, after two semesters of the preliminary course and two semesters of the canteen, set out noisily to convince the world of the wisdom of *Neues Bauen* without ornamentation. Their impact is just as negative here as in the West.»¹⁴

architectural historiography
of modernism
processes of oblivion
and repression

socialist planning and building
planning and building in the gdr

Paulick's image has long been dominated by this brutal handling of people and concepts from his own past that he found unhelpful for the design problems of the time, which involved prefabricated columns, beams, slabs, and blocks. That led to any awareness of his further development as an architect largely being repressed. This evolution began in 1957 when he took on the position of Chief Architect in Hoyerswerda, the «second Socialist city». In this context he deployed newly developed structural typologies or previously frowned upon building types to structure

- [M] What are the criteria for being included in history or excluded from it, and for historical relevance? What kinds of stand do they reveal, and which blind spots and cognitive shortcomings do they generate?
- [N] How do our own cultural, social, and political beliefs and stances affect our understanding of the Bauhaus, Modernism, and modernity?

processes of oblivion and repression

space in the city centre and throughout the entire urban area ^{Fig. 6}. Old attacks on his reputation, now long faded into history, that were levelled at him by his «competitors» partly explain why this ensemble has to date merely been perceived as a testing ground. His work in Schwedt, from 1962 to 1965, is even more overshadowed, in this case by the idealized plans drawn up by Selman Selmanagić, which preceded Paulick's planning.¹⁵ A truly historical understanding of how this city developed can only emerge by analysing the concepts of both plans and systematically comparing these with the built environment. The focus in this context will be on the masterplan Richard Paulick developed in 1964 with Erich Rank and Werner Wolfram, which represents his—completely suppressed—legacy for Schwedt. Finally, the fourth «Socialist city», Halle-Neustadt, serves as an example of how mistaken Tobias Zervosen was in pronouncing that Paulick was «pushed into the background» after 1960 and «was <deported to the provinces> with the plans for Schwedt and (later) Halle-Neustadt».¹⁶ Quite the contrary—he attained the zenith of his success with his activities in the city and district of Halle ^{Fig. 7}. He succeeded here bringing together all the experience that he had gained since his training in creating building compositions that were as practical as they were monumental. In the functional «differentiation» of the Halle-Neustadt centres, the Bauhaus functional-analytical working method took on a new significance, while Paulick's design imprimatur became more striking than ever in the paired groupings of high-rises in the Neustadt district and especially on Halle's Thälmannplatz ^{Figs. 8, 9}. A late work, the Academy for Marxist-Leninist Organizational Studies (AMLO) in Berlin's Wuhlheide, revealed an architect capable of integrating structural designs and functional relationships within a building even at a ripe old age ^{Fig. 10}.¹⁷ As Chief Architect of the Bauakademie's model and experimental office, he subsequently began work on some cultural buildings, especially theatre modernization projects, before being ousted from all his posts in 1974. Richard Paulick died in Berlin on 4th March 1979.

- [M] [N] To conclude, at a time when criticism of the Bauhaus—as an instrument of self-marketing—is degenerating into slander, researching the professional development of designers associated with the Bauhaus requires renewed analytical efforts. This undertaking must be based on an examination of the buildings, the plans, the texts and on a systematic comparison of these with other contemporary documents. This is the only way that the

architectural concepts and political-economic ideologies of an era can shed light on each other and is also the only way to determine Richard Paulick's place in German architectural and planning history.

Notes

- 1 The ruptures and contradictions in Paulick's «oeuvre» are addressed, albeit with varying degrees of detail, in the book accompanying the exhibition in Roßlau and at the Bauhaus Museum in Dessau: Wolfgang Thöner and Peter Müller (eds.), *Bauhaus-Tradition und DDR-Moderne. Der Architekt Richard Paulick*, Munich/Berlin 2006.
- 2 Cf. Uta Karin Schmitt, *Vom Bauhaus zur Bauakademie. Carl Fieger, Architekt und Designer (1895–1960)*. Dissertation, University of Heidelberg, 2015, <http://archiv.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/volltextserver/18979/> (Consulted April 8, 2020).
- 3 The information about Paulick's youth and «apprenticeship years» is compiled from the following publications: Manfred Müller, *Das Leben eines Architekten. Porträt Richard Paulick*, Halle (Saale) 1975; Adalbert Behr, «Richard Paulick»; in: id. (ed.): *Große Baumeister*, Bauakademie der DDR, Schriften des Instituts für Städtebau und Architektur, Vol. 2, Berlin 1990, pp. 297–347. These sources require more precise evaluation and a critical appraisal of the facts and evaluations communicated therein.
- 4 «Vom Bauhaus zu den Wohnsilos von Hoyerswerda. Eine Ausstellung zum 100. Geburtstag des Architekten Richard Paulick in Dessau und Rosslau. Karin Fischer im Gespräch mit Jens [Wolfgang] Thöner», 05.11.2003, https://www.deutschlandfunk.de/vom-bauhaus-zu-den-wohn-silos-von-hoyerswerda.691.de.html?dram:article_id=47500 (Consulted April 8, 2020).
- 5 Hartmut Frank, «Neues Bauen in Nazideutschland?», in: *Giuseppe Terragni, 1904–1943. Moderne und Faschismus in Italien*, (eds.) Stefan Germer and Achim Preiß, Munich 1991, p. (57–72) 58.
- 6 Some information on Paulick's local activities in the Socialist Workers' Party (SAP) as well as on agitation against his architectural works is provided in: Manfred Müller, *Das Leben eines Architekten. Porträt Richard Paulick*, Halle (Saale) 1975, Chapter III, pp. 55–68. The chapter is titled «Mann mit kämpferischem Herzen» [Man with a fighting heart], as Gropius apparently called the young Paulick.
- 7 Eduard Kögel, *Zwei Poelzigsschüler in der Emigration. Rudolf Hamburger und Richard Paulick zwischen Shanghai und Ost-Berlin (1950–1955)*. Dissertation, Faculty of Architecture, Bauhaus University Weimar, 2006, http://e-pub.uni-weimar.de/opus4/frontdoor/deliver/index/docId/929/file/diss+koegel_pdfa.pdf (Consulted April 8, 2020).
- 8 Richard Paulick, «Die Architektur der Stadtzentren», in: *Sonntag*, 17.08.1950, p. 3, quoted from: Simone Hain, ««Von der Geschichte beauftragt, Zeichen zu setzen». Zum Monumentalitätsverständnis in der DDR am Beispiel der Gestaltung der Hauptstadt Berlin», in: *Moderne Architektur in Deutschland 1900 bis 2000. Macht und Monument*, (eds.) Romana Schneider and Wilfried Wang, Ostfildern-Ruit 1998, p. (188–219) 194.
- 9 See Jens Ebert, *Richard Paulick. Architekt und Städtebauer zwischen Bauhausideal und realem Sozialismus*, Bauhaus und Gegenwart, Schriften zur Moderne, Dessau 2004, pp. 18–20. One of the merits of the publication is that the importance of Paulick's analytical work is repeatedly highlighted, in addition to numerous communications drawing on a young collaborator's insights.
- 10 See Richard Paulick, «Typus und Norm in der Wohnhausarchitektur», in: *Deutsche Architektur*, Vol. 2. (1953), Issue 5, pp. 218–225.
- 11 On authorship cf. Schmitt 2015 (as Note 2).
- 12 Richard Paulick, «Einige Bemerkungen zur Architektur-Diskussion»; in: *Deutsche Architektur*, Vol. 6. (1957), Issue 9, pp. 479–481 (editorial deadline: 25th July 1957).
- 13 Richard Paulick, «Einige weitere Bemerkungen zur Architektur-Diskussion» in: *Deutsche Architektur*, Vol. 7 (1958), Issue 4, pp. 224 f. (editorial deadline: 20th February 1958).
- 14 *Ibid.*, p. 224.
- 15 On Selmanagic's urban design in the context of Bauhaus Modernism see: Simone Hain, «Sanssouci oder die Suche nach dem wahren Schwedt. Eine Bauhaus-Geschichte. Exkurs», in: *wende bauhaus | bauhaus wende. 50 Jahre industrielles Gartenreich*, (eds.) Hermann-Henselmann-Stiftung and Universität Kassel (Thomas Flierl and Harald Kegler), Vol. 3. 2019, Issue 2, pp. 14 f.
- 16 Tobias Zervosen, *Architekten in der DDR. Realität und Selbstverständnis einer Profession* (Dissertation, ETH Zürich, gta, 2013), Bielefeld 2016, p. 165, note 399.
- 17 See Oliver Sukrow, *Arbeit. Wohnen. Computer. Zur Utopie der bildenden Kunst und Architektur der DDR in den 1960er Jahren*. (Dissertation, Heidelberg University, ZEGK, 2016), 2018, <https://heiup.uni-heidelberg.de/catalog/book/422> (Consulted April 8, 2020)

«times to come will not care for streamlining and machines to live in».

Richard Paulick in Shanghai in Search of a More Humane Architecture

Eduard Kögel

- [B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?

emigration and exile

thinking from the perspective of diasporic conditions

From 1925 to 1927, Richard Paulick (1903–1979) studied with Hans Poelzig (1869–1936) in Berlin and subsequently worked for Walter Gropius (1883–1969) until 1930. Prior to this, he had realized the Stahlhaus in Dessau in 1926/27 with Georg Mucbe (1895–1987) and in the process met Marcel Breuer (1902–1981), with whom he briefly shared an office. Exiled in Shanghai from 1933, Paulick felt isolated from the discourse on Modernism and in the 1940s attempted to get in touch with erstwhile kindred spirits by mail.¹

Questions Across the Pacific

modern architecture

Paulick first wrote to his former mentor Walter Gropius at Harvard in July 1941, asking what had become of modern architecture: «Besides: though we are wearing collars, shirts and trousers, Shanghai still is the place without any cultural life. [...] Sometimes I think that the modern movement died out entirely, [...] and that the latest development in architecture is W. D. Teague, at least, that's what we know. [...] The purpose of my letter therefore is to find out, whether the movement, which the bauhaus started is still alive.»²

rethinking modern architecture

- Gropius did not reply to this letter, perhaps because of communication problems during the Pacific War, perhaps because he interpreted as an affront the reference to Walter Dorwin Teague (1883–1960), who had built his reputation on exhibition and entertainment architecture—especially the buildings for Ford at the Century of Progress exhibition in Chicago (1933/34) and at the New York World's Fair in 1939/40. Gropius also failed to answer Paulick's letter of 27th August 1945—two weeks before the Japanese army in China capitulated—in which he once again expressed his discomfiture at being cut off from questions of architectural development in Shanghai.³ An article from April 1941, in which Paulick speculated about how the Second World War might have an effect on the development of art and design analogous to that of the First World War reveals how important and urgent the issues were for Paulick: «On the European continent we have been witnessing since 1900 a turning away of taste from historical copies and eclecticism [sic] in arts and decorative crafts. Especially after the first world war when Expressionism and as a reaction Functionalism came into favour, the Americans finally found the culmination in their streamlined house, room, furniture, teacups, cutlery and every other thing existing, besides their cars. [...] And

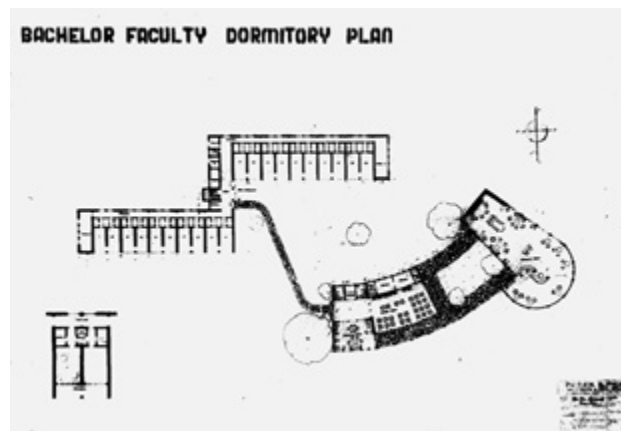
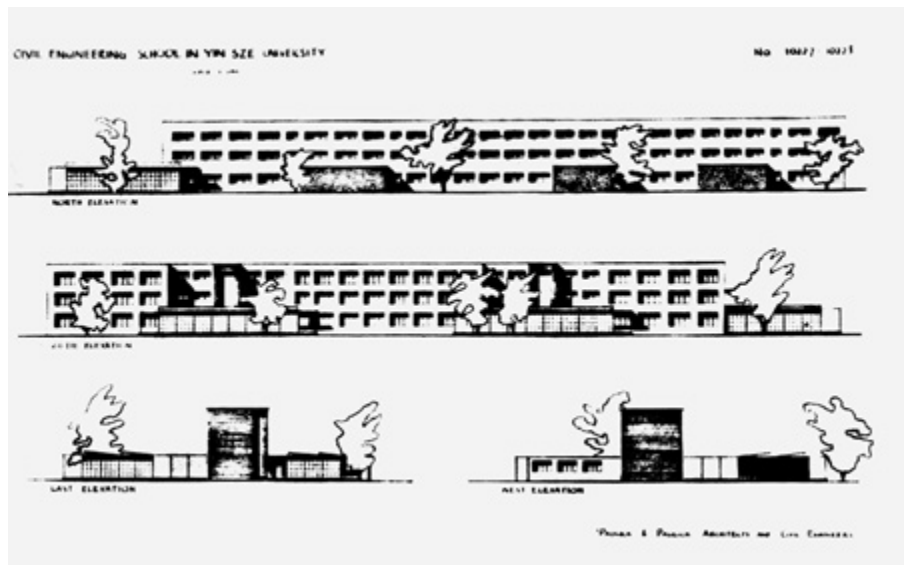
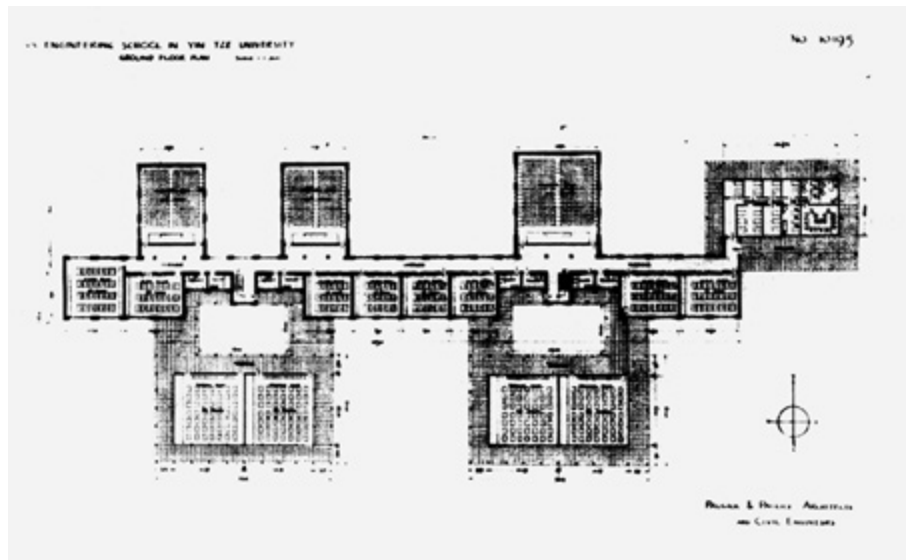


Fig. 1
Layout of the school building of Yin Sze University

Fig. 2
Views of the school building of Yin Sze University

Fig. 3
Layout of the Student residence with community pavilion of Yin Sze University



Fig. 4
Student residence with community pavilion of Yin Sze University

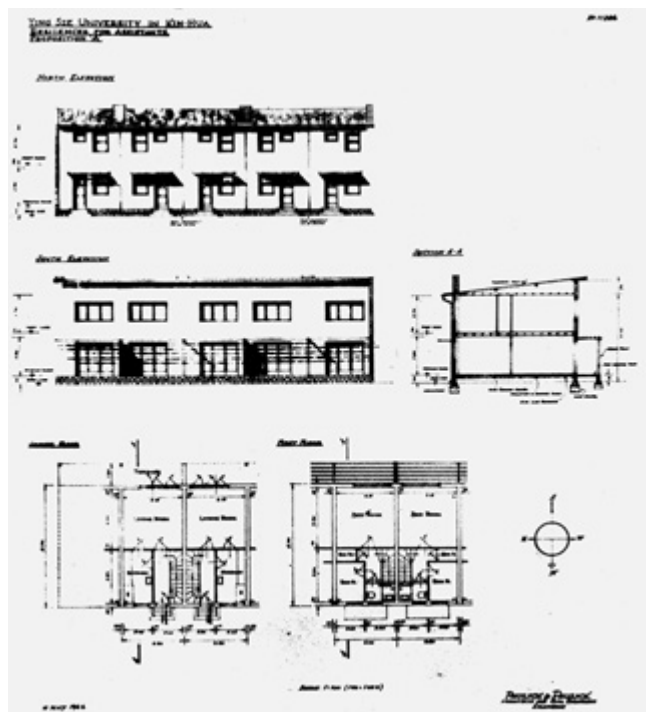


Fig. 5
Terraced houses for the teachers of Yin Sze University

nobody today will imagine that streamlining will last for a thousand years hence. [...] A new movement in arts is appearing. [...] we find a new realism in art, a return to nature and naturalism. [...] But as sure as the last world war lead us to Expressionism as the individual reaction of the human being to force and regimentation, so will this war bring another reaction of the oppressed mind, which in times to come will not care for stream-lining and machines to live in.»⁴

Further developments took Paulick by surprise, for in the autumn of 1943 he was appointed as the second full-time Professor of Interior Design and Urban Planning at St. John's University in Shanghai.⁵ The available archive material does not allow us to reconstruct exactly what he taught until the end of the war in autumn 1945.⁶ However, at the end of 1945, Shanghai's municipal government commissioned him to draw up a plan for the metropolis' future, together with several colleagues from St. John's University.⁷ As a result, teaching at the university was subsequently very strongly influenced by practical problems, which gave students an opportunity to work on new urban planning solutions. In addition to his professorship, Paulick, together with his brother Rudolf (1908–1963), who had trained at the Bauhaus under Mies van der Rohe (1886–1969),⁸ worked for the interior design firm *Modern Homes*, founded in late 1936, and for *Paulick & Paulick, architects and civil engineers*, founded in 1943.

A University in Jinhua

The first opportunity for *Paulick & Paulick* to participate in re-defining architecture came in April/May 1946 when the firm was awarded a contract for a civil engineering school at Yin Sze University⁹ in the city of Jinhua in Zhejiang province, about 300 kilometres south-west of Shanghai. Unfortunately, neither a site plan nor a description of this project has survived in Paulick's estate, only a dozen plans with floor layouts, elevations and perspective views of a library, accommodation for teachers and students and a central teaching building with classrooms.

The teaching building consists of a three-storey cuboid main volume with classrooms, extended to the north by three single-storey lecture pavilions and an administrative pavilion, and on the south side by two single-storey pavilions, each containing two teaching spaces and connected to the main building by a flat

neues bauen [new building]
connecting architecture and
nature/environment

roof. Garden courtyards that mediate between the interior and exterior with open walkways are set between the pavilions on the south side and the main building. The idea here was obviously to create communicative spaces for informal exchanges. In the main part of the building, sixteen smaller classrooms were accommodated on each of the three floors. On the north-facing side, an access corridor runs along the entire length of the building and is echoed in the façade by windows arranged in a uniform grid. In contrast, the single-storey pavilions are shown with rubble masonry. The eastern and western end walls of the main building and the stairwells on the south side seem to be envisaged with exposed brickwork, while the pavilions that project to the south appear completely transparent beneath the roof on two sides and deploy rubble masonry on the other two sides. The objective-rational design approach, pared-down to the materials' expressivity, moves away from the decorative Art Deco solutions then fashionable in Shanghai ^{Figs. 1,2}. The same applies to the residential buildings for students and teachers. Single-storey shared pavilions are set across from three-storey student residences, while narrow terraced houses, with gangway access on one side and narrow garden plots on the other, are reminiscent of Bruno Taut's 1920s housing estates. It is fair to assume that Paulick formulated an architectural approach based on his own thoughts here, characterized by function and material and taking *Neues Bauen* in Germany as a starting point to interweave architecture and nature. The haptic quality of the chosen materials and rigorous architectural form are combined in places with informally designed open spaces that connect nature with architecture in an abstract vein ^{Figs. 3-5}.

A University in Shanghai

The contract to build a new campus for the Hua Tung University in Shanghai also prompted Walter Gropius to engage with China, together with TAC—The Architects Collaborative—and with Chinese-born architect I.M. Pei as an associate.¹⁰ At TAC, Norman C. Fletcher (1917–2007) was responsible for the project.¹¹ In a letter to Paulick dated April 1948, Gropius only mentioned the project in passing, although it was also to include St. John's University, which Paulick certainly did not yet know ^{Fig. 6,12}

The project ideas were strongly influenced by I.M. Pei, who attempted, through the urban planning angle, to transpose

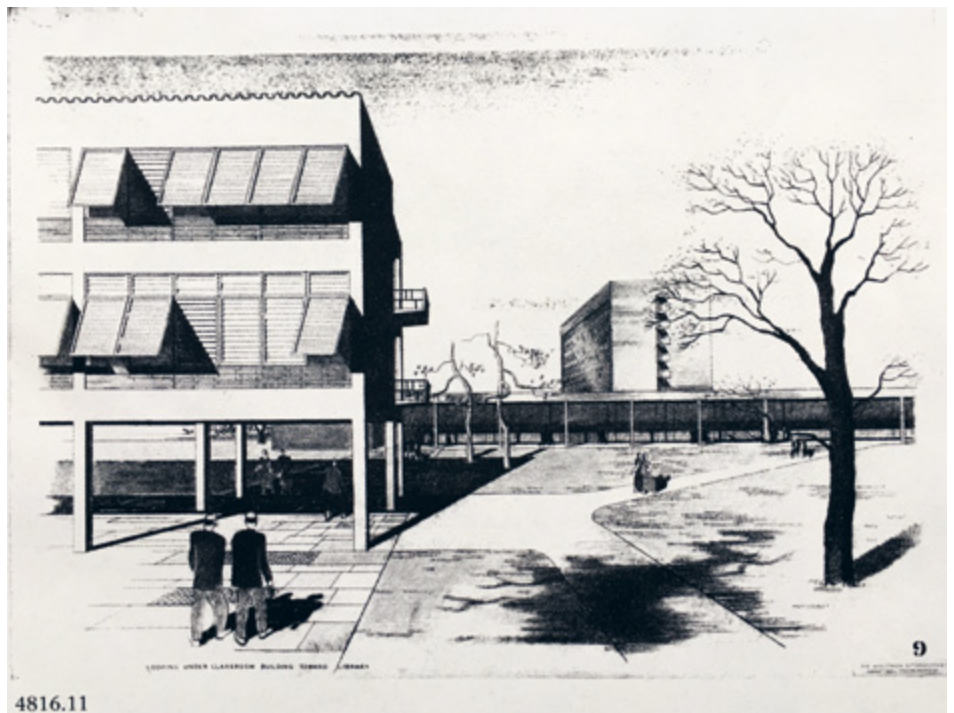
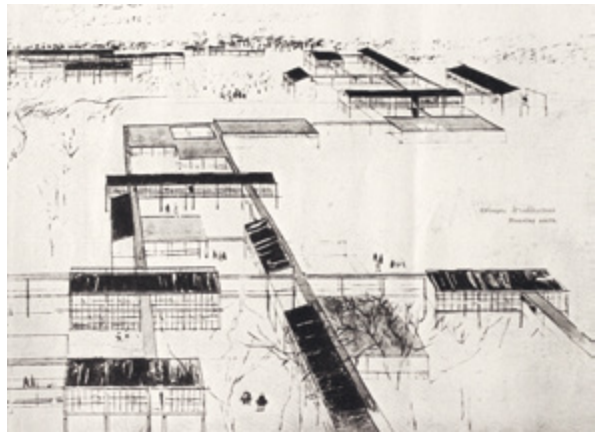


Fig. 6
Sketch by I.M. Pei for Hua Tung
University campus

Fig. 7
Norman Fletcher's drawing shows
school buildings and the library

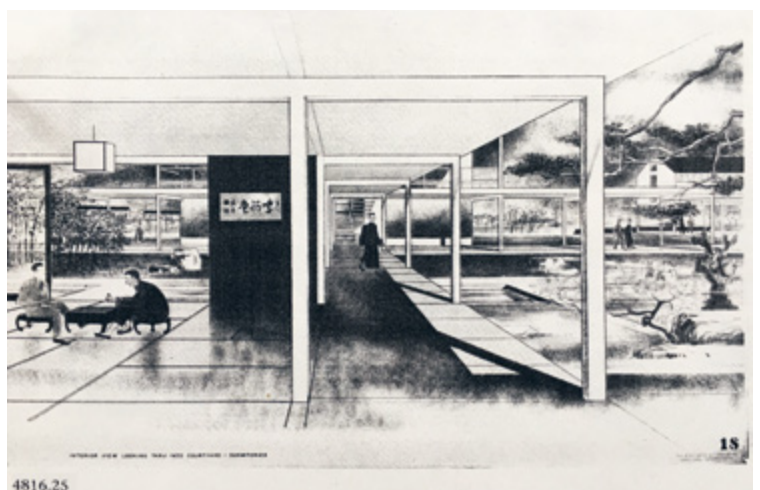


Fig. 8
Ground floor with courtyards for
residential buildings by I.M. Pei

- [B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?
- [C] How can we explore the kinds of stand taken by Bauhaus and Modernist architects and designers and their consistency?

relationship to history
reinterpretation of tradition

traditional Chinese garden concepts into a campus and to ensure the architecture chimed with modular construction methods drawn from traditional timber construction. As the archives do not contain an urban development plan for Paulick's university plans, the two designs can only be compared in architectural terms. Many aspects reveal that TAC creatively translated themes from Chinese tradition into hybrid spatial structures. As Pei explained in an interview, he admired Mies van der Rohe's aesthetics far more than those of Gropius.¹⁵ His sketches of the entire complex show a skeleton construction method in the pavilions, which are connected by covered walkways. Using vocabulary developed by Mies, Pei picks up on the structural configuration of Chinese wooden architecture. While the floor layouts, for example for the teaching buildings, resemble those drawn up by Paulick, the facades are very different. The teaching buildings Fletcher worked on have an open-plan ground floor to encourage users to pass time informally under the built volumes, while the facades have highly nuanced designs to respond to the climatic conditions. The strips of windows on the main facades are fitted with wooden shutters that could be set in an open position for ventilation purposes. This simple technique was not found in any of the buildings in which Gropius was involved up until that point, nor does it come from the Chinese tradition Figs. 7, 8.

identity formation
relationship to traditions and cultures

- [B] [C] I.M. Pei's role in the design for Hua Tung University cannot be overestimated. In an interview more than 50 years later, he explained: «Tradition, culture and life itself are of crucial importance for architecture. If life has an Eastern character, you shouldn't impose Western style on it!»¹⁴ Gropius had a contradictory attitude towards history or rather towards traditions and cultures. On the one hand, he lauded himself and TAC for adapting to local conditions, later using the project as a reference demonstrating his approach to foreign cultures when trying to obtain commissions in Baghdad.¹⁵ On the other hand, in 1949, in the context of the new buildings TAC designed on the Harvard campus, he wrote with reference to history and culture: «There is no need to emulate the «atmosphere» of this or that period. *New buildings must be invented, not copied*».¹⁶ Certainly, if he had been asked about the Hua Tung Campus for Shanghai, Gropius would not have spoken of an «atmospheric imitation», although that is exactly what can be seen here. In the same article, Gropius also stated «the student needs the real building, not buildings in disguise. So long as we do not ask him to go about in period clothes, it seems

[B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?

absurd to build college buildings in pseudo-period design.»¹⁷ It is astonishing point to note in this context how the students are depicted in the perspective drawings for the Hua Tung Project; they are often drawn in traditional Chinese dress and thus actually contradict Gropius' statement, in terms of both fashion and architecture.

Replies Across the Pacific Ocean

In a letter from New York on 2nd November 1948, Bauhaus alumnus Xanti Schawinsky refers to a standstill in architectural development in the USA: «Architecture is at a standstill [...] no courage, no ideas.»¹⁸ In his response Paulick wrote: «When the wars ended in 1945, I practically knew nothing of what had become of modern architecture [...] around 1940 I wrote a letter to Gropius, asking him whether that was so. Probably he never got the letter. Fortunately! — [...] That modern architecture was very much alive, I found out only after V-J Day [Victory over Japan Day], when we slowly got into contact again with the outer world. It actually was like a new inspiration to me, and I tried hard to get back into contemporary life again, through books and magazines. [...] Every month I go through 40–50 magazines, which I get from all over the world.»¹⁹ He believed he could see progress in contemporary architecture, especially in the more recent buildings by Marcel Breuer.²⁰ «You say that architecture is at a standstill. I was forced to look at the development from a much further distance, both in space and time, and I believe there is a progress, a very considerable progress even. The human element receives much more stress, and I believe that matters. If I look back at Toerten and compare it [...] to Breuer's recent residences, it looks to me like all the way from the Stone Ages to the Renaissance, when human individuality was first recognized».²¹

The individuality Paulick cites in Marcel Breuer's architecture could be seen as relating to its transparency and to transitions between interior and exterior, the use of free-style fieldstone for the plinth areas, as well as to his entire sensitive and differentiated choice of materials, which on the one hand creates a connection to craftsmanship and on the other hand to local availability—while last but not least enabling an informal living space set between organic nature and formally strict conceptions of architecture. Paulick was probably familiar at this time in particular with Breuer's

modern architecture

rethinking modern architecture

rethinking modern architecture

Geller House, which was presented in detail in 1947 with excellent photographs by Ezra Stoller (1915–2004), for example in the US magazine *Progressive Architecture*.²² At a symposium in February 1948 at the Museum of Modern Art in New York entitled «What is Happening to Modern Architecture?», Breuer had explained his idea of architecture: «I don't feel too much impulse to set ‹human› (in the best sense of the word) against ‹formal›. [...] just as Sullivan did not eat his functionalism as hot as he cooked it, Le Corbusier did not build his machine for living! [...] ‹Human› (seems to me more than just a pleasant forgiving of imperfection and an easy-goingness as to precision of thinking, as to the quality of planning, as to consequences of materials, details and construction.»²³ Fig. 9

A New Architecture?

neues bauen [new building]
connecting architecture and
nature/environment

relationship to traditions and cultures

faith in progress

There is much to suggest that Paulick saw his own intentions reflected in the publications on Breuer's work in the USA. For him, as for Breuer, strict functionality stood in contrast to a differentiated materials-related architecture that was intended to provide a rather informal framework for a freely unfolding lifestyle. Paulick's designs for the campus in Jinhua are formally clearly oriented towards the ideas of *Neues Bauen* from Germany, but they establish a much stronger connection between architecture and the environment. The closed and modular courtyard-house architecture of traditional China remained alien to him and he would probably have been amazed to see Gropius' or better Pei's design for Hua Tung University. Paulick's focus was not on atmospheric, modular adaptation to the host country's traditions. His attitude at the time was clearly influenced by the idea of progress, as manifested in the masonry buildings in Jinhua, which were new by Chinese standards, with large windows opening to the surroundings that were intended to position the user in a direct relationship with nature.

Paulick's professorial colleague Huang Zuoshen (also: Henry Huang) (1915–1975), who founded the architecture department at St. John's University in 1942 and had been the first Chinese student to study with Gropius at Harvard, also defined the architecture of the future around 1947. «The modern architects [...] express their ideas by means of industrialized materials in fine and elegant forms of metals and glass, and the nature of organic materials, such as the strength and the mass of the stone, of timber

- [B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?
- [C] How can we explore the kinds of stand taken by Bauhaus and Modernist architects and designers and their consistency?

and brick, the interplay of buildings and landscape, such as white surfaces against the background of foliage.»²⁴ An aesthetics of materials in the context of nature seems to have been the common denominator among colleagues at St. John's University. However, Paulick was sceptical about abstraction as an end in itself, as he wrote in September 1949 to Fritz Levedag²⁵, also formerly at the Bauhaus: «[...] with Picasso, there is an unmistakable desire to keep pace with the political events, with the time in which he lives. In his work, I have the impression that the return to the figurative is being prepared once again. With the others, I have the impression that Existentialism has been discovered and made the basis of abstract art. That must inevitably end in artistic sterility, at best in the purely decorative».²⁶ In this letter he also makes clear that he is influenced by political motives and wants to put his creative powers at the service of a new social order. After the war, Paulick's goal took shape as a desire to rethink architecture through the prism of its integration into nature and its socio-political impact. The new realism in art, the return to nature and naturalism, were ideas that in 1941 had become linked to the rejection of «stream-lining» and «machines to live in».

[B]

rethinking modern architecture
connecting architecture and nature/
environment
social impact of architecture

After his return from exile in April 1950, Paulick was again confronted with stylistic debates, this time in East Berlin in the ideological crossfire of Socialist Realism. In September 1950, he published an article in the weekly newspaper *Sonntag*, which was published by the GDR's *Kulturbund* [Cultural Association]. In it, he criticized the turn away from nature and stated that he expected new impetus to come from societal discourse. «The cities of the past closed man off from nature [...]. They created an artificial environment that could not replace man's most natural and primitive joy in life—being one with nature. [...] we must express new social contents through our architectural design, through new architectonic concepts. The stylistic development over the last fifty years, which many have seen as a revolution in art, was anything but revolutionary in its ideology».²⁷ After heated arguments, this challenge of finding a revolutionary new conception culminated, for Paulick too, in national design as demanded by ideology, which was to shape the GDR's architecture in the first half of the Fifties.²⁸

[C]

planning and building in the gdr
doctrine of «national tradition»
«socialist in content and national in form»

socialist realism



Fig. 9
Geller House in Lawrence by Marcel
Breuer, 1944/45. Photograph: Ezra Stoller

- Notes
- 1 On Paulick's emigration in Shanghai, cf. Eduard Kögel, *Zwei Poelzigsschüler in der Emigration: Rudolf Hamburger und Richard Paulick zwischen Shanghai und Ost-Berlin (1930–1955)*. Dissertation, Bauhaus-Universität Weimar, 2007, <https://e-pub.uni-weimar.de/opus4/frontdoor/index/index/docId/929> (Consulted on April 16, 2020); id., «*The Glamourboy of Hongkew*, Richard Paulick in Shanghai—Emigration und Politik», pp. 45–64, in: *Bauhaus-Tradition und DDR-Moderne. Der Architekt Richard Paulick*, (eds.) Wolfgang Thöner and Peter Müller, Munich, Berlin 2006, p. 29.
 - 2 Letter from Richard Paulick to Walter Gropius, July 6, 1941, Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin, Walter Gropius' estate. <http://open-archiv.bauhaus.de/eMuseum-Plus> (Consulted April 22, 2020).
 - 3 Letter from Richard Paulick to Walter Gropius, August 27, 1945, *ibid.*
 - 4 Richard Paulick, «Interior Decoration in Shanghai», in: *The China Journal*, Vol. XXXIV, Nr. 4, April 1941, pp. 185–187.
 - 5 Letter of thanks from Q.L. Young to Richard Paulick, September 1, 1949, Richard Paulick's estate, private archive of Natascha Paulick. The first full-time professor and founder of the Faculty of Architecture was Henry Huang, an architect trained at the Architectural Association in London and with Gropius at Harvard. See also Hou Li, «Moderne Design- und Stadtplanerausbildung an der St. John's Universität (1942–1952)», in: *BAUHAUS SHANGHAI STALINALLEE HA-NEU. Der Lebensweg des Architekten Richard Paulick*, (ed.) Thomas Flierl, Berlin 2020.
 - 6 The estate of Richard Paulick is in the collection of the Architekturarchiv der TU München and in the private archive of Natascha Paulick.
 - 7 See on this point Eduard Kögel, «Die Planung für Groß-Shanghai (1945–1949)», in: *BAUHAUS SHANGHAI STALINALLEE HA-NEU* 2020 (as Note 5).
 - 8 Rudolf Paulick received his diploma in 1932, cf. Bauhaus-Archiv (ed.), *Mehr als der blosse Zweck. Mies van der Rohe at the Bauhaus 1930–1933*, Berlin 2001, unpag.
 - 9 Sometimes referred to on the plans as Jin Tze University.
 - 10 For a detailed presentation of the planning and I.M. Pei's role : Eduard Kögel, «Walter Gropius und die Chinesische Architektur» / «Modern Vernacular—Walter Gropius and Chinese Architecture», <http://www.bauhaus-imaginista.org/articles/343/walter-gropius-und-die-chinesische-architektur/de?0bbf55ceffc3073699d40c945ada9faf=4eki40rkhrnh54i6uuf8e3v6e0> (Consulted March 24, 2020). [English: <http://www.bauhaus-imaginista.org/articles/343/modern-vernacular> (Consulted May 5, 2020).]
 - 11 John C. Harkness, *The Walter Gropius Archive. Volume 4: 1945–1969, The Work of The Architects Collaborative*, New York, London 1991, pp. 1–16.
 - 12 Letter from Walter Gropius to Richard Paulick, April 6, 1948, estate of Walter Gropius (as Note 2).
 - 13 Ulf Meyer, «I.M. Pei, Interview», in: *Beijing Shanghai Shenzhen, Städte des 21. Jahrhunderts*, (eds.) Kai Vöckler and Dirk Luckow, Frankfurt, New York 2000, p. 127.
 - 14 *Ibid.*
 - 15 Letter from Walter Gropius to Ellen and Nizzar Jawdat, September 9, 1954, Walter Gropius' Estate (as Note 2). See also Regina Göckede, *Spätkoloniale Moderne: Le Corbusier, Ernst May, Frank Lloyd Wright. The Architects Collaborative und die Globalisierung der Moderne*, Basel 2016, p. 392.
 - 16 Walter Gropius, «Not Gothic But Modern for Our Colleges», in: *New York Times Magazine*, October 23, 1949, <https://www.nytimes.com/1949/10/23/archives/not-gothic-but-modern-for-our-colleges-a-noted-architect-says-we.html>, reprinted in: Walter Gropius, *Scope of Total Architecture*, New York 1962, p. (66–70) 68. German version cf.: Walter Gropius, «Die Baukunst ist keine angewandte Archäologie», in: Walter Gropius, *Architektur. Wege zu einer optischen Kultur*, Frankfurt, Hamburg 1956, pp. (61–64) 63.
 - 17 *Ibid.*, p. 67 (English version), p. 62 (German version).
 - 18 Letter from Xanti Schawinsky to Richard Paulick, November 2, 1948, estate of Richard Paulick, private archive of Natascha Paulick.
 - 19 Letter from Richard Paulick to Xanti Schawinsky, November 15, 1948 (as Note 18).
 - 20 Paulick knew Breuer from the Bauhaus in Dessau, where he was able to realize the Stahlhaus together with Georg Muche in 1926/27. Wolfgang Thöner, «Zwischen Tradition und Moderne—Richard Paulick, das Bauhaus und die Architektur der Moderne», in: *Bauhaus-Tradition und DDR-Moderne* 2006 (as Note 1), p. (23–44) 29.
 - 21 *Ibid.*
 - 22 Marcel Breuer, «Geller House, Lawrence, Long Island», in: *Progressive Architecture* 2/1947, <https://breuer.syr.edu/xtf/view?docId=mets/11216.mets.xml;query=&brand=breuer> (Consulted on March 30, 2020).
 - 23 Marcel Breuer, «What is Happening to Modern Architecture?», in: Peter Blake, *Marcel Breuer: Architect and Designer*, New York 1949, p. 122.
 - 24 Tongji University (ed.), *Commemorative Accounts of Huang Zuoshen*, Shanghai 2012, p. 14. In the early 1950s, Henry Huang realized a Modernism-inspired school with a student residence, which bears a marked resemblance to the student residence for Jinhua designed by Paulick, in terms of its materials and connection to the environment.
 - 25 Fritz Levedag studied at the Bauhaus and worked in Gropius' office in Dessau and Berlin in the late 1920s at the same time as Paulick.
 - 26 Letter from Richard Paulick to Fritz Levedag, September 1, 1949, Richard Paulick's estate (as Note 5).
 - 27 Richard Paulig [sic, Paulick], «Die Architektur der Stadtzentren», in: *Sonntag*, Vol. 5, September 17, 1950.
 - 28 Cf. Eduard Kögel, «Das Hochhaus an der Weberwiese als Leitbau der Stalinallee. Hermann Henselmann, Richard Paulick, Hanns Hopp», in: *BAUHAUS SHANGHAI STALINALLEE HA-NEU* 2020 (as Note 5).

Panel Discussion I

with Ryan Fred Long, Raquel Franklin, Paola Ardizzola, Ulrich Hartung, and the Audience chaired by Titia Rixt Hoekstra

- [B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?
- [C] How can we explore the kinds of stand taken by Bauhaus and Modernist architects and designers and their consistency?

Titia Rixt Hoekstra

«taking a stand» as a concept

There is one thing that really struck me and that is the title of this conference, «Taking a stand?»: the concept of «taking a stand» and «*Haltung*». The first question that occurs to me is about how these architects that we talked about relate to the concept of *Haltung*, the concept of «taking a stand». I think this is actually a new and innovative question within architectural history, because we use to talk a lot about buildings, about architects and their oeuvre, their collection of buildings, but we do not discuss their actual *Haltung* very much, the actual position or attitude of the architects. I think this is a relevant question for the following reasons: These architects worked in a world that was full of ideology; Communism, incipient fascism, the world of capitalism, there were these huge ideological evocations and, at the same time, the architects themselves had a sort of ideological motivation, because they were planning and building for a «new world». And sometimes these ideologies from society matched the ideology of the architect and sometimes they did not match at all. I would like to ask all the speakers on this panel how these architects that you talked about defined the stand they took: How did they define their *Haltung* in a world that was defined to such an extent by ideology? What kind of stand did they take and how would you study that as a historian or an architectural historian? How would you go about analysing that kind of attitude?

[B] [C]

Paola Ardizzola

I can talk about Bruno Taut. First, I have to say that he was an absolute outsider, which means that in all his career he never wanted to take a specific stand and that he never wanted to belong to any school. Probably we can assert that this is in itself a stand. He never participated in CIAM, he didn't want to develop a specific ideology, he didn't like the word ideology in general, because it implies the concept of being a follower of a pre-determined idea. He always specified the difference between ideology and idea, the latter free of any pre-established structure. He was just interested in expressing and sharing his ideas, and somehow he had this shy attitude of hiding behind his projects, so maybe not everybody knows that he is the one who built 10,000 housing units in Berlin in less than ten years. This attitude came from a belief in a sort of renewed medieval guilds approach, according to which the striking architecture and beauty at the service of the community must be anonymous. It is no coincidence that the first Weimar

- [B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?

Bauhaus Programme in 1919 was characterized iconographically by Feininger's «cathedral of the future». Thanks to the *Siedlungen* [housing estates] he really changed the face of the city with his actions—and at that time nobody could have said the same—but nevertheless, he did not proclaim anything in relation to this. We must admit that he very much used writing as an effective means to convey new meanings and he wrote about 400 books, articles, essays etc, but none of them was a specific manifesto. The only manifesto we have from Bruno Taut is *Alpine Architektur* [*Alpine Architecture*] (1919), which was a manifesto against the war. On the other hand, if we want to get to know something about his stand in relation to what he did abroad, we should first take into consideration his attitude towards travelling and moving to other countries. As far as we know, he understood that as an opportunity. He wrote in his *Skizzenbuch*: Our land is where we build. That means he felt productive and positive abroad; where he had the chance to build, he did not feel like a stranger.

A case in point is the prolific work he carried out in Turkey in just two years. It is very significant that the political establishment in Turkey called on Bruno Taut to design the catafalque for the state funeral of Atatürk, the first president of the Turkish Republic, who took the country into modernity, and that they did not give this engagement to a Turkish architect: Taut somehow represented a synthesis between the modernity that Atatürk was pursuing and tradition. The same applies to the fact that he passed away there in December 1938, and even today is the only foreigner whose burial in the Istanbul Islamic monumental cemetery of Edirne Kapi was ever authorized.

While he was travelling to Japan, he wondered in a text he wrote: Is the journey going to be our homeland from this moment on? So fully aware of this new state, of these new conditions, he did some projects, but he could not build up anything; he was just concentrating on some furnishing design, interior designs. Nevertheless, he tried not only to take the best from that culture, but really to understand it deeply through his writings. That means if we want to answer the question of the stand he took, we have to state that he was always extremely emphatic with the new culture he had to face, paying a great deal of attention to localism and tradition in construction as something we can always learn from, especially in exile in Japan and in Turkey. He was always extremely empathetic, and I want to conclude by drawing your attention to an unpublished photo I saw at Mimar Sinan University in Istanbul

dialogue between modernity
and tradition

relationship to traditions
and cultures
adapting architecture to
local conditions

[B]

long ago and that shows the day, 10th November 1936, when Bruno Taut arrived in Turkey from Japan. On the photo, you see an official committee sent to welcome Bruno Taut and they are trying to interact with him. And Bruno Taut is looking in the other direction, where there are two farmers dressed according to the typical Ottoman tradition, let's say. So, he is more interested in the localism and the culture, that is how I interpret these photos, rather than in the official committee of welcome. Thus, this was Bruno Taut, always trying to understand really deeply. And this also relates to architecture, because many of his books, although written when he was still in Germany, refer to such a great extent to ancient and traditional architecture, not only to Western architecture. Before he travelled to Japan, he already knew about Japanese temples and the architecture of these Far East countries. He did not focus on the architectural object in itself, but he emphasized the process, in terms of the problem that architects had to solve and how they managed to achieve the final aim; he was interested in the process of how good architecture can be generated, in keeping with the specific needs which were required. As a matter of fact, Bruno Taut's work is difficult to define; that's why I have been studying his oeuvre for 25 years and still have not given up, because I'm still a beginner with him.

learning from design processes

Titia Rixt Hoekstra

To summarize: we can observe a tension with regard to the architects we talked about: On the one hand, they showed their colours but, on the other hand, many of them had to be productive in very diverse contexts and because of that it wasn't always so opportune to take a very definite stand; can I put it like this?

complexity of taking a stand

Ryan Fred Long

Yes, I think speaking about how difficult it is to take a stand is a helpful way of thinking about Hannes Meyer in Mexico. Certainly, he took a stand and that had to do with collectivity and the popular. When he was in Mexico, he was involved with the people's graphic workshop that took a stand in a way against another very well-known and—today much better known—Mexican tradition, which is the Muralist tradition. The people's graphic workshop could be more political, more immediate, could respond more directly to certain problems and, of course, could produce things that people could afford and they could circulate much more easily, so I think that working together with the people's graphic workshop

collectivist ethos

- [B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?
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showed that collectivity and then that type of work that the print-makers could do with the muralists showed a certain amount of the popular. And certainly, Hannes Meyer took a stand when he was in Mexico against Fascism, as part of the pro-German cultural league there. He helped the Taller de Gráfica Popular design many prints, he organized a lecture series, he was the photo editor of «El libro negro del terror nazi en Europa», [The Black Book of Nazi Terror in Europe] (Mexico City 1943), which was a Peruvian-Mexican-Yugoslavian co-production, which is quite fascinating to think of. Nevertheless, something that really shows how simply taking a stand is very complicated is that under Hannes Meyer's direction the Taller de Gráfica Popular, the people's graphic workshop, became financially feasible for the first time—and perhaps it was most stable under Hannes Meyers' directorship during its lifetime from the late Thirties to more or less the late Sixties and early Seventies—because as a Communist Hannes Meyer also understood the radius of capitalism. He encouraged the people's graphic workshop members to create fine art prints and bind them in very expensive books and sell them to markets where they could be purchased. So, Hannes Meyer certainly represents the complicated nature of taking a stand in such a context.

complexity of taking a stand

Titia Rixt Hoekstra

OK, to be a Communist you sometimes need to be a little bit capitalist—sounds a bit like opportunism.

Ulrich Hartung

- [C] Richard Paulick started out as an architect closely associated with the Bauhaus. He worked in Walter Gropius' architectural office and was closely linked to his ideas and those of Bauhaus. In Shanghai, however, he could not build. His activities involved, on the one hand, furniture construction and Bauhaus-style interior decoration, which was the most superficial side of the Bauhaus, and on the other hand, he could engage with its most interesting side, namely planning activity or, to be more precise, social planning. Even if this had perhaps not been taught at the Bauhaus during Gropius' time, I think it would have permeated the Bauhaus and construction and planning activities in this context: Paulick would already have gained insights along those lines in Gropius' architectural office while working on the Dessau-Törten housing estate. Then he had perhaps also picked up something from Hannes Meyer and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. I'd like in this

context to mention the plans for a workers' housing estate for the Junkers-Werke (1930/32) commissioned by Hugo Junkers from the Bauhaus in Dessau and developed under the direction of Bauhaus Director Mies van der Rohe and urban planner Ludwig Hilbersheimer. This modern Bauhaus housing estate project set new standards in housing construction in terms of sociology, economics, and ecology. However, the subsequent political changes meant the planned housing estate was not built.

In other words, Paulick was able to gain indirect planning experience, gleaned concrete experience as a left-wing architect, perhaps not as a Communist, but as a left-wing architect in the circle of young architects, Hans Poelzig's pupils, in Berlin. In other words, certain experiences were conceivable in this field of social planning. When he returned to the GDR, he adapted stylistically to the architectural doctrine of traditionalism; he seems to have grudgingly accepted this in order to be able to continue building as a left-wing architect with a social focus, as he immediately saw the possibilities that Stalinallee with its over 2,000 apartments afforded in terms of planning a large-scale social building programme. This was, after all, not the first housing construction programme that Erich Honecker launched in 1972. Large-scale social planning, including the relevant infrastructure, throughout the entire GDR—those were the new great possibilities that Paulick wanted to participate in. In stylistic terms he adapted, which was certainly not what he wanted initially. There is a very well-known statement he made, in which he described the turret of a Moscow high-rise hotel as a «feudalistic fool's cap» and refused to do anything similar. That entailed turning against hierarchical architecture, its symmetry, the subordination of parts to a dominant idea and its tendency to embellish everything. That is an important point, for modern architecture rejects any hierarchy of forms. This is now a quite traditional design analysis, which is a tool that I continue to consider important.

Nevertheless, he had to adapt if he wanted to build in the GDR. And he did so in a clever—I would almost say, conceptual—way in his historicizing buildings; they are consistently symmetrical, they also incorporate historicizing details, but at the same time every single aspect is considered in the overall design, in a spirit of practicability, in no way in terms of functionality. The floor plans, for example, in the C-blocks, are floor plans that were already used in 1908 in the apartment building in Berlin-Friedrichshain where I lived for years. In other ways, a kind of set of

planning and building in the gdr
doctrine of «national tradition»

complexity of taking a stand

- [C] How can we explore the kinds of stand taken by Bauhaus and Modernist architects and designers and their consistency?

three: three apartments, one in the middle, two on the side, each with two rooms; these are completely conventional floor plans. The apartments are not particularly large either. But what is specific is the development of the entire complex, the collectivist aspect of the architecture as a grand palace, as a gigantic palazzo, also couched as a palazzo stylistically, with this great Neo-Renaissance attitude.

- [C] After 1956 he had a hard time moving away from this attitude that he had adopted. It was not easy for him. He had adapted and to that end had gained a new point of view, and it was not easy for him to abandon it again, to adopt yet another attitude. However, he did in several steps reacquire this Bauhaus tradition that he had always held on to. There is a text by him from 1950 in which he calls for the industrialization of building, in direct succession to Gropius' *Baukasten* from 1922 and also with the statement that one avoids monotony not by producing a minimal range but instead through an optimal range with variations. These are ideas developed by Gropius that form part of the canon and Paulick has internalized this canon. This is one of Gropius' men, OK, but one who has made new use of his ideas or attempted to do so, also with regard to the colour scheme, as we saw in the view of Halle-Neustadt. And he was successful in that respect in Halle, at least quantitatively.

industrialized building
rationalizing housing construction

Titia Rixt Hoekstra

Would it be right to formulate the conflict situation as follows: On the one hand, you can see an ideology that is implicit to design and to architecture, which is Bauhaus, and it is confronted with the ideology of a state system or an ideal. Paulick tried to be faithful to the Bauhaus heritage, to cast off all these ideological state processes, and to continue that legacy—I do not know if you would agree.

Ulrich Hartung

No, that is not correct. He officially disowned the Bauhaus. You had to under Stalinism. And that is indeed what he did. There are statements where he stated quite clearly something along the lines that there were people who came into the world after a year of the preliminary course and six months of the Bauhaus canteen and their results were just as bad everywhere as we see today. Those are nasty comments and there is no excuse for them. There are a few remarks about the architecture discussion that are terrible, and I am afraid they were largely meant seriously. In the

[N] How do our own cultural, social, and political beliefs and stances affect our understanding of the Bauhaus, Modernism, and modernity?

complexity of taking a stand

meantime, he had concluded his engagement with the Bauhaus. And that made it all the more difficult for him to start a reconstruction in his head and to refer to it again. Because he realized, and this was the objective aspect, that it was only possible to get to grips aesthetically with a large number of buildings—a social building programme—by drawing on Bauhaus ideas on form, colour, variation, and functionality. That was the conclusion that he implicitly, I would say, drew in the 1960s. But not explicitly. These conflicts and how harsh they were should not be underestimated. Paulick is not some kind of thoroughgoing hero. Absolutely not. But he worked intelligently on contributing to modernism.

Let me point out once again here that I have problems with representations that focus too much on the negative and are always in danger of overlooking things in the process. I think the tendency to focus on the negative is at least very difficult.

Simone Hain

marginal counter-history

I would just like make a comment. I appreciate this moment very much. For me it means that the Bauhaus-Archiv becomes a marketplace for counter histories, and this is a moment I would like to say thank you for, to everybody who was involved in programming this moment. Let me say it again: We find ourselves in the 100th year after the Bauhaus was founded and are now coming to a point, in November at the very end of the centenary year, where we are, so to speak, moving into a conversation with each other, where the focus is not on icons, objects, creativity; with the idea of *Haltung* or attitude as a bridging link we are talking about what it is that we actually belong to as researchers, and as scholars too: the brotherhood of mankind.

being contemporary with the world vs. european ideologies of progress

[N]

Titia Rixt Hoekstra

architectural historiography of modernism

complexity of taking a stand

To sum it up, if we use labels like «*Haltung*» or «taking a stand» in the historiography of modern architecture and for instance associate Communism with Hannes Meyer, we always should bear in mind how incredibly complex these positions are, these attitudes, this taking a stand, and that these labels often do not fully describe the complexity of the situations they encompass. Let us start taking questions from the audience now.

David Maulén de los Reyes

Raquel, I have a little question for you, you told us that Hannes Meyer was not the same in the 1940s. I remember, in an earlier

- [C] How can we explore the kinds of stand taken by Bauhaus and Modernist architects and designers and their consistency?

conference you said he was not the same person with the Johannes Pestalozzi influence, was not the same person with the influence of logical positivism in Dessau, he changed in the early 1940s. Can you explain this epistemological change, please?

Raquel Franklin

- [C] Well, of course there are certain aspects of his trajectory that he preserves throughout his entire life but his ideology changes in that at some point he radicalizes to the left. So, in 1927 for example, he wrote a letter to one of his friends (Willi Baumeister) saying: I feel that I am slipping towards the left; so even «The New World»¹ seems to me soft and effeminate. That was exactly a week before he wrote to Gropius how he was going to teach architecture at the Bauhaus praising «The New World». And then he got into Marxism at the time he was in the Bauhaus, after being challenged by one of his students to do so. In the Soviet Union he then embraced Communism, but he was not even a member of the Communist Party there. It was only after he got back to Switzerland that he joined the Communist Party and then, in Mexico, he absolutely dealt with the issue of Communism through his relationship to the Mexican Communist Party and to the German Communist exiles. For example, the altercation he had with Paul Merker regarding his political position as a Swiss citizen towards Nazism, or the position the German Communist Party in Mexican exile should play with regards to the Soviet Union and the Mexican Communist Party. So, it was all about politics, but yes, he radicalized over the years, and especially after being in the Soviet Union.

Chin-Wei Chang

I have some specific questions regarding Richard Paulick. Ulrich Hartung, you mentioned his career in Shanghai, China. For me, Paulick is not the typical *Bauhäusler*, because he was neither trained nor taught there, but he is an architect connected with the Bauhaus. I am wondering what enabled him to work in the fields of interior design and urban planning in China, but not that much as an architect. Could you just explain the situation during that specific period of time, the 1930s and 1940s, with regard to the Shanghai building market, because I know that if Paulick worked there, he had to compete with a lot of foreign architects in Shanghai, and, probably hardest of all, he had to compete with the first generation of Chinese architects, who had returned to their Motherland. Maybe the reason why he worked as an interior designer

or urban planner was that it was very hard to get business as architect, or do you know any other reasons? And last but not least, what brought him to teach at the university in Shanghai, St. John's University, because I know that during that period Paulick wrote a letter to Gropius and it seems to me that he didn't have a good time in Shanghai, especially during his teaching there. Do you know why?

Ulrich Hartung

There is no easy answer to this question. I would say that he mentioned—not in this letter, but in another letter to a friend in East Germany around 1949—that he had no career in Shanghai, no career as an architect. Of course, the problem was, as you already mentioned, that the Shanghai building market was highly competitive and he had to compete with the other foreign architects and the Chinese architects, and it was a special situation under the rule of Chiang Kai-shek. But he could work as a planner and he could collect a lot of knowledge about planning in this situation which helped him later in the GDR. However, Paulick made exaggerated statements when depicting this time. He claimed that he had built several skyscrapers there and had done various things that turned out not to be true. I have to say that I owe all this information to Eduard Kögel's account, which takes a very critical approach, because I did not research Paulick in China myself.

Eduard Kögel²

Richard Paulick arrived in Shanghai in 1933 without any financial reserves and was able to find work as a designer in the interior design firm *the modern home* through his former fellow student Rudolf Hamburger. It would not have been possible to establish his own office at that time, as the world economic crisis had arrived in Shanghai, with a slight time lag, and he would have needed a good network of both Chinese and foreign clients. Paulick was certainly glad that from 1934 he was able to work as an interior designer in tycoon Victor Sassoon's successor company *modern home* for another two years. When Sassoon dissolved the company in 1936, Paulick continued the business under the name *modern homes* with his brother Rudolf and Hans Werther, a Bauhochschule Weimar graduate. Hans Werther already had experience with building construction in Shanghai at this time but committed suicide shortly after this period. For the Paulick brothers, continuity in interior design work was a secure source

of income, as in this respect they had a network among foreigners in Shanghai. When the Sino-Japanese War began in Summer 1937, opportunities for building construction dried up until war ended in Autumn 1945.

Paulick owed his appointment as Professor of Interior Design to Huang Zuoshen, who was Gropius' first Chinese student to return to China shortly before the outbreak of the Pacific War. There was no communication with Gropius until 1946. In 1943, when Paulick was appointed Professor of Interior Design at the University of St. John's, which was run by American missionary societies, he insisted on a simultaneous professorship for urban planning, which was also approved, although he had nothing to demonstrate his credentials in this subject. His arguments that China would urgently need planners after the war were obviously plausible. At the same time, in 1943, together with his brother, he founded *Paulick & Paulick architects and engineers*, which, however, only had a chance to build small air raid shelters. In 1946/47, this company received several larger architectural commissions, for example for railway stations or a university campus. No further projects were implemented due to inflation and the incipient civil war between the National Government of Chiang Kai-shek and the People's Liberation Army of the Communists under Mao Zedong. As Paulick lost his German citizenship during the war, as a stateless refugee he could not travel freely in the country even after the war. This limited his business activities to the region between Shanghai and the capital Nanjing, where his brother Rudolf ran a branch for *modern homes* in 1946/47. There is a villa in Shanghai (which after 1949 was used as a state guesthouse by the Communist Party of China), which in its rustic materiality could have borrowed some aspects from Frank Lloyd Wright or from Marcel Breuer, and which Chinese authors claim Paulick designed. However, this is unclear, as this building does not appear in Paulick's estate. On the other hand, the Austrian architect Hans Hajek, who also taught as a professor at St. John's, claims to have designed this villa. I asked one of Paulick's collaborators, Li Dehua, about this, and we could not clarify unambiguously whether Paulick was only responsible for the interior design or whether his involvement extended beyond that. He is not mentioned in the documents in the archive in Shanghai, which Li Dehua could not explain despite having worked on the project himself. Paulick seems to have been involved somehow, but his role remains unclear.

In the Forties, Paulick dealt intensively with the question of a «modern» architectural style, also putting questions to Gropius about this (1941 and 1945), although Gropius did not reply. After 1945, Paulick «discovered» Marcel Breuer's new buildings in the USA in American magazines and viewed them as the logical extrapolation of ideas from the Bauhaus.

Ronny Schüler

Paola, thank you for the outline of Bruno Taut's contributions in Turkey. Looking from the perspective of research focused on Palestine and Israel, Turkey is always like a sort of mirror that functions as a counter example regarding modes of transfer and perception. And I was wondering whether these invitations to Turkey of German architects, artists, teachers was something that was mainly promoted by the elite, by the government, so that it was a sort of top-down transfer process, and I was wondering how the local architectural scene, the Turkish architects, reacted to that? Because we are discussing processes of transfer and it is like a process of tensions between push and pull, between appropriation and rejection and obviously that works differently in Palestine, so I was wondering how it was experienced in Turkey at that period.

Paola Ardizzola

This is really a very interesting question. First, there was a precedent concerning the official relationship between Germany and Turkey. And indeed, in the years of the First World War, there were already very intense exchanges. And from the cultural point of view, we have a specific reference to the competition for the German-Turkish House of Friendship (the project was not realized). This was in 1916, many German architects participated in it—among them, Hans Poelzig, Bruno Taut himself, etc. so there was somehow already a very sound political relationship between the two countries. And for instance, as you know, German and the Turkish politicians were trying at that time to create this famous railway, the train from Berlin to Baghdad for specific trade exchanges. Therefore, there was also a policy related to specific trade exchanges. On the one hand, that was the reason. On the other hand, it was because many architects—who were accused of Bolshevism, for instance, like Bruno Taut or maybe some Jewish architects—were forced to flee; Walter Gropius, and Mies van der Rohe left Western Europe with regular passports, but other architects were forced to flee eastward. And Turkey was desperately

processes of transfer, translation,
and transformation

local impact of transfer processes

exchange processes
power relations and geopolitics

[C] How can we explore the kinds of stand taken by Bauhaus and Modernist architects and designers and their consistency?

need for a new image
national identity construction

working conditions and
relationships

local impact of transfer processes

in need of these new ideas to really build a new national image; it was a perfect match and perfect timing. However, local architects, who had mostly been trained in Europe, had a problem with this competition from German architects and they criticized them in journals—they wouldn't know the Turkish culture, so they wouldn't have the right to build and to be so relevant instead of them. It was therefore really a very conflictual time. And it is very interesting to observe that Bruno Taut, when he was teaching at the university, was happy to have Turkish assistants, because he wanted to share and develop a methodology within the Turkish milieu, whereas he only wanted assistance from Germany for his buildings, mainly schools and his famous Faculty of History, Geography and Languages in Ankara. To be more precise: He did not trust Turkish architects. And indeed, you know, he called Franz Hillinger and other assistants that were still in Germany. So, for a while it was really a big conflict. But it is interesting, because this school type that he invented somehow became the typology that you can find all over Turkey, especially for high schools. The same applies to his ideas of a new pedagogy according to Montessori and Steiner, etc., which had an important impact on the society and pedagogy of a Turkish establishment.

Member of audience

I want to ask Professor Long: As we know and debate, Hannes Meyer's career started in the First World War and extended to the Second World War and then, finally, the Third World. If you are concerned with modernity, is there any major change of attitude, or to be more precise, I would like to know about his attitude to [C] Mexico compared to the Soviet Union.

Ryan Fred Long

I am afraid I guess I do not have a really good answer to that question. I do not know how much his attitude towards those different places changed. Frankly, I do not know very much at all about Hannes Meyer's time in the Soviet Union. What interests me, and maybe this helps to answer your question to some extent, is the tension between his internationalism or universalism as really very clearly described in «Die Neue Welt», the manifesto from 1926, where he stated that the new technology had freed «our local sense», and the completely different attitude during his time in Dessau, expressed by the notion of «building as destiny» and the close relationship of building with landscape which is to be found

tension between universalism
and regionalism

tension between universalism
and regionalism

in *Bauhaus and Society* (1929) as well as in the task of designing and building schools all over Mexico. And I am interested in the strong conflict between Universalism and Regionalism—not Universalism and Nation, because a region can be super-national or transnational but also subnational and within a nation-state. And I think what Hannes Meyer brings to scholars of Mexican history and Mexican architecture and Mexican visual art and many other things is that kind of joint or disjoint between the Universal and the Regional. In a context like Turkey, I suppose, that is always trying to define itself in the face of Europe and in Mexico as a result of its own revolution, which brought a large degree of optimism to certain populations for a relatively short amount of time, and so I'm sorry, I can't answer this specific question, but that's why Hannes Meyer and regionalism in Mexico is particularly interesting to me. I am hoping to do a lot more research on the letters he wrote when he lived in Mexico to get an impression of what his thoughts about Mexico were and then to compare them to the Soviet Union.

Raquel Franklin

complexity of taking a stand

working conditions and
relationships

Well, speaking of his attitude towards Mexico and the Mexicans, it is quite paradoxical, because he refers, on the one hand, to the indigenous people in such a wonderful way, as noble, truthful, and honest and, on the other, refers to mixed race people—that is, mainly the majority of the Mexican people—as corrupt, as the ugliest people he has ever seen in his life. He said: I have never experienced such a land in which so much corruption is to be found, etc. And I believe he never felt at home. He never wanted to make Mexico his permanent home; he saw it as a temporary stage before coming back to Europe and contributing to the reconstruction of whatever was going to happen in the war. But he never saw Mexico as a true option.

Let me just add something with respect to your remarks about the school programme. Meyer was, I would say, irrelevant to the school programme. It was organized in three different levels. There was mixed participation from the states, the municipalities and even individuals who contributed to construction of the schools, but the programme was organized to have specifically one Mexican architect for each of the states of Mexico. Meyer was called on only to organize an exhibition of the works of CAP-FCE [Management Committee of the Federal School Construction Programme] in the Palace of Fine Arts [Palacio de Bellas Artes].

national identity construction

He said: My friends or colleagues, architects, called me because they knew that I was the only one who was able to organize an exhibition in such a short period of time; it was around two weeks, and that's why they called me. And then they asked him to be the editor of that catalogue. The exhibition was in 1945 and it was about the schools already built and those in the process of being constructed for the 1946 deadline. And then he just took on that role. Speaking of that idea of the national and international, it was not brought by Meyer but came from the Mexican architectural establishment (*Sociedad de Arquitectos Mexicanos*), which in 1933 organized a conference to speak about what Mexican architecture should look like. There was a huge debate at that point regarding the different ways the participants understood Mexican identity. One way was just to go back to the indigenous roots of Mexicanity and say, OK, this is where we are coming from. Another approach said: Well we need to do Neo-Baroque architecture, because that represents the colonial period and we are its outcome. A third one took Art Deco as a way of expressing Mexican Modernity and the fourth one, which included Juan O'Gorman, took the radical position of Rationalism. That meant it was an ongoing debate by the time Meyer got to the country. In contrast to CAPFCE, in the Taller de Gráfica Popular, he actually served as what I would say was an ideological leader for the artists in the workshop.

Notes

1 Hannes Meyer, «Die Neue Welt», in: *Das Werk*, 13 (1926), 7, pp. 205 ff., <https://www.cloud-cuckoo.net/openarchive/Autoren/Meyer/Meyer1926.htm> (Consulted March 16, 2020). [English translation Hannes

Mayer, «The New World», in: Claude Schnaidt, *Hannes Meyer: Buildings, Projects and Writings*, London 1965, pp. 91 ff.]
 2 Eduard Kögel, who could not attend the symposium, answered the question subsequently for the publication. We would like to thank him for this.

Section II

Bauhaus and Bauhaus Pedagogy
in Sweden, Latin America, and China.
Transfer, Translation, and Transformation
Processes, Power Relations
and (Geo -) Politics

Reception, Exile and The People's Home— Some Aspects of Sweden's Relationship to the Bauhaus

Atli Magnus Seelow

- [F] What are the social, political, and economic preconditions for Bauhaus reception? And how do they vary from one period or country to another?

diversity of modernism

bauhaus reception
reception of *neues bauen*
[new building]

swedish functionalism
identification of functionalism
with the welfare state

- [F] In the Nordic countries, Modernism—in contrast to the countries where it originated, such as Germany or the Soviet Union—is not the result of revolutionary upheaval after the First World War. Instead it is, to a large extent, derived from reception of Modernism on the European continent and its «translation» into the Nordic context. Reception of *Neues Bauen* and the Bauhaus is particularly significant in Sweden. The resulting «Functionalism» had a long-lasting impact that is virtually unparalleled elsewhere and, as an aesthetic as well as political programme, shapes the architecture, urban planning and design of the Social Democratic welfare state established in the 1930s. Looking northward reveals numerous overlaps, parallels, and differences between closely related yet distinct developments.

From the Continent to the North

processes of transfer, translation,
and transformation

Just as the Bauhaus builds on discussions in the Deutscher Werkbund before the First World War, the «cultural transfer» of Modernism from Germany to Sweden also begins with reception of the Werkbund's ideas. A key figure in this context is Swedish art historian Gregor Paulsson (1889–1977), who studied in Berlin in 1912, where he met publisher and gallery owner Herwarth Walden (1878–1941) and the circles around *Der Sturm* and came into contact with the Werkbund.¹ Back in Sweden, he often referred in his work for the Swedish Arts and Crafts Association (Svenska Slöjdföreningen) to German models and the ideas of the Werkbund, as well as the concept of cooperation between industry, crafts and art, as can be seen in particular in his two books *Den nya arkitekturen*, 1916, and *Vackrare vardagsvara* [*Better Things for Everyday Life*], 1919.²

After the First World War, this reception did not resume in Sweden until the mid-1920s. In contrast to other countries, the end of the First World War did not represent a decisive turning point in Sweden as historical developments took a different course there. While in Germany the Revolution and the founding of the Weimar Republic promoted radical changes in art and culture, the Nordic countries—with the exception of Finland—experienced comparatively stable political and social conditions during this period. This is reflected in their cultural life and explains—as Leonardo Benevolo has noted—why the flowering of Nordic classicism continued well into the interwar years and why the new radical currents initially found little resonance in the North.³

[F] What are the social, political, and economic preconditions for Bauhaus reception? And how do they vary from one period or country to another?

European avant-garde movements

utilitarian architecture

functionalism as a concept

[F] The reception that began in the mid-1920s was initially rather superficial. Scant attention was paid to the diverse theoretical discussions of the various avant-garde movements after the First World War, but initially focused instead on the most prominent international figures.⁴ In 1925, Uno Åhrén (1897–1977) discovered Le Corbusier (1887–1965) and his «L'Esprit Nouveau» pavilion and declared him a pioneer of a future «utilitarian architecture». Åhrén also introduced the key term «functional» into Swedish discourse in 1927, defined it as «economically functioning design».⁵ Subsequently, «Functionalism» became a popular generic designation for Modernism in the Nordic countries, together with the abbreviated variant «Funkis». As reception progressed, people increasingly turned to Bauhaus and *Neues Bauen* in the hope of finding solutions for housing and urban planning problems in their own country.⁶

rationalizing housing construction

Sven Markelius (1889–1972) was Sweden's most important connection to the Bauhaus. During a study trip in 1927 he visited the Bauhaus in Dessau and made friends with Walter Gropius (1883–1969). Markelius was particularly impressed by the thoroughly rationalized planning and construction process for Dessau-Törten (1926–1928) and celebrated the housing estate as «a topical example of economic organization of housing construction»⁷. It is also thanks to Markelius that Gropius was invited on two occasions—in March 1928 and in October 1931—to give lectures in Stockholm.⁸ The extent to which Gropius' ideas on rationalizing housing construction in Sweden fell on fertile ground can be seen, *inter alia*, from the length at which they were addressed in the 1931 manifesto *Acceptera* (Accept).⁹

Bauhaus reception
different Bauhaus versions
social, functional,
and scientific approach

Bauhaus reception in Sweden is not limited to Gropius and the rationalization of housing construction but also extends to the scientific-objective teaching approaches of Hannes Meyer (1889–1954), who developed an architecture department from 1927 and succeeded Gropius as Director in 1928–30. In 1928 the young Swedish architecture student Sune Lindström (1906–1989) studied under Meyer. As he wrote in 1929, Lindström understood the Bauhaus to be «an educational institution» that aimed to attain «the spiritual liberation of the individual» with a view to integration into society, and he cited Meyer's ADGB Bundesschule (1928–1930) as an exemplary embodiment of this goal.¹⁰

Bauhaus school

Radiating out from these pioneers, lively exchanges were triggered. A growing number of architects from Sweden and the other Nordic countries made pilgrimages to important buildings



Fig. 1
 Sigurd Lewerentz, poster for «The Stockholm Exhibition of 1930. Swedish Arts & Crafts and Home Industries» («Stockholmsutställningen 1930 av konstindustri, konsthantverk och hemslöjd»)



Fig. 2
 Sigurd Lewerentz, English version of poster for «The Stockholm Exhibition of 1930. Swedish Arts & Crafts and Home Industries»

Fig. 3
 Max Söderholm, overview of the 1930 Stockholm Exhibition, gouache, 1929



Fig. 4
Max Söderholm, Corso with Alnarp
garden and exhibition hall for means of
transport, gouache, 1930

Fig. 5
Main restaurant «Paradiset» («Paradise»)
of the 1930 Stockholm Exhibition by
Gunnar Asplund in co-operation with Nils
Einar Eriksson and engineer Erik
Ragndahl. Photograph: Carl Gustaf
Rosenberg

Fig. 6
Uno Åhrén (1897–1977), terraced house
45, 1930 Stockholm Exhibition.
Photograph: unknown

- [B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?

reception of *neues bauen*
[new building]

and exhibitions on the European continent, such as the Werkbund exhibition «Die Wohnung» [The Dwelling] in Stuttgart-Weißenhof (1927),¹¹ established relationships with leading *Neues Bauen* protagonists and participated in international discourse.

The Breakthrough of Functionalism in Sweden

swedish functionalism

More than any other event, the «1930 Stockholm Exhibition: Arts and Crafts, Building and Housing» («*Stockholmsutställningen 1930 av konstindustri, konsthantverk och hemslöjd*») Figs. 1, 2, together with the *Acceptera* manifesto published the following year, brought together the various modernization efforts and marked the breakthrough of Swedish Functionalism. Gregor Paulsson, who headed the exhibition, refers to the Weißenhof exhibition as a significant role model but moved beyond it with his programmatic aspirations. He conceived the Stockholm exhibition as a comprehensive and forward-looking programmatic show, covering the three themes «architectural and structural details», «streets and gardens, means of transport» and «household objects».¹² The show consisted of around one hundred temporary pavilions around Djurgårdsbrunnsviken Bay Figs. 3, 4. This reflected Paulsson's intention to avoid any «museum-like festivity» and to present the exhibition in a thematically ordered and egalitarian fashion, as if in a commercial or everyday environment. This approach also informed the completely new exhibition architecture developed by Gunnar Asplund (1885–1940) Fig. 5, which created the sense of a modern-day public festival. Integrating the setting and the world of nature, it combined classic urban planning vocabulary with modern landscape planning, together with a number of architectural motifs to make the show as varied as possible, and was supplemented by flags, banners, neon signs and lots of electric lighting. Asplund described the show as specifically «Nordic» and clearly distinguished it from the German exhibitions.¹³ The exhibition also played a pioneering role in the development of housing construction Fig. 6. In contrast to the Weißenhofsiedlung, the aim here was to develop solutions as close to reality as possible, in order, as Uno Åhrén noted in the catalogue, «to give everyone the apartments they need at prices they can afford».¹⁴

housing construction

[B]

affordable housing

The exhibition was a phenomenal success and attracted more than four million visitors, although Sweden had only about six million inhabitants at the time. Its enormous success probably

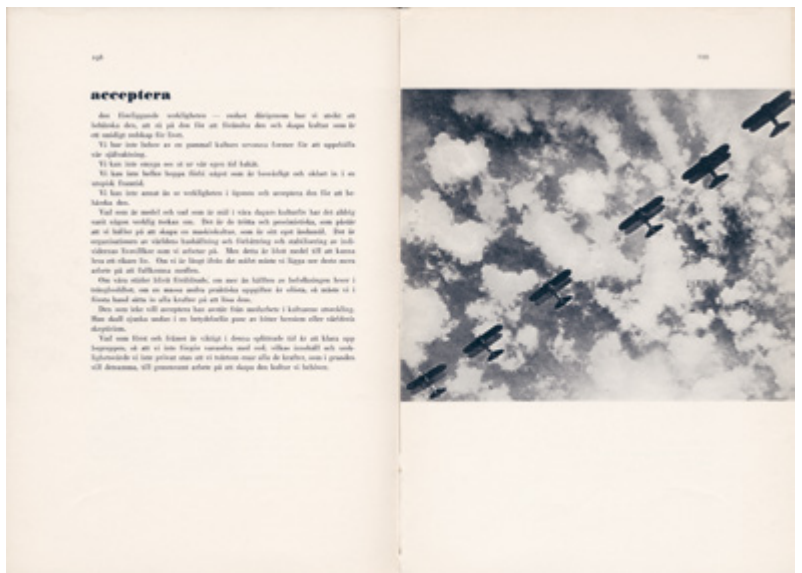


Fig. 7
The authors of Acceptera (from left to right): Sven Markelius, Uno Åhrén, Gunnar Asplund, Eskil Sundahl, Wolter Gahn, Gregor Paulsson

Fig. 8
Gunnar Asplund, Wolter Gahn, Sven Markelius, Gregor Paulsson, Eskil Sundahl, Uno Åhrén, Acceptera, Stockholm 1931, cover (front and reverse)

Fig. 9
Gunnar Asplund, Wolter Gahn, Sven Markelius, Gregor Paulsson, Eskil Sundahl, Uno Åhrén, Acceptera, Stockholm 1931, spread p. 198–199 (Final roll call)

- [G] Which ways of taking a stand can we discover in processes of Bauhaus transfer, translation, and transformation?

new political, social,
and architectural awakening

identification of functionalism
with the welfare state

new living—a new lifestyle

«new man» as a concept

stemmed essentially from the synthesis of an architectural and social new awakening, a comprehensive applied arts and industrial exhibition and a summer festival programme. The exhibition was interpreted as signalling a bright future, indicating that the global economic crisis could be overcome and heralding the welfare state;¹⁵ it was celebrated, for example, by proletarian poet Ivar Lo-Johansson (1901–1990) as the beginning of an «Age of Functionalism» that was articulated in a «new architecture» and—like the Bauhaus—also in «a new attitude to life» and a «new man».¹⁶

There was extensive press coverage of the exhibition. While reviews by foreign critics ranged from enthusiastic to benevolent, the verdict in the Swedish newspapers was more divided. The exhibition was sometimes vilified as «un-Swedish», «a threat to national tradition», «American advertising» or «rootless commercial architecture imported from Germany».¹⁷

- [G] In response to the criticism, Gregor Paulsson, Gunnar Asplund and the other architects involved in the exhibition—Wolter Gahn (1890–1985), Sven Markelius, Eskil Sundahl (1890–1974) and Uno Åhrén ^{Fig. 7}—published the *Acceptera* manifesto in 1931 ^{Figs. 8, 9}. *Acceptera* lacks the utopian aspirations and aggressive attitude of other avant-garde manifestos, such as those published by the Bauhaus. Based on the imperative indicated in its title of accepting the challenges of the present and inevitable progress, as well as on the search for a «third way» between «the individual and the mass», the authors developed a comprehensive programme for modernization of architecture, urban planning and the applied arts.¹⁸

modern architecture and
design as a response
to social modernization

Nordic Functionalism Moving Towards International Recognition

In the late 1920s, progressive architects from Sweden and other Nordic countries gained increasing international recognition. They were regarded more or less as members of the Modernist movement on an equal footing with their peers and Nordic functionalism was seen as part of this movement—or at least as a Nordic variant of it. This becomes apparent in the reception of their work through exhibitions—in Germany, for example, the *Nordische Kunst* exhibition in 1929 at the Thaulow Museum in Kiel—or the relevant overview publications.¹⁹ This international recognition is

diversity of modernism
swedish functionalism

also reflected in their participation in the CIAM congresses. No Nordic architects were present when CIAM was founded in 1928 but Markelius became a member that same year. In 1929 he and Gunnar Sundbärg (1900–1978) attended the second congress in Frankfurt am Main and Uno Åhrén joined CIAM in 1930.²⁰ Finally, in 1932, works by the Nordic Functionalists were presented side by side with the usual text-book examples in the *Modern Architecture* exhibition at New York's Museum of Modern Art.²¹

Sweden as a Land of Exile

emigration and exile

processes of transfer, translation,
and transformation

Functionalism's breakthrough segued almost seamlessly into the arrival of around 5,000 German-speaking emigrants who sought refuge in neutral Sweden between 1933 and 1945 and were a driving force in the aforementioned reception and translation processes. Among them were a number of architects, for example, Austrian Josef Frank (1885–1967) as well as the two Bauhaus architects Fred Forbát (1897–1972) and Werner Taesler (1907–1994), who made a significant contribution to the development of Swedish Functionalism.²²

neues bauen [new building]

emigration and exile

Born in Hungary, Forbát had studied in Budapest and Munich from 1914–1920 and established himself as a representative of *Neues Bauen* during the Weimar Republic. He worked in Walter Gropius' studio and taught at the Bauhaus for a time before joining Ernst May (1886–1970) in 1932 and moving to the Soviet Union. Disillusioned, Forbát had already returned to Hungary in 1933 as an «involuntary exile», emigrating from there to Sweden at the invitation of Uno Åhrén in 1938, after Jews were banned from practicing as architects. Taesler, who was a decade younger and came from near Berlin, had studied in Basel, at the Bauhaus and in Munich from 1928 to 1931 before following May to the Soviet Union in 1931, where he remained until 1935. As a member of the KPD [Communist Party of Germany], he could not return to Germany and also opted to emigrate to Sweden. In 1944, the two architects organized a «Conference on the Study of Reconstruction Problems» in Stockholm. Forbát rose to become a prominent urban planner, who, for example, drew up the development plan for Lund in 1939–1942 in cooperation with Lindström, organized the CIAM meeting in Sigtuna in 1957, and taught in 1959–1960 as Professor of Urban Planning at the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm. Taesler, on the other hand, made an important

- [F] What are the social, political, and economic preconditions for Bauhaus reception? And how do they vary from one period or country to another?
- [N] How do our own cultural, social, and political beliefs and stances affect our understanding of the Bauhaus, Modernism, and modernity?

contribution to disseminating information in Sweden about architecture in the Soviet Union, particularly with his series of articles on the subject in 1935–1936. As a practising architect, however, he had less success.

Functionalism and the People's Home

- social democratic welfare state [F] In 1932 the Social Democrats came to power and over the next four decades transformed Sweden into a welfare state often referred to as the «Folkhem» [the People's Home]. Functionalism shaped the architecture, urban planning, and design of the period as an aesthetic and political programme. Many of the ideas transposed from the Continent to the North from the mid-1920s, shown at the Stockholm exhibition and described in *Acceptera* were now increasingly widely and more comprehensively implemented.²³ A further contributory factor was that the pioneers involved in the Stockholm exhibition and *Acceptera* moved into influential positions. Swedish functionalism was manifested above all in housing and urban development, culminating in what was known as the «Million Programme» between 1965 and 1974. Over the course of just one decade, around one million apartments were built as part of this programme, in keeping with the principle of rationalized housing construction, mostly as slab buildings. While Functionalist ideas were put into practice—turning the housing shortage of the 1960s and 1970s into a housing surplus—there was also growing criticism of this Functionalism, which now appeared as a symptom of an excessive welfare state and misguided bureaucracy.²⁴
- identification of functionalism with the welfare state
- swedish functionalism
- rationalizing housing construction
- social democratic construction schemes
- critique of functionalism [N] In 1976, the election of a liberal prime minister did not merely put an end to the Million Programme. It also marked the beginning of a broad-based reckoning with Functionalism, as can be seen, for example, in the exhibition *Aufbruch und Krise des Funktionalismus* organized for German audiences in 1976 by the Swedish Architecture Museum, or in the polemic published in 1980 by Hans Asplund (1921–1994), Gunnar Asplund's son Fig. 10.²⁵
- history as perpetual reshaping With increasing historical distance, the way in which Functionalism is viewed in Sweden has indeed become more diverse. However, as revealed by the most important depictions of the topic, it is still considered primarily from the perspective of a history of its national impact, starting with the Stockholm exhibition and *Acceptera*.²⁶

Bauhaus centenary

swedish functionalism vs.
german modernism/bauhaus style

The Bauhaus centenary should therefore be used as an opportunity to recall the origins of Swedish Functionalism on the European continent and to point out the overlaps, parallels, and differences. Taking a look at the long-lasting impact of Functionalism in Sweden, it is also tempting to speculate and imagine a different Modernism in Germany than the one that came to an abrupt end in 1933 when the National Socialists seized power and the Bauhaus was dissolved.

Notes

- 1 Cf. Gregor Paulsson, *Upplevt*, Stockholm 1974, pp. 12–14, 73–76.
- 2 Gregor Paulsson, *Den nya arkitekturen*, Stockholm 1916; id., *Vackrare vardagsvara*, Stockholm 1919. [English translation of the latter text; Gregor Paulsson, «Better Things for Everyday Life», in: *Modern Swedish Design: Three Founding Texts*, (eds.) Lucy Creagh, Helena Kåberg, and Barbara Miller Lane, New York 2008, pp. 72–125.
- 3 Cf. Leonardo Benevolo, *Storia dell'architettura moderna I–II*, Bari 1960; English: *History of Modern Architecture*, Cambridge (Mass.) 1971; cf. Juhani Pallasmaa and Simo Paavilainen (eds.): *Nordisk Klassicism. 1910–1930 / Nordic Classicism 1910–1930*, Helsinki 1982.
- 4 Cf. Atli Magnus Seelow, «From the Continent to the North. German Influence on Modern Architecture in Sweden», in: *Konsthistorisk Tidskrift. Journal of Art History*, Vol. 85, Nr. 1, 2016, pp. 44–62.
- 5 Uno Åhrén, «Brytningar», in: *Svenska Slöjdföreningens Årsskrift*, 1925, pp. 7–36; cf. Eva Rudberg, *Uno Åhrén*, Stockholm 1981, pp. 41–48.
- 6 See for example Gotthard Johansson, *Funktionalismen i verkligheten*, Stockholm 1931.
- 7 Sven Markelius, «Bostadsområde vid Dessau-Történ. Ett aktuellt exempel på ekonomisk organisation av bostadsbyggandet», *Byggmästaren*, Vol. 6., Nr. 19, 1927, pp. 236–243; cf. Eva Rudberg: *Sven Markelius, arkitekt*, Stockholm 1989, pp. 48–50.
- 8 Walter Gropius, «Byggnadsväsendets rationalisering», in: *Byggmästaren*, Vol. 10, Nr. 28, 1931, pp. 149–156; cf. Reginald R. Isaacs: *Walter Gropius 2/I*, Frankfurt am Main and Berlin 1986, pp. 500, 600–601.
- 9 Gunnar Asplund, Wolter Gahn, Sven Markelius, Gregor Paulsson, Eskil Sundahl and Uno Åhrén, *Acceptera*, Stockholm 1931, pp. 90–92, German: Atli Magnus Seelow, *Akzeptiere. Das Buch und seine Geschichte. Deutsche Übersetzung mit Einleitung und Kommentar*, Erlangen 2018, p. 90–92. [English translation: as Note 2, pp. 140–347]
- 10 S. [Sune] Lindström, «Bauhaus», in: *Byggmästaren*, Vol. 7, Nr. 17, 1929, pp. 96–98; Hannes Meyer, «Erläuterungen zum Schulprojekt. Grundsätze der Gestaltung», in: *ibid.*, pp. 98–101.
- 11 See for instance Uno Åhrén, «Stuttgartutställningen», in: *Byggmästaren*, Vol. 6, Nr. 21, 1927, pp. 253–261; cf. Seelow 2016 (as Note 4), pp. 49–54.
- 12 Gregor Paulsson, «Stockholmsutställningens program», in: *Svenska Slöjdföreningens Tidskrift*, 1928, pp. 109–117; «Stockholmsutställningen 1930», in: *Svenska Slöjdföreningens Tidskrift*, 1928, pp. 85–86.
- 13 «Kulturkrönika 1930» [Conversation with Gunnar Asplund and others], in: *Byggmästaren. Utställningsnummer, 1930*, pp. 8–32, here p. 11. For the exhibition see: *Stockholmsutställningen 1930 av konstindustri, konsthantverk och hemslöjd, maj–september. Officiell huvudkatalog*, Stockholm 1930; see Eva Rudberg, *Stockholmsutställningen 1930*, Stockholm 1999, pp. 54–65, 100–177; Peter Blundell Jones, *Gunnar Asplund*, London 2006, pp. 130–139; Atli Magnus Seelow, *Reconstructing the Stockholm Exhibition 1930*, Stockholm 2016, pp. 40–121.
- 14 For the housing exhibition see: *Stockholmsutställningen 1930 av konstindustri* (as Note 13); Uno Åhrén, «Bostadsavdelningens planläggning och tilkomst», in: *ibid.*, pp. 25–30, here

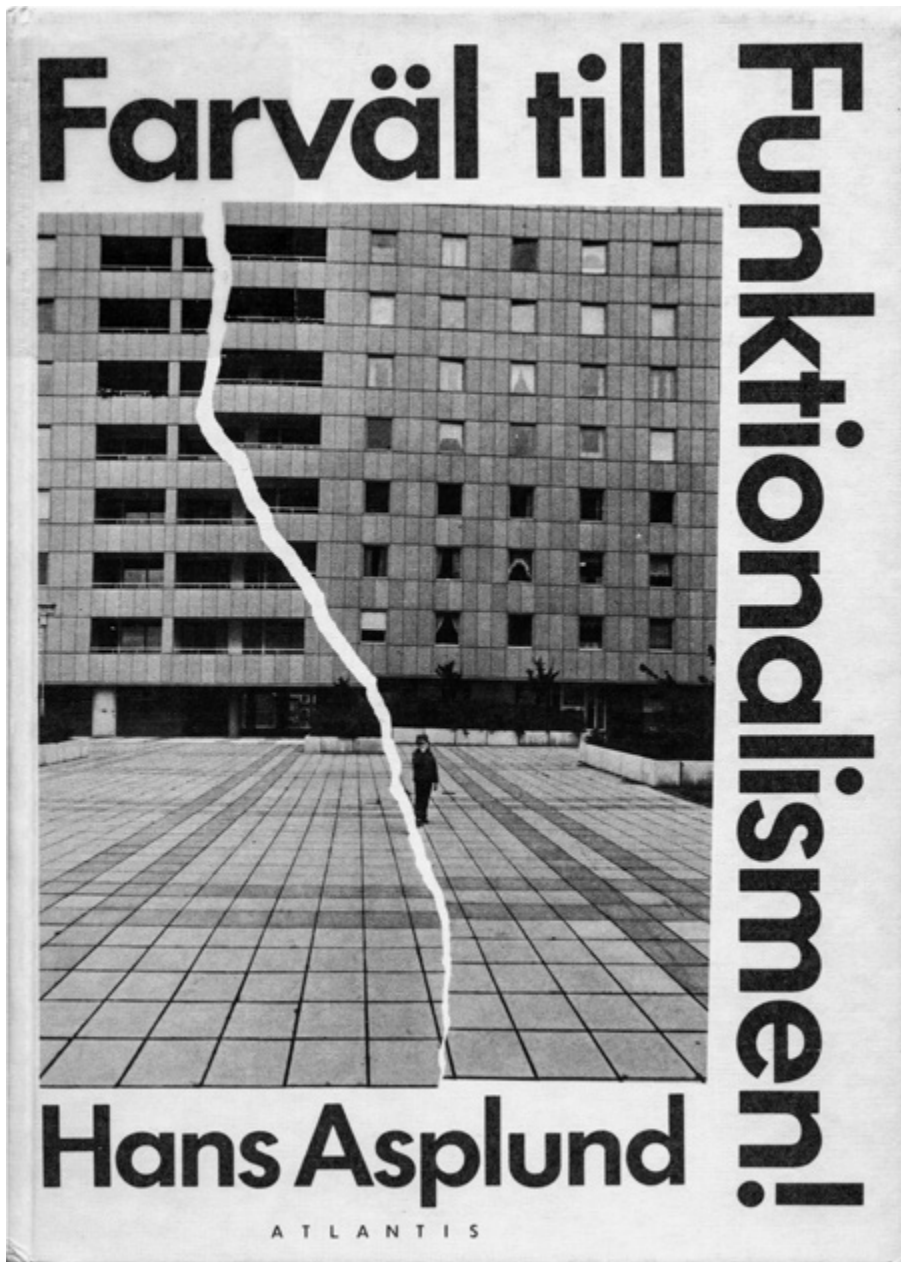


Fig. 10
Cover of the book by Hans Asplund, *Farväl till Funktionalismen!*, Stockholm 1980

- p. 30; cf. Lucy Creagh, «At the Limits of Architecture. The Housing Section of the 1930 Stockholm Exhibition», in: *Dash. Delft Architectural Studies on Housing*, Rotterdam 2013, pp. 18–35; Seelow 2016 (as Note 13), pp. 122–183.
- 15 Cf. Christiane Küster-Schneider, *Schau Fenster Zukunft. Gesellschaftliche und literarische Diskurse im Zeichen der Stockholmsausstellung 1930*, Freiburg 2002.
- 16 Ivar Lo-Johansson, *Författaren*, Stockholm 1957, p. 5.
- 17 See Per G. Råberg, *Funktionalistiskt genombrott. Radikal miljö och miljödebatt i Sverige 1925–1931*, Stockholm 1970, 2nd expanded edition, Stockholm 1972, pp. 171–177; Rudberg 1999 (see Note 13), pp. 187–195; Eva Rudberg, «Rakkniven och lösmanschetten. Stockholmsutställningen 1930 och «Slöjdstriden»», in: *Formens rörelse. Svensk form genom 150 år*, (ed.) Kerstin Wickman, Stockholm 1995, pp. 122–139.
- 18 See Seelow 2018 (as Note 9), pp. LIII–LXXXVI.
- 19 *Nordische Kunst Kiel 1929. Ausstellungen im Thaulow-Museum: Nordische Volkskunst, Nordische Baukunst der Gegenwart*, Hamburg 1929; see for example Gustav Adolf Platz, *Die Baukunst der Neuesten Zeit*, 2nd expanded edition, Berlin 1930, pp. 145, 513–515; Alberto Sartoris, *Gli elementi dell'architettura funzionale. Sintesi panoramica dell'architettura moderna*, Milan 1932, 3rd ed., Milan 1941, pp. 801–818.
- 20 Sven Markelius, «Den andra internationella arkitektkongressen «Neues Bauen»», in: *Byggmästaren*, Vol. 9, Nr. 2, 1930, pp. 1–5; cf. Martin Steinmann (ed.), *CIAM. Internationale Kongresse für Neues Bauen. Dokumente 1928–1939*, Basel and Stuttgart 1979, p. 213.
- 21 Cf. Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson, *The International Style. Architecture since 1922*, New York 1932, 3rd edition, New York and London 1995, pp. 107–109, 112–113, 118–119, 178–179, 224–225.
- 22 On this and the following point cf.: Fred Forbat, *Erinnerungen eines Architekten aus vier Ländern*, (ed.) Sibylle Hoiman, Dokumente aus dem Bauhaus-Archiv 5, Berlin 2019; Werner Taesler, *Flüchtling in drei Ländern. Ein Bauhaus-Architekt und Sozialist in Deutschland, der Sowjetunion und Schweden*, (ed.) Ekkehard Henschke, Stuttgart 2019; Roger Jönsson, *Arkitekt i mellankrigstidens Europa. Fred Forbat och funktionalismen*. Dissertation University of Lund 2004.
- 23 Cf. Eva Rudberg, «Der Aufbau der Wohlfahrtsgesellschaft im «Volksheim». 1940–1960», in: *Schweden*, (eds.) Claes Caldenby, Jöran Lindvall, and Wilfried Wang, *Architektur im 20. Jahrhundert*, 4, Munich, New York 1998, pp. 110–142; David Kuchenbuch, *Geordnete Gemeinschaft. Architekten als Sozialingenieure. Deutschland und Schweden im 20. Jahrhundert*, Bielefeld 2010, pp. 45–74.
- 24 Cf. Claes Caldenby, «Die Zeit der großen Programme. 1960–1975», in: Caldenby et al. 1998 (as Note 23), pp. 142–169.
- 25 *Aufbruch und Krise des Funktionalismus. Bauen und Wohnen in Schweden 1930–80*, Stockholm 1976; Hans Asplund, *Farväl till Funktionalismen!*, Stockholm 1980.
- 26 See for example Råberg 1972 (as Note 17); Helena Mattsson and Sven-Olov Wallenstein, *1930/1931: Den svenska modernismen vid vägskälet*, Stockholm 2014; Per I. Gedin, *När Sverige blev modernt. Gregor Paulsson, Vackrare vardagsvara, Funktionalismen och Stockholmsutställningen 1930*, Stockholm 2018.

Re-Imagining Modernization in Chile—
The Active School Movement, Integral
Co-op Architecture, Second-Order
Cybernetics—Lessons from the Bauhaus
and Beyond

David Maulén de los Reyes

- [F] What are the social, political, and economic preconditions for Bauhaus reception? And how do they vary from one period or country to another?
- [G] Which ways of taking a stand can we discover in processes of Bauhaus transfer, translation, and transformation?

modernization and industrialization

architectural education reform
social relevance of design
and teaching

socially engaged architecture
co-op design

bauhaus school

emigration and exile

modernization and industrialization

education reform
social housing

new architectural curriculum

integral co-op architecture

neoliberalism
as a paradigm shift

co-op design
cooperative housing
construction

active school

The state-supported process of modernization and industrialization in Chile appears to be entangled with similar processes in Europe. In this contribution, I will focus on the impact of the Bauhaus, especially Hannes Meyer's Bauhaus, on developing new and very fruitful ideas about architecture and design that not only changed the architectural education paradigm, but also promoted a pronounced shift towards an extremely socially oriented and committed architectural practice.¹

The main (albeit not the only) point of reference for Co-op design in Chile was the Hungarian architect Tibor Weiner. As a graduate student he participated in two of the Co-op design projects of the Bauhaus in Dessau, under the direction of Hannes Meyer: the *Laubenganghäuser* in Dessau-Törten Housing Estate, workers' apartments with collective balcony access (1929–30), and the ADGB Bundesschule [Trade Union School] in Bernau. Weiner was also a member of the Bauhaus Brigade Red Front (Red Front) in the USSR, between 1930 and 1937. After a short time in France, he arrived in Chile in 1939 as a political refugee of the Chilean Popular Front government. Before Weiner, other Bauhaus teachers and students had arrived in Chile as political refugees, Günter Hirschel-Prottsch and Edith Rindler; Paul Linder and Jan van der Linden passed through Chile in those years.

- [F] At the end of World War II, the Chilean state aimed to promote the modernization process on various levels. Industrialization, public education and social housing are the most interesting aspects of the Bauhaus' impact in Chile. However, this was not only a top-down development initiated by the state. In 1945, the University of Chile's architecture students went on strike to demand changes to the curriculum to respond to underdevelopment, and the university agreed to their demands.

Weiner, in contact with Hannes Meyer, was the main supporter of and a key figure in the architecture students' strike at the University of Chile in 1945 and managed to propose and implement a new curriculum at the University of Chile. «Integral co-op architecture» spread successfully to other countries after the Pan-American Congress of Architects that was held in Peru in 1947 and «designing the city as a living organism» was a widely shared goal before the advent of neoliberalism in the 1970s.

- [G] Hannes Meyer's Co-op architecture and collective design are characterized by his experience with Swiss cooperatives. Their epistemological roots are Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi's Active School,² the Vienna School's logical positivism,³ a personal interpretation

of dialectical materialism, critique of political economy, and the theory of perception (Gestalttheorie). The Active School concept seems to me particularly important in the Chilean context.

The Active School aimed to motivate the construction of knowledge recognizing and valuing one's own cultural variables in a constructive rather than illustrative fashion. It was addressed to students who were reinforcing their decision-making autonomy, who could analyse and interpret for themselves. One crucial element was an awareness of the value of teamwork, which added a new quality greater than simply the aggregate of all the students' work, along with learning through experience. Active School theoreticians besides Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi included Maria Montessori, Ovide Decroly, Adolphe Ferrière, Friedrich Wilhelm August Fröbel, and in Latin America, José Vasconcelos in Mexico, for example.

The Active School Movement as a Precondition for the Architectural Education Reform in Chile

Between 1920 and 1924, during the social and economic crisis of the oligarchic state, a movement of teachers and workers (FOCH) in Chile defended the Active School. In March 1925, they occupied the Municipal Theater building and organized a Constituent Assembly. The idea was that this new constitution had at its core an educational reform based on the ideas of the Active School. The President of Chile betrayed the Active School movement of teachers, as he promised a Constituent Assembly, but instead of carrying it out, drew up a new constitution with his own small commission; it remained in force in Chile from 1925 until 1973, when the government junta suspended it.

However, General Carlos Ibáñez who took over in 1927, was trying to copy Benito Mussolini's corporatist model of working with the unions. He gave educational power to the Active School teachers and in 1928 implemented a radical reform of education throughout the Chilean system. Between 1925 and 1927, Carlos Isamitt, the Chilean anthropologist, musician, painter, and teacher, travelled to Europe where he represented the Active School movement, and reviewed about 300 curricula of the new schools of art and technology. Some of the most interesting cases for Isamitt were *VKhUTEMAS* in the USSR and the theories of Karol Homolacs from Poland. Before this trip, between 1910 and 1918, Isamitt had already

active school

education reform

- [F] What are the social, political, and economic preconditions for Bauhaus reception? And how do they vary from one period or country to another?

developed ways and methods of using indigenous geometry in educating children. Up to that time, the culture of indigenous peoples was not valued (institutionally).

propaedeutics—*vorkurs*

In 1928 Isamitt was responsible for designing the country's new artistic education, incorporating Active School ideas. For the main state art school, Isamitt designed a preliminary course, a *Vorkurs*. The Chilean education reform of 1928 was interrupted by violence in 1929, when the government finally understood the concepts of this proposal that strengthened the decentralized communities, reflecting their diverse cultural and social interests ^{Fig. 1}.

architectural
education reform

architecture
as a social project

After the fall of the dictator Carlos Ibáñez, architecture students at the University of Chile organized a strike in 1931 (which continued until 1932) to call for modern architecture to be introduced as a social project. They even managed to organize co-government between teachers and students but were punished by the central university authorities in 1933 and some of the movement's leaders were expelled. Nevertheless, connections with the Bauhaus were strengthened. The first Chilean student at the Bauhaus in Weimar was Gustavo Keller-Rueff in 1920. Roberto Dávila, who had studied urban planning under Ludwig Hilberseimer at the Bauhaus in Dessau under the directorship of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, later became a professor and taught at the University of Chile. In 1934, the Chilean architect Guillermo Ulriksen cited the ADGB Bundesschule [Trade Union School] in Bernau and Hannes Meyer in the Faculty of Art's magazine.

lessons from the bauhaus

- [F] In 1938, with the election of the Popular Front government, University of Chile students tried once more to achieve changes at the School of Architecture. However, the architecture students have not been successful with their demands until the end of the Second World War. Key factors leading to this success were: the founding of the National Production Development Corporation CORFO (Corporación de Fomento de la Producción) in 1939, to promote economic development and boost industrialization by the state; the founding of the professional association of Chilean architects in 1942, which exercised considerable power until 1973; and, last but not least, the independence that the Architecture School of the University of Chile gained from the Engineering Faculty in 1944.

architectural
education reform

social relevance of design
and teaching

In 1945, the University of Chile architecture students declared a further strike, demanding radical changes to the curriculum and technical training to reflect the needs of their social context. The young architecture students, supported by young architects from

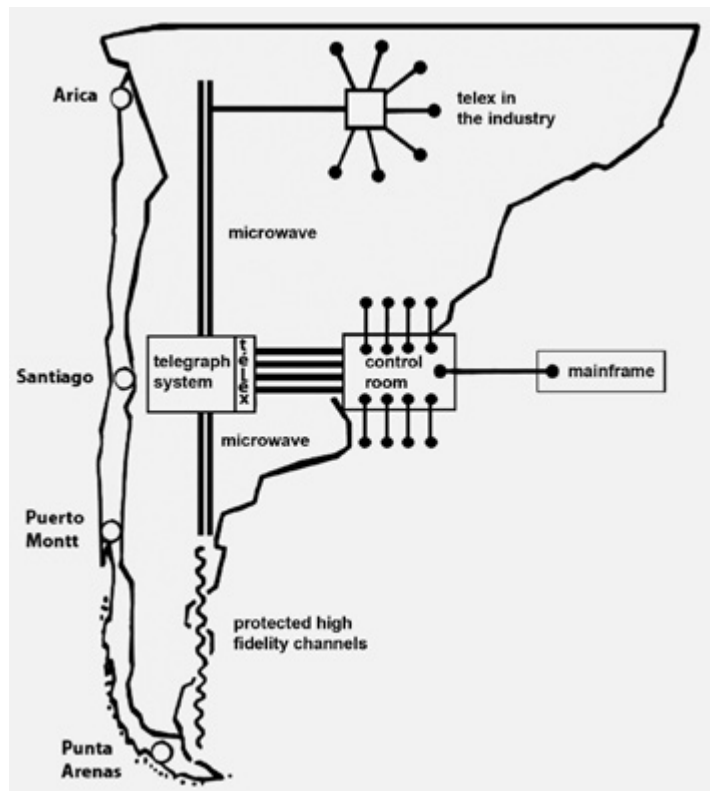
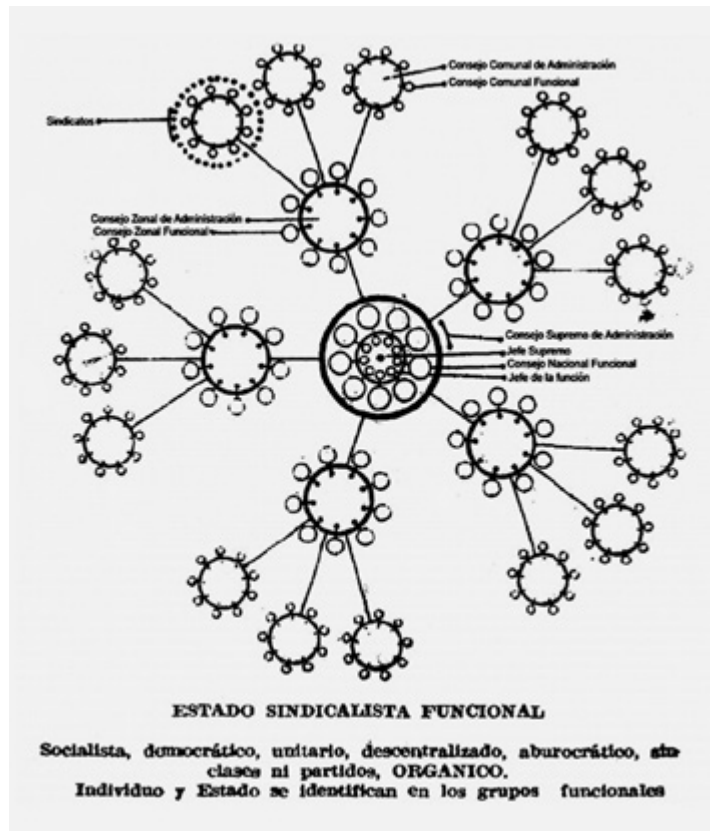


Fig. 1
Idea of decentralized administration, according to the teachers of the Active School, «Estado sindicalista funcional», in: Sindicalismo Funcional en la Teoría y en la Práctica (Revista Nervio), Curicó: 1936

Fig. 2
The Viable System Model, applied in the Cybersyn project network, using Cyberstride software. Image from Stafford Beer's testimony, Que pasa magazine, September 6, 1973, Chile

- [F] What are the social, political, and economic preconditions for Bauhaus reception? And how do they vary from one period or country to another?

the Thirties movements, aimed to address all the challenges of underdevelopment. In the end, the Superior Council of the University of Chile accepted their demands and tasked a commission of students and teachers with the project of developing a new curriculum. Thanks to the Hungarian engineer Carlos Sandor, who was a political refugee from the Spanish Civil War, the leaders of the student movements, Abraham Schapira and Hernán Behm, reached out to the architect Tibor Weiner.

active school
bauhaus school

new political, social,
and architectural awakening

Although the development process of the Active School in Chile cannot be compared with that of the Bauhaus school in Germany, both were state-supported education models and their existence depended on the political will of those in power and on the *kairos*—both are deeply connected with a decisive moment of social and political change.

Until the early 1970s, when democracy in Chile collapsed as a result of Augusto Pinochet's coup against Salvador Allende's government in 1973, attempts to absorb approaches developed by the Bauhaus and what was dubbed the «new Bauhaus»—its successor institution, the Hochschule für Gestaltung (HfG) Ulm [Ulm School of Design]—had been primarily within the state education system, or organically within the productive system of the state. This ended with the imposition of the neo-liberal economic model in 1975.

neoliberalism
as a paradigm shift

[F]

The New Curriculum of the University of Chile (1945–1963) from the Perspective of Second-order Cybernetics

second-order cybernetics

Between 1970 and 1973, Stafford Beer, the English second-order cyberneticist, designed his Viable System Model (VSM) in Chile for *Cybersyn* Fig. 2, a project under the aegis of CORFO (Corporación de Fomento de la Producción). It was planned as a real-time information transmission system, intended to strengthen decentralized collaborative independence (ICD) in companies and state production. Maurice Yolles, a follower of Stafford Beer, explains that, starting from the VSM, any organization model can be reduced to three basic elements: 1) The decision space (human being); 2) The environment (social and natural); 3) The technique or technology. A fourth element is extrapolated from these three basic elements: the action. In this model, the priority is the relationship between the decision space (the human being) and the social and natural environment. The technique is not an end in itself; it is only a means to an end.

environments—cybernetic visions
and systemic approaches

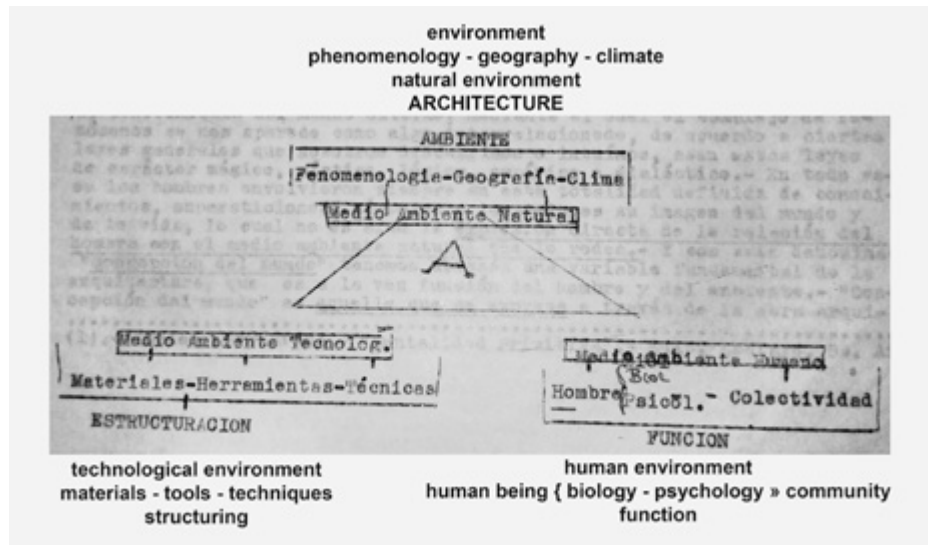
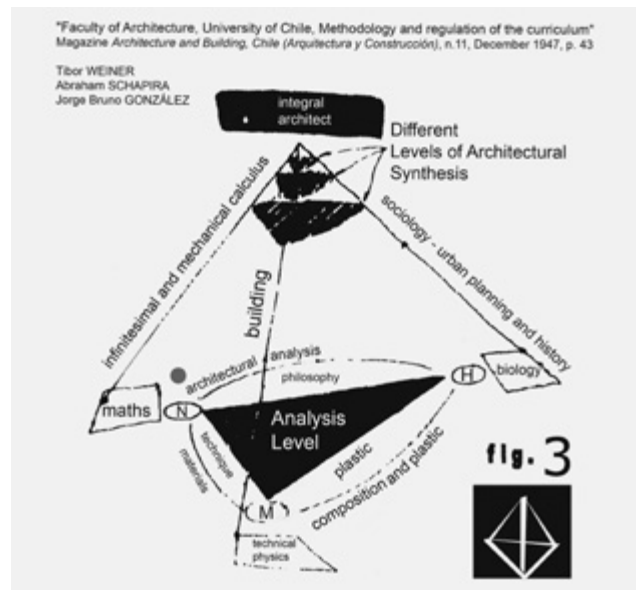
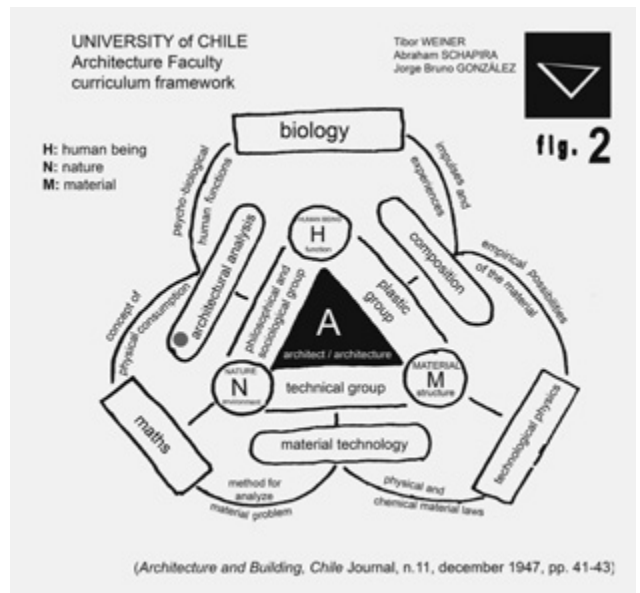


Fig. 3
The 3 elements that define architecture: human environment, natural environment and technological environment, by Abraham Schapira, Architectural and Urban Analysis course, University of Chile 1948

Fig. 4
Basis of the «Integral Architecture» curriculum at the University of Chile since 1946: Human Being: Function, Nature: Environment, and Material: Structure. By Abraham Schapira, Tibor Weiner and Jorge Bruno González, published in: *Arquitectura y Construcción*, Chile, n.11, 1947

Fig. 5
Analysis and Synthesis Cycles in training of the «Integral Architect» at the University of Chile since 1946. Scheme of Abraham Schapira, Tibor Weiner and Jorge Bruno González, published in: *Arquitectura y Construcción*, Chile, n.11, 1947



- [B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?
- [G] Which ways of taking a stand can we discover in processes of Bauhaus transfer, translation, and transformation?

integral co-op architecture

systemic approach

There are similarities between the 1970 Viable System model and the 1946 Integral Architecture model: «In retrospect, this model can be seen as compatible with that of the Integral Architecture model antecedent of 1946, which also possessed three basic elements: the human being, nature Fig. 3 and raw material (taking into account the technological possibilities—from the analogical possibilities that emerged after World War Two to the digital possibilities of the computer technology of the early 1970s).»⁴

- [B] I think that both also adopt an approach developed by the Twenties' avant-garde, criticizing nineteenth-century technocratic modernity that established scientific and technological development as its main objective, ignoring other forms of knowledge and segmenting disciplines. Different interdisciplinary relationships are generated by combining the three basic elements Fig. 4, and through three axes, the objective of the Integral Architect was achieved in a five-year process of «analysis»⁵ and «synthesis» Fig. 5.

integral co-op architecture

- [G] In 1939–40 Hannes Meyer designed an Institute of Urban Studies (IPU) at the invitation of the President of México Lázaro Cárdenas. The process of initiating these studies also arose through a «cycle of analysis» and one of «synthesis». For a brief period, there was an ongoing exchange of correspondence between Hannes Meyer in México and Tibor Weiner in Chile. Weiner even tried to make Meyer one of the new teachers of the Chilean plan of 1946. In 1940, Hannes Meyer presented a workshop with his students, with the title «The family's living space», in the Mexican magazine *Edificación*.⁶ In 1946 Tibor Weiner referred to «the basic molecule of living»⁷ in the Architectural and Urban Analysis workshop at the University of Chile Figs. 6 a–d.

interdisciplinary approach
systemic approach

Incorporating the study of biology into architectural and urban analysis was a way of responding critically to the nineteenth-century's emphasis on division by disciplines. A new human being was imagined, connected simultaneously with sensitive and rational aspects, as well as with his social and natural environment. After the Second World War, this trend was consolidated in Chile, as can be seen by the relevance and impact of the concept of «designing the city as a living organism», while Chilean surgeon José Garcíatello, who was linked to the young architects of the Thirties, began teaching biology and anatomy in a new class called «Bio-Architecture» in 1946.⁸ As a result, architecture students had to link anatomy and biology with urbanism and architecture. There was much criticism at that time of rigid divisions into disciplines, emphasizing only technical progress.

[B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?

The influence of biology changed the concept of system, or structure, from that dominant during the Industrial Revolution in the nineteenth century, and influenced everything: teamwork models, urban planning, and design methodology.

teamwork as a concept

In a modular system, each element has a function; if one element is missing, the system does not work. For example, in a cloverleaf interchange, the protagonist is the car, not the pedestrian. In contrast, using the «nodular system», each element of a system potentially contains all the characteristics of the system, such as in a seed or in DNA. The pedestrian, not the cars, are the centre of the planning approach: For example, with roundabouts pedestrians do not lose sight of the line of the horizon, in contrast to the situation in elevated cloverleaf interchanges.

second-order cybernetics

heterarchical
vs. hierarchical order

Any «nodular» system proposes alternatives to the vertical, centralized hierarchical order. Twenty years later, second-order cybernetics used the Greek word *heterarchy* to describe this process. The heterarchical order of cybernetics is reflected in the characteristic teamwork of Co-op design, which integrated elements from the cooperatives movement rather than focusing solely on the work of designers. Co-op design, like second-order cybernetics, highlighted the need for people who are going to use or receive a design to be part of the design process. This is also the perspective of the Active School, being based on the tenet that the «future users» of design know their reality, and that is why they have to be involved in the design process.

[B]

user participation in the
design process

Integral Architecture in Chile

integral co-op architecture

In Chile, some of the emblematic cases of implementation of the Integral Architecture model involved cooperation with the coalworkers' union in Lota (1954–1955) to create a shared design of the theatre and union headquarters.⁹ A further exemplary case is the support that young architects in the Fifties gave to the homeless, who occupied public land in the south of Santiago, Chile, to build their houses in the later called *Población La Victoria*.¹⁰ The *pobladores* built a circular school in this neighborhood, which translated the decentralized logic of assemblies into its architecture.

When Hannes Meyer designed a circular hall for a cooperative children's home in Mümliswil, Switzerland (1938–39), we know that even the children helped him decide the final design,

- [E] What are the political prerequisites for socially engaged architecture or design?
 [I] What can we learn from the history of the Bauhaus and Modernism when facing current issues? And how can this enable us to gain new insights into the past?

co-op design
 socially engaged architecture

in an attempt to practice the ideas of Pestalozzi in the architecture for learning. Co-op design's teaching methodology started with the organization of student groups as work teams. One way of working involved sending these groups to the edge of the city, where homeless people, arriving in the capital in search of work, lived in miserable conditions. The students did surveys and from those answers decided the important topics of the workshop.

neoliberalism
 as a paradigm shift

The aim was for students within a free and public university, an educational system that no longer exists in Chile today, to focus on solving the problems within their surroundings. There are many homeless camps in Chile today, but that is not addressed as a teaching concern or a substantive issue in architecture schools which instead encourage individual success in the private market.

modern movement
 architecture as a social project

[E] [I]

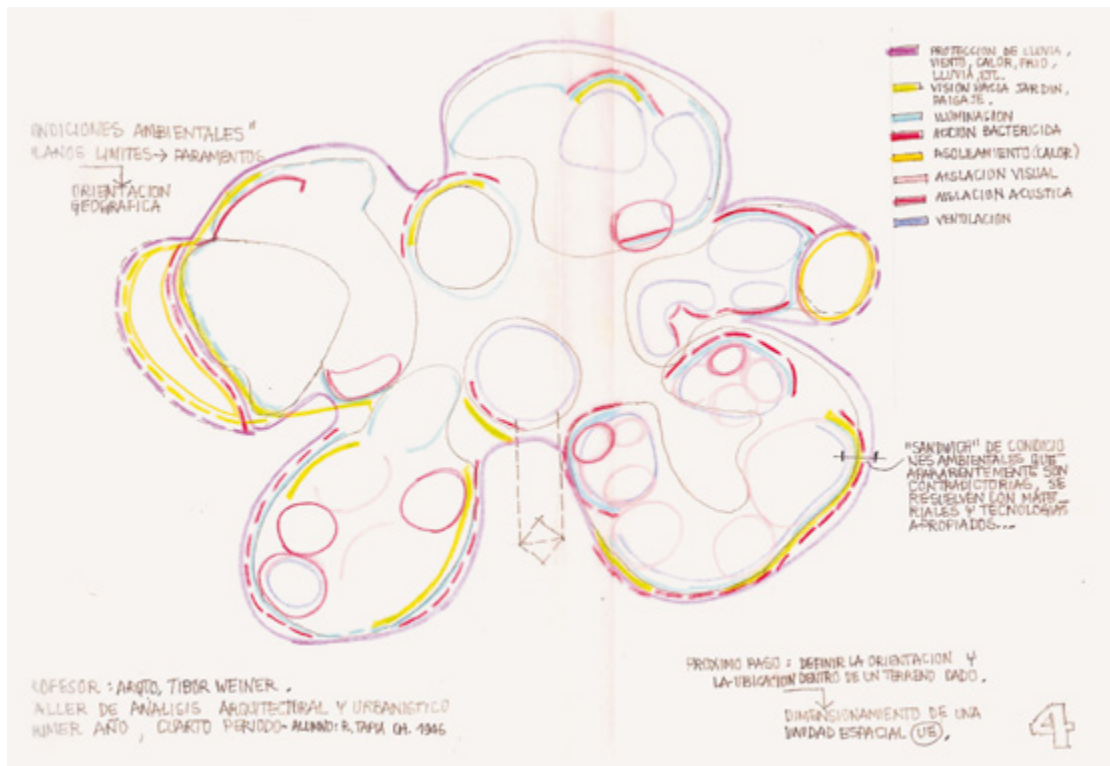
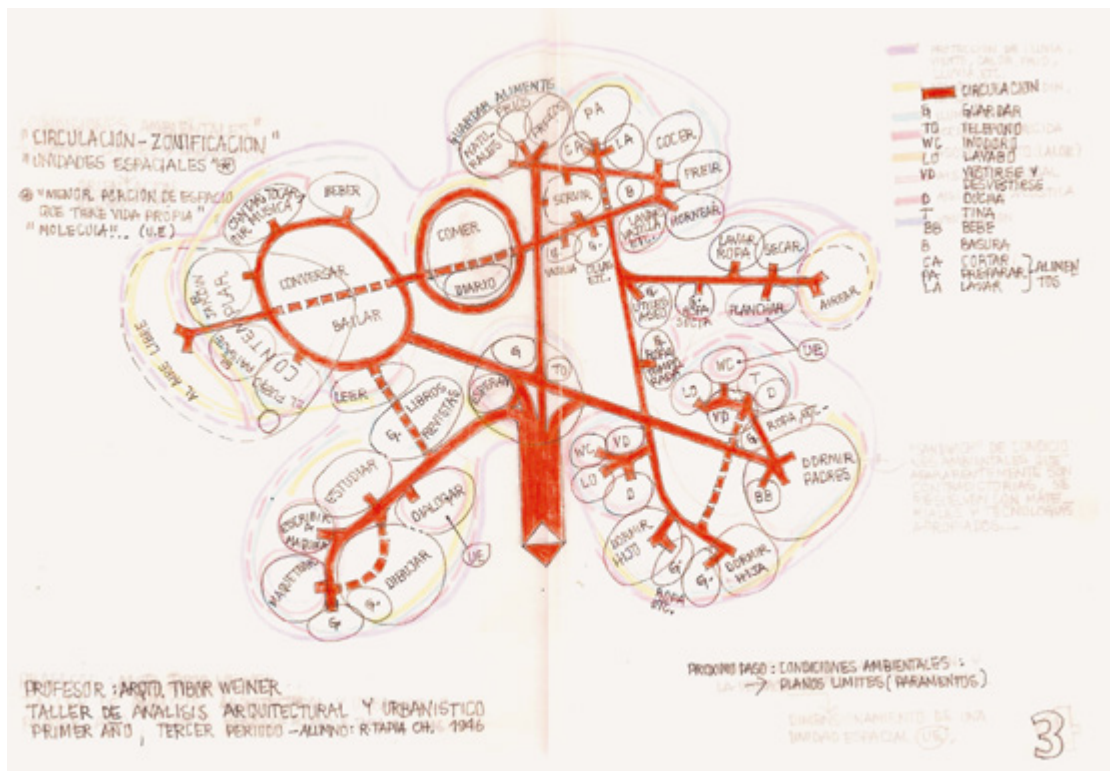
From the Forties on, the modern movement developed in direct contact with the social organizations of the poor, who asserted their right to housing.

systemic approach

In 1950 the University of Chile's former School of Medicine, in the north of the capital, was destroyed in a fire. The Faculty of Architecture criticized the option of a «university city» that would isolate the university from the community and would conceive architecture as an object and not as a system. That was why the architects from the university proposed the concept of «university nodes» linked within the city framework. In 1950, Simón Perelman organized a team of students to design, as a group, a new Faculty of Medicine in the north of the city but they did not win the tender. The new faculty design was entrusted to Juan Martínez, who had visited the Bauhaus in Dessau and the VKhUTEIN, the Russian model of a progressive Art and Technical school, but rejected Modernism, leaning towards the most characteristic futuristic monumentalism of fascism. Simón Perelman wrote a paper on this planning process in which he highlighted Walter Gropius' concept of teamwork. In fact, Perelman became the author of the new architecture campus built in an industrial area in the south of the city, integrating applied arts and design with architecture between 1958 and 1974.

teamwork as a concept

These projects were always carried out in work teams. One of the most important was: *Planning Essay of Greater Santiago* (EPGS), 1952.¹¹ Enrique Gebhard, one of the leaders of 1933, had managed to enter the Ministry of Public Urban Planning (MOP), and from there he managed to get the project purchased. During the development process, the development department of the Intercommunal Plans (Pris) was created. In 1957, a seminar on



[E] What are the political prerequisites for socially engaged architecture or design?

greater Santiago was held and all the protagonists discussed the future of design for the national public space.

[E] In 1960, the PRIS law was approved, giving rise to large city plans designed as a living organism, to be implemented over a 30-year time frame. This development was abruptly interrupted in 1975, when the new neoliberal economic-politic model was applied. The legal power of the college of architects disappeared, as was also the case for the political parties and the housing cooperatives. In 1979, the new law handed over the decisions on public space to the private sector with almost no regulation. Today the negative consequences of that change are almost impossible to repair.

neoliberalism as a paradigm shift

The Co-op Design Movement: a Latin American Regional Movement

co-op design

The Co-op design movement was not a nationalist movement. In 1947, the sixth Pan American Congress of Architects was held in Lima. The representatives from schools in the process of transformation met as a Latin American regional movement. The University of Chile representative was José Garcíatello, Professor of Bio-Architecture and his presentation of the Integral Architecture model was prepared by Tibor Weiner, Abraham Schapira, and Jorge Bruno González. The presentation of the University of Chile's new curriculum was published in a special edition of the prestigious journal *Arquitectura y Construcción*. Faithful to the collectivist ideology, it had no individual signatures.

integral co-op architecture

new architectural curriculum

collectivist ethos

The University of Chile went through an internal crisis in 1963; almost all the professors who defended the model of Integral Architecture resigned and never again spoke within the university, or within the history of local architecture, about those 17 years influenced by the Co-op design model. After resigning, these teachers formed the *AUCA* Cooperative and created a very important magazine: *AUCA* means: Art, Urbanism, Construction, Architecture.¹² *AUCA*'s editorial board promised to serve what they considered as a radical, political, social, and urban transformation towards social equality that would revolutionize citizens' everyday lives.¹³

co-op design

bauhaus as a collective call for action

The last chapters of that story were seen in the building of the United Nations' Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), designed by Chilean architect Emilio

- [N] How do our own cultural, social, and political beliefs and stances affect our understanding of the Bauhaus, Modernism, and modernity?
- [O] What is the significance and relevance of the Bauhaus and Modernism today—a historical phenomenon or a resource for the present? And what, if anything, constitutes their current relevance?

co-op design

Duhart—a former student of Walter Gropius at GSD Harvard in 1942—in 1965 as well as in an extraordinary case of Co-op Design in the construction of the building for the Third Session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD III) held in Santiago de Chile in 1972¹⁴. Several alumni of Tibor Weiner worked on that project, as did the team of Gui Bonsiepe, a HfG Ulm designer who was in charge of the CORFO Technological Institute (INTEC). At that time, organisms such as ECLAC and UNCTAD III represented the ability to decide economic policies for this region and in the second case to find how these modernities of Latin America, which had been developing since the 1920s, sought a point of convergence with alternative modernity projects for the Third World at the 1972 conference.

[N] [O]

With hindsight, the Viable System Model of the 1972 *Cybersyn* project allows us to gain a different vision of the modernization process in Chile—in the light of knowledge about the Integral Architecture model and the way in which the city was designed as a living organism in the Fifties, and about the concepts of the Active School movement of 1928. And continuing this modernization process still stands as an open invitation.

bauhaus as a collective
call for action

Notes

- 1 David Maulén de los Reyes, «The integral architect: Co-op in Chile», in: *Bauhaus*, 7, December 2015, Kollektiv, pp. 92–100.
- 2 See Raquel Franklin and Werner Möller, *The coop principle – Hannes Meyer and the concept of collaborative design*, Bauhaus Dessau Foundation 2015.
- 3 See Peter Galison, «Aufbau/Bauhaus: Logical Positivism and Architectural Modernism», in: *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 16, No. 4 (Summer 1990), pp. 709–752.
- 4 David Maulen, «Biology and educational models in the Pacific Southern Cone», in: *bauhaus-imaginista Journal*, <http://www.bauhaus-imaginista.org/articles/5531/biology-and-educational-models-in-the-pacific-southern-cone?0bbf55ceffc3073699d-40c945ada9faf=1f3d-53046cf0e54616350422befc8dec> (Consulted on April 27, 2020).
- 5 Daniel Talesnik refers to «analysis» as «the main educational legacy of Weiner in Chile». He sees the 1946 reform as an «effort to reconnect the architecture of the Modern Movement, as it had been imported to Latin America, with a social agenda. The reform attempted to correlate image and project—method and purpose.» Op. cit. Daniel Talesnik, «Escuela de Arquitectura, Universidad de Chile, Santiago, Chile 1943–1963, in: radical pedagogies, an ongoing multiyear collaborative research project by Beatriz Colomina with the PhD students at Princeton University School of Architecture, <https://radical-pedagogies.com/search-cases/a25-escuela-arquitectura-universidad-chile/> (Consulted on April 27, 2020).
- 6 Patricia Rivadeneyra, *El arquitecto Hannes Meyer en México 1939–1949*. Tesis de Maestría. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, México 1982.
- 7 Beatriz Mella, *Taller de Análisis Arquitectural 1946–1947, Universidad de Chile, Profesor Tibor Weiner*. FADEU PUC Chile, Seminario de Investigación 2004.
- 8 José Garcíatello, *Bio-arquitectura. Desarrollo esquemático del curso*, Santiago de Chile: Editorial Universitaria 1958.
- 9 Sergio Bravo, «El edificio: Síntesis del espíritu y las necesidades de los mineros», in: *Las Noticias de Última Hora*, 18th May 1955, p. 3.
- 10 *Población La Victoria* is named after an event called *La Toma de la Victoria* in 1958, in which a group of 1200 families seized the land of *La Feria* farm, built it, and formed committees in charge of controlling crime and providing security to the population. The neighborhood inspired other residents of the Chilean capital to demand housing. See: Samuel Shats, *La Victoria: Resilience & Creativity*, <http://urbanoproject.org/la-victoria> (Consulted on August 5, 2020).
- 11 Pastor Correa, *Retrospectiva de un ensayo de planificación del Gran Santiago 1952: evocación de un proyecto de título en la Facultad de Arquitectura y Urbanismo de la Universidad de Chile*, responsibility: Pastor Correa P., Juan Honold D., Jorge Martínez C., Santiago: Universidad Central de Chile 2002.
- 12 Ana Maria Barrenechea et al., *A 53 años de la Reforma de 1946*, Santiago: Facultad de Arquitectura de la Universidad de Chile, Chile. Unpublished, report presented at the 150th anniversary of the teaching of architecture at the University of Chile 1999.
- 13 Camilo D. Trumper, *Ephemeral Histories. Public Art, Politics, and the Struggle for the Street in Chile*, Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2016, p. 31.
- 14 David Maulen, «An exceptional trajectory. Civic integration and collective design in the Unctad III building», in: *ARQ*, n. 92, (2016), pp. 68–79, https://scielo.conicyt.cl/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0717-69962016000100008&lng=en&nrm=iso&tlng=en (Consulted on April 28, 2020).

Born from the Periphery—Gui Bonsiepe's
Contribution to a Symbolic Production of
Design within the Cultural-Political Context of
Salvador Allende's Chile

Susanne Neubauer & Marcelo Mari

- [F] What are the social, political, and economic preconditions for Bauhaus reception? And how do they vary from one period or country to another?

conditions of industrial design—
metropolis vs. periphery

construction of a «third world»
critique of capitalism

German designer and theorist Gui Bonsiepe (*1934) summarized the collective experiences and achievements of his advisory work for Salvador Allende's government in *Design im Übergang zum Sozialismus. Ein technisch-politischer Erfahrungsbericht aus dem Chile der Unidad Popular* (1974). Bonsiepe wrote this book in Argentina in 1973, after leaving Chile in the wake of Augusto Pinochet's military coup against Salvador Allende, the democratically elected Marxist-Socialist President.¹ Allende's government was the first democratically elected government in the world that attempted to implement modern Socialism. This undertaking had already triggered covert CIA operations on the part of the USA when Allende was elected.² This article examines Bonsiepe's professional activity during this extraordinary Socialist era in the context of the debates conducted around international Modernism, addressing topics such as the metropolis, periphery, and *arte popular* [folk art] in Latin America. As well as adapting the functional design developed by the Bauhaus and the Hochschule für Gestaltung (HfG) in Ulm to the non-European context of the so-called «Third World» at an early stage, Bonsiepe also sharply criticized Latin America's «exploitative dependency» on capitalist countries, i.e. the «First and Second World».³

- [F] The restructuring of Chile by Allende's Unidad Popular government between 1971 and 1973 demonstrates how Gui Bonsiepe's European-influenced design ideas fell on particularly fertile ground in Chile in the course of the growing technologization of the environments in which people lived. The contribution made by Bonsiepe and his research team at INTEC (Instituto Tecnológico de Chile) determined new product manufacturing for the home and the agriculture, mobility and communication sectors, and also found resonance in the writings of the Brazilian intellectual and Marxist Mário Pedrosa (1900–1981). Pedrosa was in exile in Chile from 1970 to 1973 and even stayed with Bonsiepe for a few days during the turmoil of the military coup.⁴ Pedrosa indirectly compared the military suppression of the new historical project of democratic Socialism with the cultural repression deployed in Brazil, which had been under military rule since 1964, and highlighted the suppression of folk art as symptomatic of this phenomenon.

- [B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?

Gui Bonsiepe's Journey from the Hochschule für Gestaltung (HfG) Ulm to Chile

Gui Bonsiepe had studied painting in Munich and Hamburg before transferring to the Hochschule für Gestaltung (HfG) Ulm, founded in 1953 by Inge Aicher-Scholl, Otl Aicher, Max Bill and others, from which he graduated in 1959 in the Information Department under Argentinean Tomás Maldonado. The HfG Ulm, as the successor institution to the Bauhaus, which closed in 1933, was opened in the presence of Walter Gropius and designed by Max Bill; it saw itself as a politico-cultural democratization project that was intended to continue a tradition interrupted by National Socialism and war. After his studies, Bonsiepe worked at the HfG Ulm until it was closed in 1968, initially as a member of Development Group 6 and later as a lecturer on product design and visual communication. Maldonado, Dean of HfG Ulm from 1964 to 1966, introduced a more scientific basis for the teaching concept, now known as the «Ulm model».⁵ This entailed deliberately turning against political references to the historical idea of the Bauhaus

self-image of the architect and designer

- [B] that had been consolidated by Max Bill. Against the backdrop of Maldonado's teaching model, the modern professional profile of the industrial designer developed, with a self-image that also includes a critical attitude towards the role of the market and styles in industrial manufacturing. Maldonado is also regarded as one of the first to associate design with themes of sustainability and holism.⁶ His activities at the HfG Ulm, as well as later in Chile, raised Bonsiepe's awareness of regional developments in sustainable and anti-capitalist design production and of the problematic relationship between metropolis and periphery. Bonsiepe advocated developing a new concept and ecological understanding of design, which he considered to be an important political instrument. He took the view that the ecological crisis was closely linked to product manufacturing technologies that trigger environmental pollution. For Bonsiepe, design, or rather the designer, held collective responsibility for proposing solutions to foster ecological behaviour.⁷ With his globalization-critical perspective, Bonsiepe also anticipated important problematic issues that arise from the prosperity gap that divides nations today, at least from the design research perspective.

sustainability

environments—cybernetic visions and systemic approaches

value-based concept of design

[E] What are the political prerequisites for socially engaged architecture or design?

Cybersyn—A Futuristic Control Room Combining «Design for Values» and «Socialism by Design»

After a trip with Maldonado to Argentina in 1964 and the HfG Ulm's closure in 1968, Bonsiepe was invited to participate in a United Nations project to promote development of small and medium-sized industry in Chile from 1968 to 1970.⁸ Subsequently, from 1971 to 1973, he headed the INTEC product development group of the Unidad Popular government, which was a coalition of Socialists, Communists and some other left-wing parties ^{Fig. 1}. Allende's economic policy gave rise to agrarian reform and nationalization of natural resources. Fixed prices were introduced for basic foodstuffs and schooling and health care were provided free of charge. These policies led to massive inflation, followed by Pinochet's military coup and Allende's suicide in 1973.

INTEC's work included, inter alia, the design for *Cybersyn (Proyecto Synco)* ^{Fig. 2}, an emblematic interface in the form of a control room.⁹ The interface, developed by the English engineer and management cyberneticist Stafford Beer, functioned as a data-network-based economic control system rooted in scientific and cybernetic organizational techniques, and was intended to guide the new nationalized industrial enterprises. *Cybersyn* is considered an advanced example how new technologies were used in the early 1970s to steer economic developments.¹⁰ *Cybersyn* also incorporated what was known as the *Cybernet* telex network, which connected some fifty nationalized companies and other organizations to a computer in Santiago and was used to transmit key figures every day. It could be called a kind of pre-Internet. Construction work on *Cybersyn* continued for a year but the telex network was the only part that was ever completed.

In Gui Bonsiepe's view, the *Cybersyn* project aimed to «[...] avoid the failures and pitfalls of the centrally administered planned economy [of Russian origin, authors' note]—there was an awareness that this did not work, given the reality of the situation in Socialist countries. The team was looking for a way to democratize consumption [i.e., to ensure the state's ability to supply the Chilean population through a reactive system that continuously processed economic data, authors' note], as the market, as the dominant institution, gave and gives no guarantee of this. This

second-order cybernetics

environments—cybernetic visions
and systemic approaches



Fig. 1
The INTEC Industrial Design Group,
with Gui Bonsiepe in the last
row at the left, undated, circa 1971



Fig. 2
Cybersyn, control room, 1973

- [D] How can we discover the social and political processes behind buildings and objects, planning and building activities as well as reception processes?

obviously did not meet with sympathy amongst the established circles of power, for whom any attempt to change the rules of the game is a provocation that deserves to be punished. In extreme cases, this may involve resorting to military intervention, as was the case in Chile.»¹¹

Cybersyn, which looked like a futuristic control room in the INTEC design group's blueprint, amalgamated a political and technological utopia. Allende and Beer were seeking to ensure controllable decentralization of power and to shape a new political and technological reality with the help of cybernetics.¹² The system was intended to regulate the state economy in real time and increase economic production with assistance from technology, while at the same time not causing unemployment.¹³ Despite Socialist proclamations on working-class equality, its critics viewed *Cybersyn* as a symbol of the separation of power between functionaries and workers and as a means of permanently controlling production. American computer scientist Eden Medina noted that this project enabled the Allende government to capture data on its «revolutionary subjects», which was tantamount to monitoring of the Chilean workforce.¹⁴ Nevertheless, Medina sees *Cybersyn* as a very important historical example of how a value-based concept of design that reflects democratic processes («design for values») can be linked to the idea of Socialism realized through design, making industrial products that were primarily reserved for the elite affordable for lower income groups too («Socialism by design»).¹⁵ It transpired that ultimately all that emerged through *Cybersyn* was a form of design developed in the periphery that determined economic and political circumstances, despite—and even especially—fostered by the possibilities arising from the country's changed political situation.¹⁶

[D]

value-based concept of design

critique of capitalism

conditions of industrial design—
metropolis vs. periphery

dependency and periphery
as a concept

Bonsiepe's understanding of capitalism critiques becomes clear in his examination of the metropolis and the periphery, and of living and production conditions in so-called emerging economies. To a much greater extent than almost any other designer in this period, he addressed the question of the conditions for product design that would enable the «dependent countries» to liberate themselves from production in the so-called «First World». In his book *Design im Übergang zum Sozialismus* (1974), he explains that, because of its «[h]istoric origin in the capitalist metropolis, it stands to reason to brand industrial design as another diabolical instrument from the arsenal of capitalism's techniques of domination, which serves to increase the cultural dependence of the

- [G] Which ways of taking a stand can we discover in processes of Bauhaus transfer, translation, and transformation?
- [I] What can we learn from the history of the Bauhaus and Modernism when facing current issues? And how can this enable us to gain new insights into the past?

periphery and tie it to the interests of the metropolis. This suspicion cannot be dismissed in advance as the result of a rattling verbal radicalism—however disturbed and skewed its relationship to technology, i.e. the productive forces—when one considers the strategic role that industrial design plays in increasing the circulation of goods and consumer orientation in late capitalism.»¹⁷

- [I] As a developer in Chile, Bonsiepe dealt with the question of how design can make up for the periphery's technology deficit and influence society—in line with the ideas of the Bauhaus and the HfG Ulm. Which preconditions determine the extent to which production of design in the periphery also becomes a form of «symbolic capital»—to use Pierre Bourdieu's term—that leads to social recognition? Bonsiepe vehemently denied the assumption that the periphery is not capable of producing its own design.
- [G] In the approach he adopted, design was an instrument for overcoming dependence and a means of increasing the periphery's significance,¹⁸ also in the spirit of a critique of the world's division into different political blocs and the constitution of a «Third World».¹⁹ Bonsiepe pointed out that Max Bill's «*gute Form*» or «good design» movement was rapidly identified as «cultural imperialism» and a relic of the educated bourgeoisie that bypasses the needs of the periphery.²⁰ As well as saving currency reserves, Bonsiepe saw the «creation of approaches to a material culture of one's own» and satisfying the population (in his words of the «proletariat») as goals of project development.²¹ In his writing, he describes the process of «decolonization»—which he expressed a «*Deskolonisierung*», a Germanized term with which he picked up on the Latin American intellectual discourse on «descolonialización»²² that had gained ground in the 1970s—as a design practice that can only unfold within the «framework of drastic changes in society as a whole», such as the creation of products with their own cultural identity, tailored to the country's needs.²³ Through the idea of «*Deskolonisierung*» he contradicted the concept of universal design principles that had been articulated in the Bauhaus period as a defence against a narrowed national focus and the appropriation of art, and subsequently handed down in Bill's concept of «*gute Form*», which drew on this approach. In Bonsiepe's view, «criticism of the concept and practice of «good form» had already been formulated at the HfG Ulm around 1957. Later, in Latin America, I criticized the imitation of this concept for its one-sided and even exclusive emphasis on the external aspects of

«good design» as a concept

cultural imperialism

hfg ulm's criticism of the bauhaus

demand to decolonize design

identity formation

a product, without taking a number of other—technological, social and economic—factors into account».²⁴

In Bonsiepe's view, industrial design could only really contribute to the modernization process in Latin American countries that were beginning to enter the global scene if it picked up on the specific characteristics of local problems to find solutions and at the same time broke away from standard international design. «However, this decolonizing potential can only develop in the context of radical and fundamental social transformations. The conditions that influence project practice, which is very different in the metropolis and on the periphery, in turn imply a different project perspective. In the metropolis, industrial design has at its disposal a mature technology and a whole range of materials, manufacturing processes and highly qualified workers. [...] In the periphery, exactly the opposite is produced. The volume of requirements is far greater than the means to meet them. The level of development of productive forces is relatively low: they do not manage to meet demand. [...] Other needs, other priorities, other cultural traditions, another level of productive forces, other economic constraints are imposed on the industrial design of the periphery».²⁵

Alongside implementation of Socialist ideas such as job creation, income distribution and rationalization of the product range, central aspects in his concept of «Deskolonisierung» included above all adaptation of products to local needs and possibilities, a preference for local materials, use of technologies that do not require any investment, and an appraisal of environmentally harmful factors and the cultural context, because: «Industrial products make up a constantly growing part of the human artificial environment. They are the expression of a culture (in the anthropological sense), its representational, material expression. Designing implies the creation of a cultural identity of its own, thus reducing the degree of cultural dependence».²⁶

As well as record players, agricultural machinery, furniture, and crockery, Bonsiepe explained the example of a measuring spoon for milk powder ^{Fig. 3} commissioned by the National Ministry of Health. A study had shown that milk powder was not dosed correctly as household spoons of different sizes were used and that children were therefore not properly nourished. One of Allende's goals was to provide enough protein to Chile's children.²⁷ Bonsiepe's team was therefore given the task of developing an aesthetically pleasing and functional solution that would respect the

resolving problems
at regional and local level

demand to decolonize design

conditions of industrial design—
metropolis vs. periphery

dependency and periphery
as a concept

resolving problems
at regional and local level

environmental awareness

cultural identity



Fig. 3
Measuring spoon for milk powder,
Design: INTEC Design Group, 1972

[E] What are the political prerequisites for socially engaged architecture or design?

relevant technological and economic conditions. The solution was a hemisphere, a shape that was easy to produce, and also prevented milk powder from sticking.

Mário Pedrosa—Art as a Means
of Cultural Revolution and
the «Chilean Model of Socialism»

Mário Pedrosa wrote two essays on the Socialist wind of change in Chile, one about the Chilean Model of Socialism and the Front of the arts—«O modelo chileno de socialismo e a frente das artes» (1971)—and the other one about cultivated art and popular art «Arte culta e arte popular» (1975). They provide an overview of his experiences in Chilean exile during Allende's brief period in government, during which Pedrosa, together with Spanish art critic José María Moreno Galván, founded the Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende (Museum of Solidarity) in Santiago in 1971, which is now one of the country's most important institutions.

Pedrosa understood art as a means of cultural revolution that could be deployed to create a Socialist society. In his essay on the «Chilean model of socialism», Pedrosa supported Allende's programme, noting that rather than repeating the mistakes of the 1917 Russian Revolution, it would build on a «democratic pluralism» of the working class. The «cultural revolution» would in his view enable the rural population to go through a «technical, scientific, aesthetic, moral, political» process that would defuse the numerous inequalities within society.²⁸ He saw the «Chilean approach» as an alternative to both bureaucratized art in the style of the Russian model and the high levels of consumption in imperialist, capitalist metropolises, subject only to the logic of «efficient work».

Pedrosa once again articulated his hope for a classless society, which he also associated with a renewal of modern art around the world in a lecture held in Mexico City in 1975, published as «Arte culta e arte popular».²⁹ Here Pedrosa also describes a new category of aesthetic objects, which are neither folk handicrafts nor elitist objects that have assumed the status of capital, for the value of these new objects lies in their social relationships. He judges the «arte culta», «scholarly art» or «art of the bourgeoisie», to be power preserving; it is used for speculation with a view to accumulation of wealth.³⁰

emigration and exile

thinking from the perspective
of diasporic conditions

art as a means
of cultural revolution

[E]

new unity of art and the people

When it comes to seeking new points of reference for artistic and local production with stronger collective meaning in its aesthetic manifestations, craftwork has, in Pedrosa's view, historically had an advantage over art. Moreover, the phenomenon of folk and handicraft art has assumed a more significant position since the wave of modernization in the 1920s, if not before, and can be identified as an important reference point in many Latin American countries. Nevertheless, Pedrosa makes a point of addressing the danger of fetishization of folk art and craftsmanship by pointing out that this «is not always a creative form of the people. [...] On the contrary, it often expresses an ideology of dependence, insofar as it is a production destined to satisfy the tourist market's interest in folklore. This interest reflects the colonizing image that the capitalist countries impose on our America. At other times it served fascist ideology.»³¹ For Pedrosa, craftsmanship only attains revolutionary value if it helps to smash the class structure.

Addressing income redistribution policy, Pedrosa points to processes of change for the most disadvantaged social groups, including achieving «creative freedom» in craftwork. Pedrosa notes that this «new state of the artisan» also motivates the bourgeoisie to «engage in this activity, which until then was considered unworthy of its class. Any craft trade seemed inappropriate for the upper bourgeoisie and the so-called «middle class», except, of course, for the trade in objects that could be considered artistically valuable and were thus attractive to the market—such as what were known as costume jewellery shops. With this designation, the purported artist intended (and still intends) to distinguish his production from that of the worker-jeweller, in terms of both status and economics. [...] The distinction between craftsman and artist fades and the craftsman takes on the social situation of the artist».³² Pedrosa's report also aims to link Mothers' Centres in Chile (COCEMA) to the cultural flourishing of folk art as a political success of the Allende government. According to Pedrosa, craftsmanship gained prestige; even the Chilean bourgeoisie, especially its left-wing members, acquired a taste for craftsmanship as a means to give visual expression to their national identity. During the Unidad Popular period, many craft groups emerged, and numerous cultural centres were established, setting up workshops for weaving, painting, and other disciplines. With these increasingly bottom-up cultural activities, one can even speak of a quiet cultural revolution. This served the purpose of aesthetic education, but

dismantling arts' hierarchical order

national identity construction

- [E] What are the political prerequisites for socially engaged architecture or design?
- [O] What is the significance and relevance of the Bauhaus and Modernism today—a historical phenomenon or a resource for the present? And what, if anything, constitutes their current relevance?

also fostered exchanges and conviviality. Pedrosa had no doubt that precisely these centres would be closed or at least more closely controlled after the fall of Allende, because «they represented a further form of progress that people made during the Allende experience».³³

Mário Pedrosa and Gui Bonsiepe and the Vision of Production from the Periphery Inspired by Cultural Policy

In the early 1970s, Mário Pedrosa and Gui Bonsiepe were observers, co-creators and intellectual forces who also reflected on peripheral differences, at the same time as the Socialist Democrat upheavals. Both agreed that the solutions implemented in Chile, adapted to local conditions, could make an important contribution to improving living standards for ordinary people. Both crafts and peripheral design were developed with a focus on saving resources, i.e. «sustainably», and were adjusted to meet the needs of the population and reflect the anti-capitalist specifications of Allende's government in Chile. In adopting this focus, they led to production of Latin American design that was intrinsically motivated by cultural-political concerns, in other words, to peripheral design.

resolving problems at regional
and local level

sustainability

[E]

[O]

Notes

- 1 The secret police imprisoned Gui Bonsiepe and accused him of Marxist thinking. He was only released thanks to the intervention of the West German vice-consul. E-mail to the authors, February 11, 2020.
- 2 Jonathan Haslam, *The Nixon Administration and the Death of Allende's Chile: A Case of Assisted Suicide*, New York: Verso, 2005.
- 3 Gui Bonsiepe, *Design im Übergang zum Sozialismus. Ein technisch-politischer Erfahrungsbericht aus dem Chile der Unidad Popular (1971–1973)*, Hamburg 1974, p. 11, 21.
- 4 E-mail to the authors, February 11, 2020.
- 5 Felicidad Romero-Tejedor, «Tomás Maldonado. Seine Aktualität für das designwissenschaftliche Denken», in: *Design und Gesellschaft: Wandel der Lebensformen*, (ed.) President of the University of Applied Sciences, Lübeck, Kassel 2014, pp. 74–82.
- 6 René Spitz, *HfG Ulm. Kurze Geschichte der Hochschule für Gestaltung / Concise History of the Ulm School of Design*, Zurich 2014, p. 84 f.
- 7 Gui Bonsiepe, *Teoría y práctica del diseño industrial – elementos para una manualística crítica*, Barcelona 1978, p. 48.
- 8 James Fathers, «Peripheral Vision: An Interview with Gui Bonsiepe. Charting a Lifetime of Commitment to Design Empowerment», in: *Design Issues*, 19, 4 (Autumn 2003), pp. 44–56.
- 9 Eden Medina, *Cybernetic Revolutionaries. Technology and Politics in Allende's Chile*, London, Cambridge, Massachusetts 2011, https://uberty.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Eden_Medina_Cybernetic_Revolutionaries.pdf (Consulted May 11, 2020); Eden Medina, «From Cybernetic Revolutionaries: Technology and Politics in Allende's Chile», in: *Review: Literature and Arts of the Americas*, 48, 1 (2015), pp. 109–117.
- 10 David Maulén de los Reyes, «Interfaz y heterarquía: diseños de interacción locales para la independencia colaborativa descentralizada», in: *Revista Chilena de Diseño. RChD: creación y pensamiento*, 1, 1 (2016), pp. 65–78; Hugo Palmarola, «Productos y Socialismo: Diseño Industrial Estatal en Chile», in: 1973. *La vida cotidiana de un año crucial*, (ed.) Claudio Rolle, Santiago de Chile 2003, pp. 225–295.
- 11 E-mail to the authors, August 10, 2019.
- 12 Medina 2011 (as Note 9), p. 3.
- 13 *Ibid.*, p. 211.
- 14 Medina 2015 (as Note 9), p. 117.
- 15 *Ibid.*, pp. 110, 116.
- 16 Fathers 2003 (as Note 8), p. 48.
- 17 Bonsiepe 1974 (as Note 3), p. 12.
- 18 *Ibid.*, p. 13.
- 19 Cf. also Arturo Escobar, *Encountering Development—The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*, Princeton/Oxford 1995.
- 20 Bonsiepe 1974 (as Note 3), p. 14.
- 21 *Ibid.*, p. 16.
- 22 Pablo Quintero, «Notas sobre la teoría de la colonialidad del poder y la estructuración de la sociedad en América Latina», in: *Centro de Estudios Interdisciplinarios en Etnolingüística y Antropología Socio-Cultural*, No 19, 2010. The term also appears in Bonsiepe 1978 (as Note 7), p. 68.
- 23 Bonsiepe 1974 (as Note 3), p. 40.
- 24 E-mail to the authors, August 10, 2019.
- 25 Bonsiepe 1978 (as Note 7), pp. (64) 69 f.
- 26 Bonsiepe 1974 (as Note 3), p. 41.
- 27 Jakob Schmidt and Jannis Funk, «Chiles kybernetischer Traum von Gerechtigkeit. Projekt Cybersyn», Deutschlandfunk, https://www.deutschlandfunkkultur.de/chiles-kybernetischer-traum-von-gerechtigkeit-projekt.3720.de.html?drum:article_id=471842 (Consulted May 11, 2020).
- 28 Mário Pedrosa, «O modelo chileno de socialismo e a Frente das artes», in: *Política das artes. Textos escolhidos*, São Paulo 1995, p. 318.
- 29 Mário Pedrosa, «Arte culta e arte popular», in: *Política das artes. Selected texts I*, (ed.) Otilia Arantes, São Paulo 1995, pp. 321–332. The essay was first published in the journal *Arte em Revista* (1971–1984), Nr. 3.
- 30 *Ibid.*, p. 322.
- 31 *Ibid.*, p. 328.
- 32 *Ibid.*, pp. 328–329.
- 33 *Ibid.*, p. 331.

Bauhaus in Chile—The Presence of a School

Fernando Pérez-Oyarzun

bauhaus reception

bauhaus propaedeutics—*vorkurs*

Before I entered the School of Architecture at the Universidad Católica, Santiago in 1968, a couple of friends were already pursuing studies there. During long conversations on Sunday evenings I saw them folding papers or perforating pieces of cardboard to fulfil the assignments of their first-year practical exercises. Sometimes they produced three-dimensional objects made of wood and cardboard, always with attractive geometrical content. Their teacher was Alberto Piwonka and at that time I did not know that he had met Josef Albers in Chile 15 years before and that those exercises were the result of a pedagogical proposal known as *Vorkurs* and conceived in Germany long before. When I entered the School of Architecture, a radical reform had happened and Piwonka was no longer teaching the first-year *Vorkurs*, but continued doing similar exercises in the adjacent School of Art.

I don't know exactly when I heard the name Bauhaus for the first time, but it certainly was in the air at the school. I had to approach the subject more seriously in 1970 when, preparing to assume a teaching assistant position, I worked my way through the pages of *Space, Time and Architecture* by Sigfried Giedion. Later on, references to it would re-appear in texts by other historians such as Bruno Zevi or Leonardo Benevolo. In 1975, along with a senior faculty member, I shared responsibility for a monographic course on the Bauhaus. By way of preparation, we tried to cover all the literature available in Chile. The heavy, white volume of the Hans Maria Wingler monograph, in its English translation, was one of our main sources.

In 1977 a Bauhaus exhibition that had circulated around the world arrived in the National Fine Arts Museum, endowing the subject with a public and less specialized character.

The subject of the Bauhaus would often come back to me in my academic life. In my doctoral dissertation, in 1981,¹ I included a brief chapter entitled «The Bauhaus and the systematic body», in which Oskar Schlemmer was the main reference, together with Xanti Schawinsky, Joost Schmidt or Ernst Neufert. By then, I had become acquainted with the catalogue of the 1938 MOMA exhibition, which was fortunately available in Barcelona. Back in Chile, when I began teaching the first-year *Vorkurs*, I came back many times to the *Triadische Ballett* [Triadic Ballet] film to make the students aware of the relationships between body and space. Thus, the Bauhaus has accompanied my academic career as a *basso*

[O] What is the significance and relevance of the Bauhaus and Modernism today—a historical phenomenon or a resource for the present? And what, if anything, constitutes their current relevance?

[O] *continuo*, reflecting the many personal and institutional connections it established with the Chilean intellectual and artistic milieu.

The Bauhaus as an International Phenomenon

bauhaus as a transnational
and transcultural network
of relationships

heterogeneity of the bauhaus
different bauhaus versions

The Bauhaus was a global phenomenon from its very beginnings. Gropius himself contributed to that, recruiting teachers from all over Europe. This cultural richness made the Bauhaus a multifaceted institution, often difficult to manage. More a space for encounter and discussion than a monolithic institution, it is common knowledge that relations among its members were not always easy. From 1918 until 1933, the period of its development in Germany, shifts and changes occurred in its internal environment, responding to the preferences and orientations of its leaders and members. Students from various countries played their part in shaping this international character of the Bauhaus. Exhibitions and publications, skilfully managed by Gropius, made the school a well-known institution throughout the world, including in South America. The exhibition *Bauhaus 1919–1928*, held at MOMA, New York in 1938, is one of the best examples of that. Disciples from all over the world would also disseminate their ideas and perspectives in their respective home countries.

If the Bauhaus was an international institution from the outset, this characteristic was multiplied under the diaspora that followed its demise, which was due to the Nazi regime. Former Bauhaus teachers took positions in various universities, especially in the USA. They would play a significant role in renewing art, architecture, and design education. As is well known, Hannes Meyer himself settled in Mexico for a while in what was a rather complex and problematic experience,² making Latin America part of the diaspora destinations.

bauhaus diaspora

renewal of art, architecture,
and design education

On the other hand, young professionals educated in the Bauhaus looked for work opportunities all over the world, especially after the school closed as an institution in 1933. From Israel to the USSR and from Latin America to Australia, they tried to take advantage of any opportunity to put into practice the ideas and values they had experienced in the Bauhaus, adapting them to a range of geographical and cultural contexts. As representatives of a new form of education, they also took up positions in many schools around the world and frequently contributed to reforming them.

processes of transfer, translation,
and transformation

Traces of Bauhaus in Art and Architecture of the 1920s and 1930s

encounters with bauhaus
and modern design

The mid-twentieth-century cultural environment was not globalized in the way and to the degree we experience today. However, ideas, names and images found ways to travel throughout the world. Thus, albeit possibly in rather restricted circles, avant-garde publications were not only known but could also be accessed in Latin America.³ Cultivated Latin American architects, travelling to Europe in the late Twenties and early Thirties, were interested in learning from the Bauhaus experience. That happened, for example, with the Chileans Sergio Larraín García-Moreno in 1928⁴ or Roberto Dávila Carson⁵ in 1930. Through them, as well as through other sources, the image of the Bauhaus entered the thinking of the more advanced students and academics. Although architectural education continued to be very traditional and officially followed the Beaux Arts standards and procedures, the new ideas began to permeate the academic milieu as well as that of enlightened professionals.

architectural education

between beaux-arts
and modernism

It is likely that also some furniture and decorative objects had arrived in Chile, reflecting the spirit of renewal in the 1920s. That was the case for Alfredo Johnson's house in Santiago, which was equipped with modern furniture and appeared in local publications, probably as a curiosity.⁶ Figures such as Gropius and Mies van der Rohe formed part of the intellectual imaginary of a rather small group of Chilean intellectuals. However, the reflection of such interest in projects and buildings had to wait until the Thirties. The Oberpauer building in Santiago by Sergio Larraín, from 1929, was probably the first of those examples in Chile and even in Latin America. Although it is difficult to state that it was a direct reference to Bauhaus ideas, it seems to be inspired by the German avant-garde of the period. The need to reform the teaching of architecture also became stronger in those years. A reform initiative emerged at Universidad de Chile, the national university, in 1933, but was not successful. Even though the institutional context of a traditional university was quite different from the Bauhaus one, it is likely that it represented a possible alternative for renewing architectural education.

architectural
education reform

- [F] What are the social, political, and economic preconditions for Bauhaus reception? And how do they vary from one period or country to another?
- [G] Which ways of taking a stand can we discover in processes of Bauhaus transfer, translation, and transformation?

Bauhaus Diaspora Reforming Art and Architectural Education after World War II

bauhaus diaspora
education reform
bauhaus pedagogies

One might venture to say that the real impact of the Bauhaus in the country happened within the pedagogical field and increased after World War II, during the time of the Bauhaus diaspora. Prestigious figures such as Walter Gropius at Harvard University, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe at Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT) or Josef Albers at Yale University were very attractive for Latin American architects and artists. The Bauhaus' importance had become internationally recognized and a wider circle of Latin American architects and artists became aware of its contribution. This is quite evident in some publications of the period, such as an article by Guillermo Ulriksen in *Arquitectura y Construcción*, probably the most influential Chilean publication of the period.⁷

processes of transfer,
translation, and transformation

bauhaus reception and
geopolitics

- [F] This process became increasingly important during World War II, when the USA promoted a new political relationship with Latin America. Emilio Duhart, a talented Chilean architect of French origin, educated at the Universidad Católica de Chile, was awarded a scholarship to pursue master studies at Harvard, in 1942, which he did successfully. When he returned to Chile in 1945, after a period in California when he gained experience as an architect, he joined Sergio Larraín's office and soon began to teach at his own former university. His Harvard experience, which combined Gropius' ideas with a traditional university environment, must certainly have stimulated him to imagine a renewal process for his school. Both Larraín and Duhart would later be of great importance in the renewal of architectural education in Chile.

architectural
education reform

If the Bauhaus might have been the background of the aborted Universidad de Chile reform proposals in 1933 and 1939, it was certainly an explicit model in the 1946 reform, the first actually implemented in the country. That happened through Hungarian architect Tibor Weiner, who contributed by backing and reinforcing the students' ideas with the authority of a recognized radical pedagogy. Weiner⁸ had arrived in Chile in 1939 and left for Hungary in 1948. In the meantime, he developed professional work and taught at Universidad de Chile, where he definitely contributed to the new curriculum implemented in 1946. Freely adapted to the conditions of a local university, this curriculum reflected Weiner's own experiences at the Bauhaus in Dessau under Hannes Meyer's leadership. Weiner taught some of the initial courses himself, emphasizing an analytic perspective, a functional approach, and an

new architectural curriculum
integral co-op architecture

social, functional,
and scientific approach

- [G] leadership. Weiner taught some of the initial courses himself, emphasizing an analytic perspective, a functional approach, and an

ergonomic perspective. Some of the Bauhaus principles thus found a local incarnation in Latin America Figs. 1a, b, 2.

Reform Process at the Universidad Católica, Santiago

A similar reform process had been incubated at the Universidad Católica since 1945. Young academics like Alberto Cruz Covarrubias (1917–2013), Alberto Piwonka (1917–1992) and Emilio Duhart (1917–2006) actively advocated those ideas and Sergio Larraín was perceived as a kind of institutional leader. Since the Thirties, a renewed form of architecture, closer to social problems and artistic avant-gardes, had already begun to permeate the practical exercises of the introductory teaching thanks to the influence of young academics. However, the initial study course remained classical and traditional. Alberto Cruz had conceived a course for the initial years based on observation and abstraction, which he called Pure Composition Fig. 3.⁹ The tensions between the traditional convictions of the authorities and the new ideas of young academics led to a conflict in 1949. A curriculum reform followed, which ended up with Sergio Larraín being elected as Dean of the School in 1952.¹⁰

new architectural curriculum

Larraín's invitation to Josef and Anni Albers in 1953 was the result of this reform process. Perhaps the main idea was to find a canonical way to initiate the studies replacing the traditional classical option. The presence of the artist couple in the school during the first semester of that year radically reformed the teaching of architecture and design there Fig. 4.¹¹ Alberto Piwonka taught a version of Albers' *Vorkurs* until 1967 and even later on in the Design School Fig. 5. Josef and Anni Albers also travelled to Peru and appreciated Andean textile production. Anni Albers was crucial to promoting the teaching of textile design at the Universidad Católica de Chile. The connection with Albers and Yale was extended by the presence of other influential academics, such as Sewell Sillman and Sheila Hicks who visited the school in 1958. As a result of those contacts, other areas were enriched with Bauhaus procedures. Responding to a suggestion from Sillman, Eduardo Vilches, recently awarded a national prize in art, went to study at Yale in 1960 Fig. 6. Returning to Chile in 1961, he began to teach a colour course, picking up on Albers' ideas. Generations of artists received his teaching in this area, building up a tradition that is still kept alive. During the late 1950s, Latin American

bauhaus propaedeutics—*vorkurs*

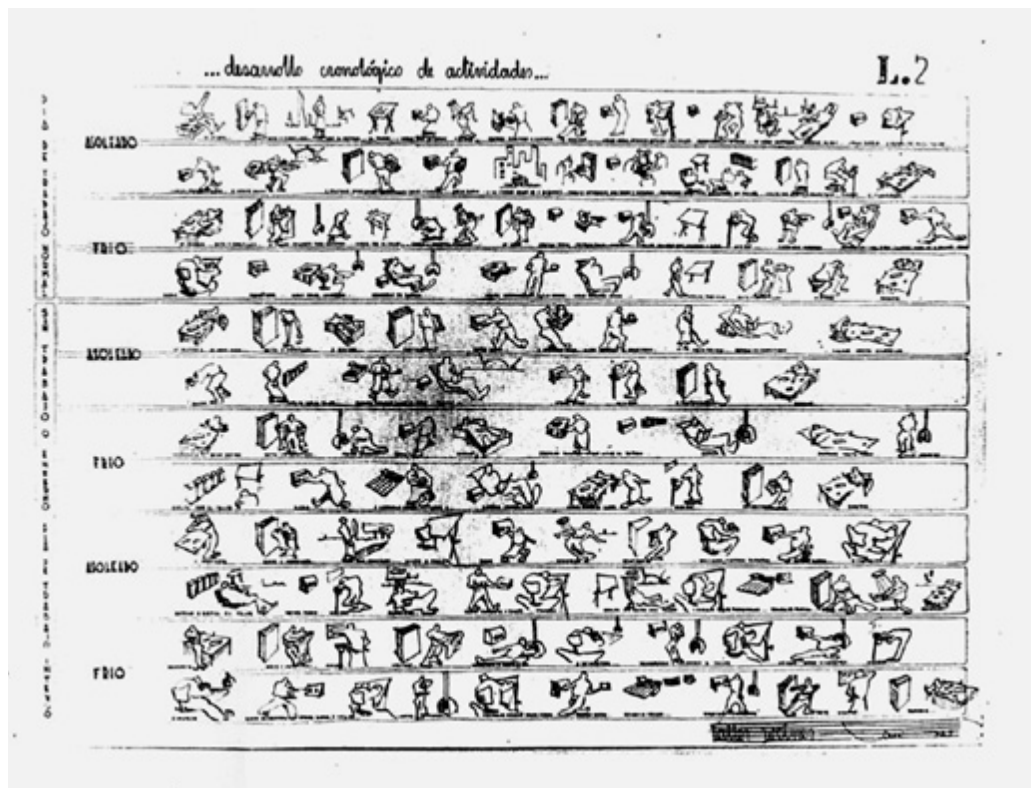
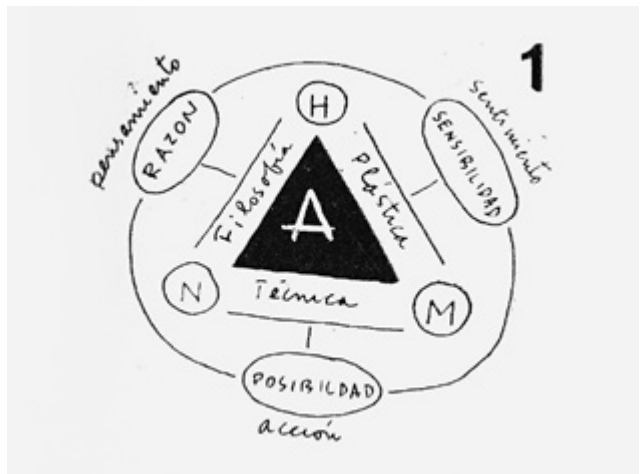


Fig. 1a
 One of the three schemes illustrating the Universidad de Chile 1946 reform including Tibor Weiner's ideas. The integral architect should articulate reason (philosophy), sensitivity (plasticity) and possibility of action (technique)

Fig. 1b
 Student work within Tibor Weiner's course: chronological activities, development under various climatic conditions, c. 1946

Fig. 2
 Tibor Weiner leaving Chile in 1948, surrounded by friends and students



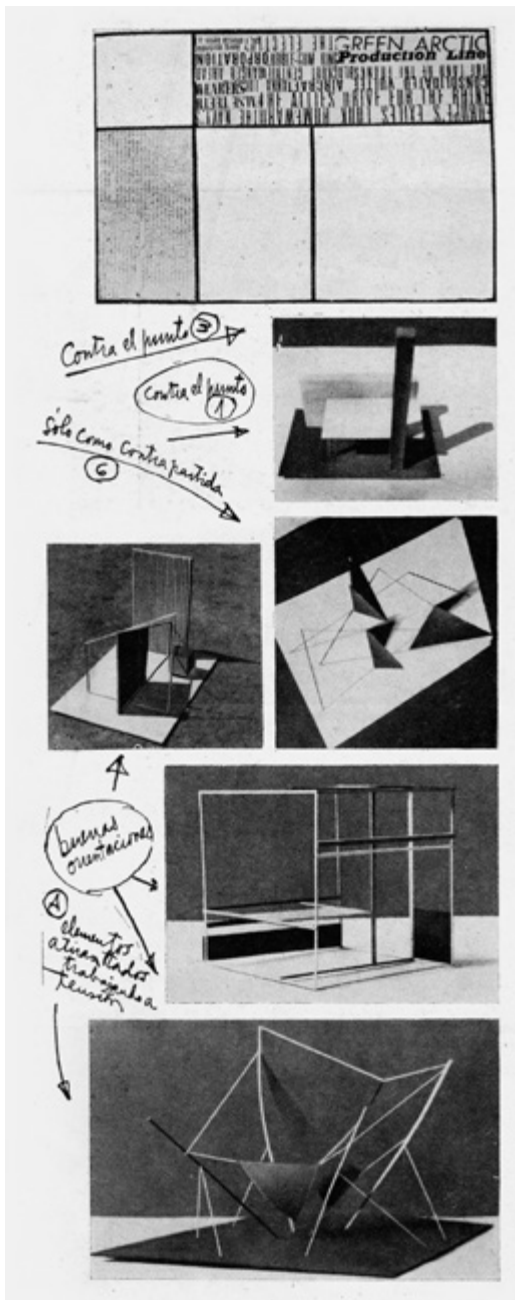


Fig. 3
Albert Cruz Covarrubias, Pure composition course at Universidad Católica de Chile, Student exercises published in *Arquitectura y Construcción* 16, 1949

Fig. 4
Student work produced within Josef Albers' studio in Santiago, Chile, with Alberto Piwonka participation

Fig. 5
Alberto Piwonka studio. Universidad Católica de Chile, c. 1960

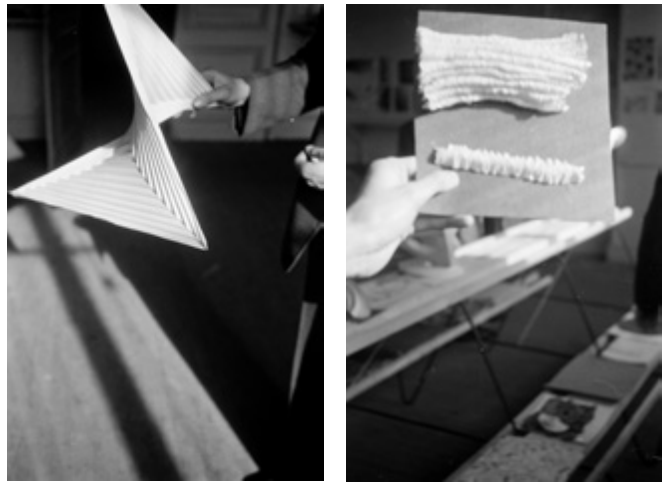




Fig. 6
Eduardo Vilches, two free colour
compositions, Sewell Sillman course,
Yale University, 1960

architects, such as Chileans Jorge Larraín and Sergio Miranda or Juan Manuel Borthagaray from Argentina, also pursued graduate studies at IIT under Mies van der Rohe's direction. Other Chilean artists, for instance Virginia Huneus, Carlos Ortúzar and Alejandro Siña, studied with György Kepes at the Centre for Advanced Visual Studies (CAVS), MIT, during the late Sixties.¹²

The Valparaíso School as a Cultural Nucleus and its Connections with the HfG Ulm

architectural
education reform

interdisciplinary approach

building as a field
for experimentation

new pedagogies
bauhaus pedagogies

The radical reform of the School of Architecture in Valparaíso, the Escuela de Arquitectura de la Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso (PUCV), was implemented in 1952 and is parallel to the beginning of Sergio Larraín's time as Dean in Santiago. This reform, developed during the 1950s, gave birth to what has been known internationally as the Valparaíso School. It encompassed the formal teaching of the school, the formulation of a theory of architecture, based on a relationship with poetry, and continuous experimental practice both in architecture and design. It began when Alberto Cruz Covarrubias and a group of disciples, accompanied by a poet, Godofredo Iommi (1917–2001), moved to Valparaíso and advocated a radical reform of the school, as well as founding an Institute of Architecture to promote research in the area. In a few years, the school had been completely changed and the Valparaíso School recognized as a significant cultural nucleus in Chile.¹³

We cannot state that the Bauhaus was literally the inspiration for the Valparaíso School. However, the school turned out to be, in its own terms, the closest Chilean experience to that of the Bauhaus. The idea of a community of teachers and students, the choice of experimental teaching methods, the simultaneity of teaching and creative work and even the parties, banquets and poetic acts that were organized have much in common with the Bauhaus cultural environment. In Valparaíso Alberto Cruz continued developing the ideas initially proposed in the Pure Composition course at the Universidad Católica de Chile in Santiago. They finally took form in the Space Course, which accompanied architectural practice as a kind of formal reflection ^{Fig. 7.}¹⁴ The presence of artists working in various genres—here poets, painters and sculptors—was another characteristic shared by the Bauhaus and the Valparaíso School. The latter institution had connections with the

Concrete Art movement in Argentina, which counted Tomás Maldonado as a member and, through Godofredo Iommi, with Brazilian poets.¹⁵ In 1971, members of the School founded the Open City in Ritoque, near Valparaíso, a mixture of community settlement and experimental camp, which was internationally renowned. As well as being a site where a series of interesting dwellings and public spaces were erected, it was also the setting for sports, gymnastic and imaginative games, eventually using masks and a variety of artifacts that the school developed around the idea of body culture Fig. 8.¹⁶

bauhaus reception

Another coincidental connection between the Valparaíso School and the Bauhaus, specifically through its heir, the Hochschule für Gestaltung (HfG) Ulm, is connected to Eduardo Vargas¹⁷, former student of the Valparaíso School. He pursued graduate studies in Ulm and worked with Max Bill in Switzerland before returning to Chile. In Germany he met and married the artist Cornelia Koch, also educated at the HfG Ulm, today known as Cornelia Vargas. As is common knowledge, the Ulm School had close ties to Latin America, developed during the 1950s and 60s. Tomás Maldonado, artist, designer, and theoretician, contributed to that. Born in Argentina, Maldonado was part of the Concrete Art Group and succeeded Bill as HfG Director in 1957. Back in Chile, Vargas worked extensively in public housing and other public positions. Exiled once again to Germany in 1975, after the military coup, Vargas took up a teaching position in Hannover and returned to Chile in 1993 to assume the post of Director at a recently created School of Architecture in the Universidad de Los Lagos, proclaimed the southernmost in the world. There he would propose a curriculum based on critical thinking, observation, and experimentation. Cornelia Vargas taught environmental design and other subjects in Santa María, Los Lagos, and Talca universities.

architectural
education reform

Juan Román, who was part of the initial teaching team of the Universidad de Los Lagos, was in charge of creating a new school of architecture in Talca, 250 km south of Santiago. He developed a regional approach to teaching there. The school curriculum, as in the Los Lagos university experience, aimed to create a sort of peripheral centre. The Architecture School at the Universidad de Talca has been recognized as one of the most innovative new schools of architecture in the country. There have been extensive publications addressing in particular its experience with final projects conceived as small construction schemes that were actually built.¹⁸ That represents a creative way of relating to the

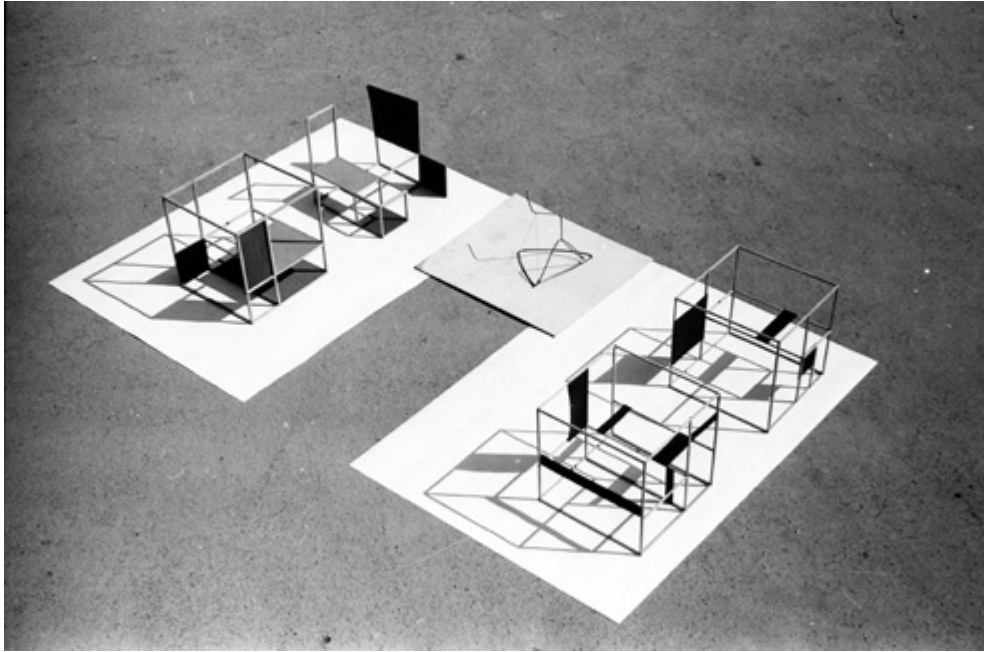


Fig. 7
Alberto Cruz, exercises from the Space
Course, School of Valparaíso 1952

Fig. 8
Students of the Valparaíso School, Luodo,
tournament organized by Manuel
Casanueva, in the Open City, Ritoque,
1984

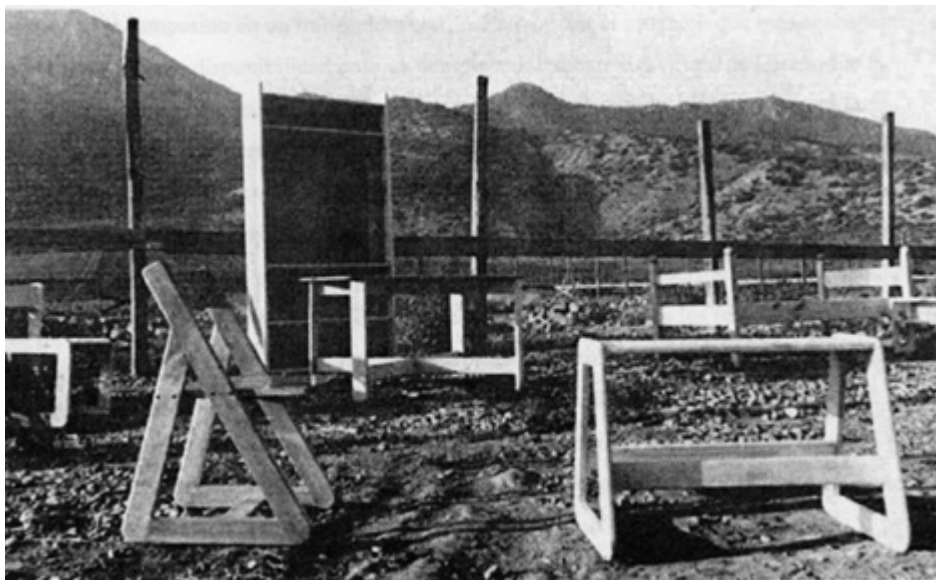


Fig. 9
Claudio Urzúa, student, Germán
Valenzuela, tutor, Landscape Intervention
in La Lajuela, Colchagua, Central Chile,
final project, 2010

Fig. 10
Gui Bonsiepe and Design Group,
Furniture for social housing (1971),
Photograph: Gui Bonsiepe

[J] The Bauhaus embraces different versions and ways of taking a stand. Which version or stance could help us tackle present and future challenges?

academic environment and the «real world» in an attempt to rein-vigorate conventional commissions and develop students' creative capacities in the field of construction. Not necessarily connected with industrialization, these experiences look for new links between disciplinary practices and social life Fig. 9.

Bauhaus Reshaped: Gui Bonsiepe and Cybernetics

Another significant connection with the HfG Ulm occurred through Gui Bonsiepe's presence in Chile between 1968 and 1973. Bonsiepe, who was trained at the HfG Ulm and worked with Maldonado, formed part of a second diaspora that spread after the school in Ulm closed in 1968. He saw an opportunity in Chile because of the presence of reformist governments between 1964 and 1973.¹⁹ Bonsiepe represented a new kind of rationality, less connected with the arts than Albers, and more engaged with the new ideas around language and communication. Within the CORFO (Production Development Corporation) government agency, Bonsiepe promoted a series of projects aimed at a new industrialization process promoted by the government, ranging from tableware to school furniture and from toys to household appliances Fig. 10. Probably his most unusual project was that of a planning control centre, including furniture and information design, to coordinate the significant number of industries then under government control. The 1973 military coup prevented implementation of this project. Bonsiepe's connections with students from both Universidad de Chile and Universidad Católica allowed him to make disciples and to influence the teaching of design and technology in both universities.

The Bauhaus—Innovative School and School of Innovation

The celebration of the Bauhaus centennial made it a sort of trending topic around the world. Both specialized and public media delivered articles and reports on the subject. Probably the complex and heterogeneous condition of the Bauhaus and its historic evolution make it difficult to identify a proper «Bauhaus style» which, to some extent, would contradict its own principles. Bearing in mind the architecture that Walter Gropius and Ludwig Mies van

processes of transfer,
translation, and transformation

modernization
and industrialization

second-order cybernetics

bauhaus centenary

heterogeneity
of the bauhaus

different bauhaus versions

[J]

education reform

bauhaus school acting as
a precedent

renewal of art, architecture,
and design education

modernist promise for
a better future

bauhaus as a concrete utopia

renewal of art, design and
architecture practices

bauhaus centenary

bauhaus as a screen
for projections reflecting
our own aspirations

bauhaus brand

der Rohe produced in the US helps understand how various positions could be related to the Bauhaus universe. However, perhaps the prevailing international image of the Bauhaus has been that of a reformed school and a school of reform. The Bauhaus called for art, design, and architecture teaching to be modernized, connecting them to artistic avant-gardes as well as to new pedagogical trends that emerged at the beginning of the 20th century. On one hand, the aim was to use art, crafts, and industrial production in order to achieve a new and better world, and on the other, to offer comprehensive education of human beings.

The Bauhaus' presence in Chile can be thus envisaged as that of a school in the term's twofold meaning of a teaching institution and a movement with shared ideas and convictions. During the 1920s and 30s, it was envisaged as a significant element within the new emerging trends in art and architecture. A more precise knowledge of the Bauhaus, including direct contact with its members, occurred in 1940s and 50s. Bauhaus masters and former students visited Latin America and Latin American students went to study with them in various North American or European institutions. However, the Bauhaus remained the utopia of a renewed school: the possibility of a creative teaching community able to educate people with the aim of changing the world and establishing new connections between production and culture, as well as between art and daily life. Especially during the second half of the 20th century, Chile offered fertile ground for pedagogical experiments. These brought about a renewal not only of teaching but also of art, design, and architecture practices. The Bauhaus was indubitably a permanent, and perhaps the main, point of reference in this process.

The celebrations of the Bauhaus centennial have demonstrated the extent to which the Bauhaus as a school was still present in the imaginary, at least of intellectuals, art historians and students. A series of lectures and seminars were organized to mark the occasion, mobilizing all the resources accumulated in the country concerning the Bauhaus itself and its Chilean connections. An interesting exhibition at Centro Cultural La Moneda referred to the Bauhaus centennial, allowing us to understand the way it is still perceived in the country. The exhibition brought together the main innovations in Chilean industrial design during the 20th century. Many of the exhibits were not necessarily connected with the Bauhaus in formal or historical terms, yet they were considered in some way to be the result of a process triggered by the school

- [N] How do our own cultural, social, and political beliefs and stances affect our understanding of the Bauhaus, Modernism, and modernity?
- [O] What is the significance and relevance of the Bauhaus and Modernism today—a historical phenomenon or a resource for the present? And what, if anything, constitutes their current relevance?

Gropius founded in 1919, which significantly increases their value—both tangible and intangible.

- [O] The National Museum of Fine Arts organized the exhibition *Bauhaus 100, el manifiesto se manifiesta* [Bauhaus 100. The manifesto manifests itself].²⁰ Through it, the museum aimed to celebrating the occasion not so much with an informative exhibition, but instead with a creative proposal. A Walter Gropius statement, comprising exactly one hundred letters, is installed in the main hall of the museum. Associated with each one of the letters, a series of Bauhaus material is made available to the public, including characters, products, ideas, etc. The aesthetic of the pamphlet dominates the installation, trying to underline and even to recover the social connections of the Bauhaus. The proposal suggests that the challenge of relating art, industry, and social transformation to one another persists in our society and our cultural institutions.
- [N]

Notes

- 1 Fernando Pérez, *Los Cuerpos del edificio, un estudio de la figuración arquitectónica del cuerpo en Alberti, Boullée y Le Corbusier*. Doctoral Dissertation, Escola Tècnica Superior de Arquitectura de Barcelona, 1981.
- 2 Adrián Gorelik and Jorge Francisco Liernur, *La sombra de la vanguardia: Hannes Meyer en México, 1938–1949*, Buenos Aires: Proyecto Editorial, 1993.
- 3 As an example of that, references to Le Corbusier's *Vers une Architecture* [EN: *Towards a New Architecture*] by the writer Juan Emar was published in *La Nación*, a Chilean newspaper, in 1924, the year after its publication in Paris. See Juan Emar, «Ideas sueltas sobre arquitectura», in: *La Nación*, 18 junio de 1924, published in: Patricio Lizama, *Juan Emar notas de arte*, Santiago: RIL Editores—Centro de Investigaciones Barros Arana, 2003, pp. 114–115. Issues of *L'architecture vivante* were also available in Chilean bookshops.
- 4 According to his own testimony, Sergio Larraín García-Moreno (1905–1999) visited the Bauhaus and the Weißenhof-Siedlung in Stuttgart this same year. See Cristián Boza, *Sergio Larraín GM: la vanguardia como propósito*, Bogotá Colombia: Escala, 1990, p. 29.
- 5 Roberto Dávila Carson (1889–1971) stayed in Europe until 1934, travelling extensively. He worked briefly with Le Corbusier and participated in Peter Behrens' studio in Vienna. Through contacts with van Doesburg and Vantongerloo, he was aware of the Bauhaus' role in architectural education.
- 6 See «Interiores modernos, residencia del Sr. Alfredo Johnson Gana», published in *Urbanismo y Arquitectura*, the magazine of the Asociación de Arquitectos de Chile (1936–41), in: Humberto Eliash and Manuel Moreno, *Arquitectura y Modernidad en Chile, 1925–1965, una realidad múltiple*, Santiago: Universidad Católica de Chile, 1989, p. 55.
- 7 Guillermo Ulriksen, «Trayectoria del equipo Bauhaus», in: *Arquitectura y Construcción*, 5, 1946, pp. 55–58. The article provides a complete and very accurate vision of the Bauhaus' principles and evolution.
- 8 Tibor Weiner (Budapest 1906–1965) received his degree in architecture in Hungary in 1929. After that, he pursued graduate courses at the Bauhaus in Dessau, under Hannes Meyer. After collaborating professionally with the master, in 1931 he travelled, together with Meyer, to the URSS, where he remained until 1937. See Daniel Talesnik, «Tibor Weiner and his role in the reform: a re-introduction», in: *De Arquitectura*, 14, pp. 63–70.
- 9 See Alberto Cruz Covarrubias and Alberto Piwonka, «Curso de Composición Pura», in: *Arquitectura y Construcción*, 16, 1949, p. 20.
- 10 An accurate description of this reform process can be found in: Cristóbal Molina Baeza, *Alberto Piwonka Ovalle, en el cruce de las ideas de la modernidad en Chile*, Santiago de Chile: ARQ, 2018, pp. 76–176.
- 11 See Hugo Palmarola, «Cartografía del curso preliminar. Josef Albers y Chile», in: *Anni y Josef Albers. Viajes por Latinoamérica*, VV.AA., Madrid: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, 2006, pp. 148–163.
- 12 See David Maulén, «Intercambios directos y reinterpretaciones de la HfG Bauhaus en Chile (Parte II)», in: *Plataforma Arquitectura*, <https://www.plataformaarquitectura.cl/cl/02-345942/intercambios-directos-y-reinterpretaciones-de-la-hfg-bauhaus-en-chile-parte-ii> (Consulted June 10, 2020).
- 13 Alberto Baeza, Jaime Bellalta, Fabio Cruz, Miguel Eyquem, Francisco Méndez, and José Vial joined this group of young architects. The Argentine sculptor Claudio Girola would also soon join the group.
- 14 See Molina (as Note 10), pp. 139–145.
- 15 Claudio Girola (1923–1994), sculptor and teacher in the Valparaíso School, was the nephew of Godofredo Iommi, poet and co-founder of the School. Claudio Girola and his brother Ennio Iommi had been part of the group Arte Concreto-Invencción, which included Maldonado, Alfredo Hlito, Camilo Arden Quinn, and others. Godofredo Iommi cultivated a long relationship with Brazilian poets, especially with Gerardo Mello Mourao and Thiago de Mello.
- 16 See Manuel Casanueva, *Libro de Torneos*, Ediciones Universitarias de Valparaíso, 2009.
- 17 Eduardo Vargas (1933–1996) belongs to a similar generation to that of Víctor Gubbins (1932–) and Guillermo Jullian de la Fuente (1931–2008). They had already entered the School of Architecture when Alberto Cruz Covarrubias and his group arrived there with a view to radically reforming it. Thus, they received that influence but had not been initiated in those principles.
- 18 Juan Román, José Luis Uribe and a team of collaborators, representing the Talca School of Architecture, were selected to design the Chilean Pavilion at the 15th Venice Biennale of Architecture.
- 19 Bonsiepe came to Chile during Eduardo Frei's government (1964–1970). From October 1968 until September 1970 he worked for a multilateral industrial development project. Later, employed by Salvador Allende's government (1970–1973), he worked in the INTEC (Institute of Technological Research), which was part of the CORFO structure. See Hugo Palmarola, «Entrevista a Gui Bonsiepe», in: *ARQ*, 49, pp. 54–56. Also «Diseño Industrial estatal en Chile 1968–1973», lecture delivered in the School of Design, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, November 2002, http://www.guibonsiepe.com/pdf/timeline_design_chile.pdf (Consulted June 10, 2020).
- 20 The exhibition was conceived by the artist and designer José Delano (1978–), born in Chile and currently living in Germany. It has received support from the AOA, Association of Architects Offices and the local building industry firm El Volcán SA, demonstrating the extent to which the subject of the Bauhaus reflects a cultural interest that is still alive in the country.

Manifestations of Bauhaus on the Mainland: Historical Advent of China's Modernities in Arts, Crafts, and Architecture

Chin-Wei Chang



Fig. 1
 The images of Bauhaus Dessau (top right), Gropius and Meyer (bottom left) published in: *Manufacture and Crafts*, 1931, Issue 2

bauhaus and politics
national socialist politics

bauhaus signifying
left-wing culture

Mies van der Rohe liaised with influential Nazi ideologue Alfred Rosenberg to win his support for reopening the Bauhaus in Berlin on the day after its closure on 11th April 1933. Rosenberg's simple, yet incisive, question «Why didn't you change the name for heaven's sake?»¹ reverberated in a 2009 exhibition monograph published by the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York—a publication largely indebted to the foundational work by Hans Maria Wingler, who proposed that the Bauhaus-Archiv be established. It revealed that this leading Nazi ideologue considered the name «Bauhaus» far more dangerous than the school itself, because it had become a powerful signifier for radical left-wing culture. The idea that the Bauhaus could have been reopened in the Nazi era under a new name and clearly defined conditions was not a new insight upon the school's 90th anniversary, but it is interesting to find it at such a historical moment in an institution that was from its very beginnings deeply connected with the Bauhaus and its mythologization. MoMA's founding director Alfred Barr² was prepared for his job by a visit to the Bauhaus in 1927 where he met Walter Gropius, Paul Klee, László Moholy-Nagy, Oskar Schlemmer, amongst others.³

Early Encounters with Bauhaus and Modern Design in China

A connection of the Bauhaus with China was established at an even earlier stage in terms of personal contacts and reception of literature, albeit not involving solely Chinese citizens. Saito Kazo, for example, was a Japanese student who trained from 1912–14 at the Kunstgewerbeschule, Berlin, led by Bruno Paul, which Nikolaus Pevsner regarded as one of the most significant schools in the field. Before joining China's first Higher Education in Fine Art National College of Art (today's China Academy of Art; CAA) in Hangzhou, he visited the Bauhaus in Weimar and talked to Wassily Kandinsky as well as Paul Klee in 1923.⁴

encounters with bauhaus and
modern design

The following year, 1924, art historian Ivan Matis from Hungary wrote a book *Modern European Art*, which was translated in Shanghai by 1930 and was one route for introduction of the Bauhaus—specifically noting its location «Weimar» in Chinese «威瑪爾 (Wei Ma Er)»—through literature at a very early stage;⁵ this not only seems to be an important step in spreading knowledge about the Bauhaus in China but also indicates the country's

considerable interest in the German avant-garde school. As we can see here in *Producing Crafts*, published in Beiping (now Beijing) by 1931, the signature building of the Bauhaus in Dessau entered Chinese audiences' awareness for the first time ^{Fig. 1}.⁶

Throughout the school's fourteen-year existence, from 1919 to 1933, there were no Chinese *Lehrlinge* who sat at the feet of the Bauhaus Meister in Weimar, Dessau, or Berlin. However, not unlike a comment once made by Charles Jencks—Being there makes the difference!—Zheng Ke may be the one and only or one of just a few Chinese persons who ever went to the Bauhaus, visiting during summer 1929, possibly at some point between Meyer-led exhibitions in Basel and Leipzig. As a French-trained painter and sculptor at the *École des Beaux-Arts*, he attended a few courses at the school in Dessau and drew in class on the basis of his atelier *modus operandi*.⁷

Pang Xunqin, an equally crucial figure in Chinese modern design, studied fine arts—to be more precise, oil painting—at Académie Julian, an art school quite different from Zheng's, yet also in Paris. However, their contacts with the Bauhaus were chronologically very close to each other in the same year 1929 when Pang Xunqin went to Berlin for Mary Wigman's dance performance. During his days there, he not only enjoyed the paintings of the Bauhaus teacher Paul Klee in the Nationalgalerie's [National Gallery's] New Department at Kronprinzenpalais, but also came across Modernist housing estates in Berlin. Such a seminal experience inspired him, early in 1946, to start dreaming of establishing a school of applied arts in his motherland.⁸ However, it was not until 1956, a decade later, that his proposal became reality: The Central Academy of Arts and Design in Beijing, to which the National Hangzhou School of Art (previous National College of Art in Hangzhou, as mentioned above) also dispatched teachers.⁹ It appeared as an aspiring «Chinese Bauhaus», consonant with most mainstream opinions, and for multifarious reasons.

The Dutch architect and designer Mart Stam, guest lecturer for urban planning at the Bauhaus Dessau (1928–1929), was invited by Mies van der Rohe to the Werkbund exhibition «Die Wohnung» [The Dwelling] in Stuttgart-Weißenhof 1927 where he introduced his pioneering cantilever chair, looking like what we see in this 1934 Shanghai film «New Women» ^{Fig. 2}.¹⁰ There is a suggestion of a well-to-do life style, especially in a city like Shanghai that had opened its gates to the world since the mid-19th century, and where people could hire the first generation of Chinese architects

between beaux-arts
and modernism

encounters with bauhaus
and modern design

new women's movement

modern architecture
and design as a response
to social modernization

bauhaus symbolizing
modern life



Fig. 2
Photograph of a Chinese woman sitting in
the Bauhaus-designed tubular steel chair,
1930s–1940s

- [F] What are the social, political, and economic preconditions for Bauhaus reception? And how do they vary from one period or country to another?

trained overseas, like Dong Dayou, to design a neo-Corbusian house filled with tubular steel furniture.¹¹ That is to say, design as the «enlightenment» of modernities first occurred in the field of arts and crafts, then moved onto a larger scale and physical dimension, as in architecture.

dismantling arts' hierarchical order

- [F] Seen in this light, straddling the rift between fine and applied arts in Europe seemed to pose the same challenge once again for Chinese professionals trained abroad upon their return to the motherland, paving the way, in their droves, for the multiple influences, if not for simplistic transplantation, of modern design and education. Various leaders, mainly Chinese architects and planners as addressed in the following paragraphs, obtained a more well-rounded reception/assimilation of Bauhaus wisdom/stardom, rather than random encounters with modernities, which in reality can only have stemmed from technological progress, institutional support, and interpersonal cooperation.

To-be-Modern Discourses and Pedagogies of Chinese Architects

Huang Zuoshen attended the Architectural Association (AA) in London from 1933 to 1938, and then followed Walter Gropius to the United States (US), becoming his first Chinese disciple. Prior to his well-known 1937–1952 position as Harvard University's Professor for Architecture—for which initial candidates included Ludwig Mies van der Rohe in Berlin and Jacobus Johannes Pieter Oud in Rotterdam—Gropius's interim period in Great Britain is usually prone to be overlooked, as is also the case for Huang. Gropius arrived in London on 18th October 1934 and lived there until his move to America. For those three years subsequent to his departure from Nazi Germany, Gropius lived at Lawn Road Flats (later known as the Isokon Building) designed by Wells Coates: a British icon of modern architecture and also home to László Moholy-Nagy and Marcel Breuer during their brief stay, which overlapped with Gropius' time there. Given that the émigrés were only allowed to practice if they entered into partnership with an established British architect, Gropius entered into partnership with the young Maxwell Fry, who brought the Bauhaus founding director's head-in-the-clouds utopianism down to the earth. In fact, it was immediately apparent, at a glance, that the so-called «London Bauhaus» consisted of Gropius' stripped-down functionalist aesthetics.¹²

modern architecture

emigration and exile

In contrast to records showing that AA talks by Frank Lloyd Wright and Le Corbusier later in the Fifties were much-heralded, Gropius seemed to have kept a low profile during his short stay in Great Britain (1934–1937). Fry and other active members of the Modern Architectural Research group (MARS), like Berthold Lubetkin and FRS Yorke, on the contrary, were fully involved in AA circles, whose base at Bedford Square served as their regular meeting venue. In addition, they on the one hand worked a great deal with emigrated Bauhaus teachers or students in practice, and on the other, they organized an exhibition that Huang certainly did not miss.

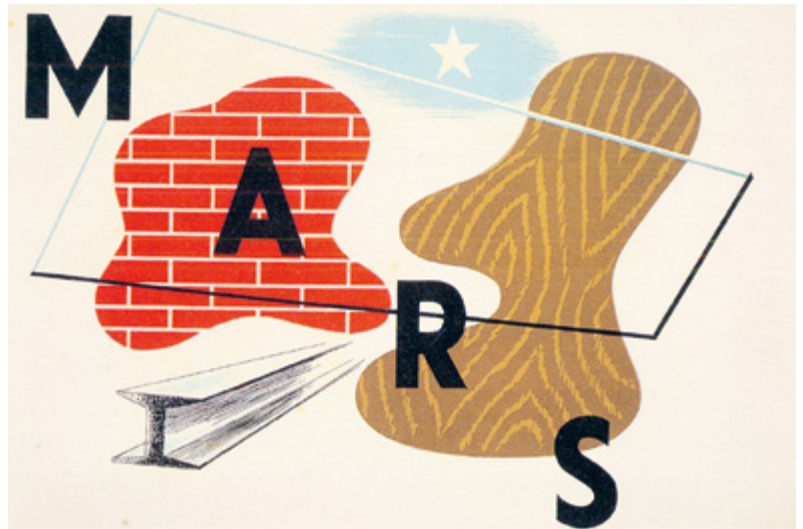
In January 1938, the MARS exhibition was held in Bauhaus-like «new architecture» at New Burlington Galleries in London. Huang's classmate and bosom friend A. J. Brandt went to the event and published a review in the *Architectural Association Journal*, which Huang was certainly aware of ^{Fig. 3}. When it comes to AA students' publications, there is no way to overlook *Focus*. There were only four issues, scattered over 1938–1939, but this offered Huang an opportunity to read articles including László Moholy-Nagy's *Education and the Bauhaus*¹⁵, Sigfried Giedion's *The Bauhaus, 1919–28*¹⁴—not to mention his face-to-face contact with Le Corbusier in Paris.

bauhaus reception
educational reform

european avant-garde movements

His direct exposure to these European avant-garde Modernists, however, led to an outcome that was both unpredictable and uncliché. Turning down even a truly hard-won internship offered by the godfather of modern architecture, Le Corbusier,¹⁵ Huang followed Gropius to the US and joined his Master Class at the Graduate School of Design (GSD) throughout the 1938–1940 academic years. He was the first Chinese architect, earlier than the famous I.M. Pei, to train at the legendary «Harvard Bauhaus».¹⁶ In 1942, one year after graduating in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Huang returned to China and was invited to set up the architecture department at St. John's (the former Architecture and Urban Planning School of Tongji University), one of the earliest missionary universities in Shanghai.

In terms of the nationality and diversity of the team he brought together, Huang's faculty recruitment was indeed «Bauhaus». In addition to his AA colleague Brandt, teaching construction, Richard Paulick took up a position teaching interior design and urban planning; he was recommended by Gropius directly, as head of the College of Engineering, as part of the Architects' Collaborative (TAC)'s deployment to the Far East.¹⁷ And last but not



圣约翰大学建筑系“建筑理论课”课程大纲

● 建筑理论大纲（七）

1. 概论：建筑与科学、技术、艺术
2. 史论：建筑与时代背景、历史对建筑学的价值
3. 时代与生活：机械论
4. 时代与建筑：时代艺术观
5. 建筑与环境：都市计划与环境

（一下）讲解新建筑的原理，从历史背景、社会经济基础出发，讲述新建筑基本上关于美观、运用、结构上各问题的条件，以及新建筑的目标

（二上）新建筑实例的批判（criticism），“评论”的意思，引者注）新建筑家（的）介绍和批判

● 该课程的参考书籍有：Architecture For Children, *Advantage of Building*, Le Corbusier 著；Toward a new Architecture, F.L.Wright 著；On Architecture, F.R.S.York 著；A Key to Modern Architecture, S.Giedion 著；Space, Time and Architecture, S.Giedion 著

资料来源：圣约翰大学建筑系档案，1949年

Syllabus: "Architectural Theory," Department of Architecture, St. John's University

● Outline:

1. Introduction—Architecture and Science, Technique, Art.
2. History & Theory—Architecture and Context, History's Value in Architecture.
3. Time & Living—On Machine
4. Time & Architecture—Artistic Perspectives of Ages
5. Architecture & Circumstance—Urban Planning and Built Environment

Explanation for the principles of new architecture, in terms of historical background and socio-economic context, as well as those requirements regarding aesthetics, function and structure, including the goals of new architecture.

Criticism of examples of new architecture and of new architects and their survey.

● Course References: *Architecture for Children*, *Architecture of Building*, Le Corbusier's *Toward a New Architecture*, F. L. Wright's *On Architecture*, F. R. S. Yorke's *A Key to Modern Architecture*, Sigfried Giedion's *Space, Time, and Architecture*.

东北大学建筑系四年级段尚楼设计名人纪念馆

名人纪念馆习题

廿一年九月七日作

吾國革命成功後，以成名人建築供奉神廟，吾國京城奉祀諸紀念堂，凡文學藝術界事蹟大家，國家之偉績，皆移其堂中，舉行前朝，然後再於堂下，堂內舉行，以昭其列先列祖。

堂宜高而深，宜方，宜在四百尺，以內，凡建築本面，古則其圓，林率，不務，應對其，則，堂內宜有大廳，再行，繪之，大廳之外，有正廳，其後，列之，下，層，分列，若，本堂，其，形，亦，若，此。

— 22 —

Fig. 3
MARS Group's catalogue of their exhibition in London, New Burlington Galleries, Graphic design by Ashley Havinden, 1938

Fig. 4
Huang's outline of Architectural Theory course in 1949, with translation by the author

Fig. 5
A student project under the traditional Beaux-Arts pedagogy in 1932

- [B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?

least, the Hungarian scholar Hans J. Hajek oversaw history courses, as well as those students-turned-teachers, in keeping with the Bauhaus tradition, in the postwar period.

bauhaus pedagogies

bauhaus propaedeutics–*vorkurs*

functionalist approach

Taken together, a decade of Bauhaus-inspired pedagogies at St. John's University (1942–1952), after all, trains our sight on Huang's preliminary course, modelled on the *Vorkurs*, with elements like «Pattern and Texture», where students had to make materials perform with intrinsic qualities through hands-on practice. Besides, their anti-formalist studio works were surely Functionalist-oriented because, led by mechanical engineers, their teaching was unmistakably distinguished from programmes available in beaux-arts-centric training.

reception of different versions of modernism

When it comes to realism and social relevance, however, Huang's experimental emphasis was elsewhere: for example, his groundbreaking theoretical class in architecture. As clearly demonstrated by his reading list for the syllabus, in addition to Le Corbusier and Giedion's enduring «bibles», the radical clout added via MARS members came to the fore, along with selected writings by Frank Lloyd Wright, whose Taliesin Fellowship insisted on traditional methods of British apprenticeship ^{Fig. 4}.

- [B] Had it not been for his deep-seated, yet outreaching, Bauhaus adolescence before Pax Americana and US consumerism, Huang would not have quoted the late-Victorian architect Sir Thomas Jackson—«Architecture does not consist in beautifying buildings; on the contrary it should consist in building beautifully» in his 1947/8 lecture at the British Consulate-General in Shanghai.¹⁸ Huang's Bauhaus approach therefore was not solely rooted in obsolete masters; instead, it was much more like a coalescence of «Modernisms» traversing the Atlantic, with London Bauhaus vis-à-vis Harvard Bauhaus, shedding new light on China's architectural education, then still under the sway of the French School.

bauhaus as a collection of attitudes towards design issues of the industrial age

architectural education

between beaux-arts and modernism

In this context, Liang Sicheng would be his counterpart in China. Throughout the 1920s, no architecture school in the US could be without a French academic. In addition to Jean-Jacques Haffner, winner of the Prix de Rome in 1919, whom Gropius replaced at Harvard, there were Eugène Létang at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Jean Labatut at Princeton University, and Liang's alma mater was no exception: Paul Cret made the University of Pennsylvania (Penn) the most distinguished Beaux-Arts-design-based programme on the East Coast.¹⁹

The first architecture department Liang Sicheng created in China was at Dongbei (Northeastern) University in Shenyang by

1928, which was completely modelled on the French system and honed students' talent in compositional drawing ^{Fig. 5}. The school, unfortunately, existed for merely three years due to the Japanese invasion. However, Liang was not alone in that short-lived undertaking; Penn alumni including his wife, Lin Huiyin, as well as Yang Tingbao, Louis Kahn's classmate, also joined his faculty.²⁰

After his thoroughly rewarding sojourn in America during the mid-1940s, Liang established his second architecture department at Tsinghua University in Beijing by 1946. Most current accounts of Liang's US journey, alas, were simplistically encapsulated in a few photos of him with signature Modernists, serving as a design consultant alongside Le Corbusier and Oscar Niemeyer, doing away with overblown monumentality and anachronistic styles, advocating progressive discussion of building design for the United Nations (UN) headquarters in New York.²¹

Conversely, this image de facto overshadows many other significant elements of his 1946–1947 visiting professorship at Yale University. First and foremost, his assistant there was Wu Kinglui, a GSD alumnus who later worked closely with Bauhäusler Josef Albers, who had left Black Mountain College near Asheville, North Carolina in 1950 to lead the Art Department of Yale University. Wu provided Liang with state-of-the-art curriculum and pedagogical logistics from both Yale and Harvard, which had been starkly distinct from Beaux-Arts-orientated training at Penn back in the Twenties.

Not unlike the philosophy of Dean Joseph Hudnut at Harvard for organizing GSD, a precursory notion even before Gropius' arrival, seeking to bring different majors under one umbrella, Liang came up with the idea that his architecture «department» should be upgraded to a «college» in order to accommodate burgeoning professions concerned with the built environment. Alongside industrial art, horticultural studies, landscape, and urban planning, in his draft program for Tsinghua upon returning from America he also carefully divided «architecture» into «design» and «engineering», two-track double-billing.²²

Each of these programmes required specific courses from five areas of study, also systematically crafted by Liang himself. Students of Architectural Design and Urban Planning, amongst other areas of spatial study, were supposed to take the same Culture and Sociology courses. The decision had much to do with Liang's attendance at the elite conference, «Planning Man's Physical Environment» at Princeton in 1947, where he—as the one and only participant from China—was able to meet with the guru Gropius ^{Fig. 6}.

architectural
education reform

new pedagogies

reception of different versions
of modernism

With respect to such documents, at the conference, however, Liang's attention was captivated by other—in the sense of offering an alternative to Bauhaus—Modernist architects, such as Frank Lloyd Wright and Alvar Aalto ^{Fig. 7}. The conference title, «Physical Environment»—in Chinese: *Ti Xing Huan Jing* (體形環境)—was not unlike the Bauhaus mission, proclaimed by Gropius in 1919, of creating a «total work of art» (*Gesamtkunstwerk*). When the People's Republic of China (PRC) was founded in 1949, in line with a newly-established party state's holistic planning and collective goals, this was the terminology that he invariably applied in official proposals submitted to the Ministry of Education on behalf of Tsinghua's aspiring college of architecture, which also taught Marxism-Leninism-Maoism Basic Courses, such as historical materialism and the new democracy.

The Amalgamation of China's Bauhaus: From Building to Planning

Shanghai established its official urban planning committee in 1946. More than half the committee members were teaching faculty at St. John's, including Huang himself and other lecturers, such as Luke Him Sau, Chen Zhanxing, Zhen Guanxuan, Wang Dahong. They pooled their efforts and also worked together with students, making a prolific contribution to citizens' well-being. When the scheme was completed by 1948, they teamed up as one of the first post-war associated architects' groups «Wu Lian» (Five United), a name that bore testimony to the re-unification of British-trained architects in China.²³

The most professional planner amongst them, Chen (who graduated in that field at Liverpool University and University College London) went northwards in 1950 to Beijing, to assist Liang in planning the new PRC capital. The two of them wholeheartedly submitted the cause célèbre Liang-Chen Proposal, which is still the subject of heated debates, although it was not implemented due to Chinese Communist Party (CCP) bureaucracy, with its ultimate failure due to political duress arising from alignment with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR).²⁴

For Huang, MARS Master Plan for London (1942) and for Liang, CIAM's Athens Charter (1933), should be seen in tandem, although based on different options, ever since in the restive Thirties they, individually and collectively, equipped mankind with the

demand to decentralize
the bauhaus

most progressive planning solutions then available: satellite towns, neighbourhood units, organic decentralization, and so forth. They acted like «architect-planners» abreast of notable counterparts all over the globe, irrespective of whether these were former Bauhaus teachers or students, despite their disappointment that all their endeavours failed when Mao Zedong's CCP propaganda meant, all in all, decisively counting on Soviet experts during the decades that followed his victory in the Chinese Civil War.

Apart from Wu Lian, 1949, Huang marshalled students and colleagues to operate the architecture office «Gong Jian Tu Mu», which was not unlike Gropius' Architects' Collaborative (TAC), and they designed Shangdong Secondary Technical School, completed in 1951. Two years later, Wenyuan Building was inaugurated as a new home for the original St. John's architecture department at Tongji University. Both projects offered an indefatigable sense of Gropius' Bauhaus building in Dessau, where young generations of engineers and architects went to be schooled ^{Fig. 8}.

bauhaus reception

In 1954, Mao's CCP revolutionary government sent representatives abroad to Communist countries for reconnaissance. A group that went to East Germany (German Democratic Republic; GDR) brought back Gropius-inspired design for a monolithic factory complex in Beijing. After the Ten-Year Great Disaster of the Cultural Revolution (1966–1977), a few books in translation, such as those by Johannes Itten and Wassily Kandinsky, became available in China for the first time. Approaching the 100th anniversary, however, reading about the Bauhaus is only part of the story, for, after all, seeing is believing!

bauhaus centenary

In 2011, the city of Hangzhou purchased a huge collection of European modern design from Berlin-based art dealer Torsten Bröhan, including 7,010 items and approximately 300 Bauhaus-related ones. It is now accommodated at China Design Museum, designed by Pritzker award-winning Portuguese Álvaro Siza.²⁵ The museum opened with a popular Bauhaus exhibition in 2018, on the campus of CAA, which even contains its own full-fledged Bauhaus Research Institute, a think-tank for *bauhaus imaginista*, an international research project series which culminated in 2019 in the exhibition at Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin and Thames & Hudson's centenary publication (in both an English and German version).

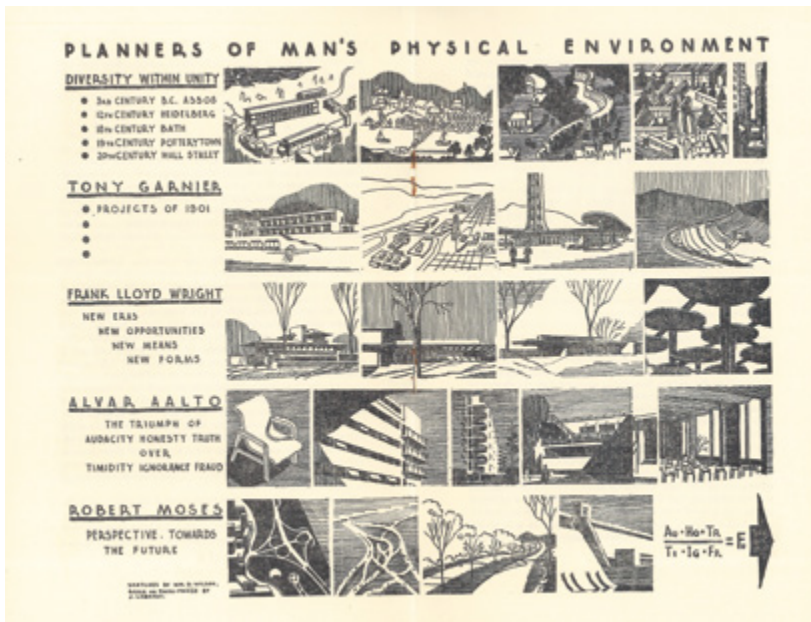
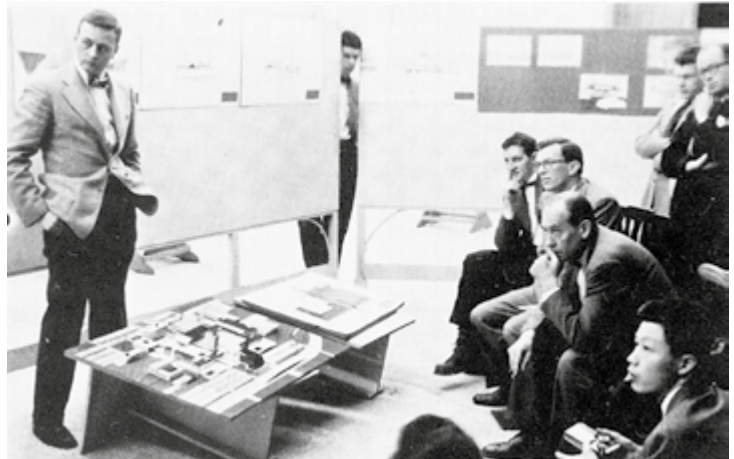


Fig. 6
Eminent attendees including Gropius sitting in the middle of first row whilst Liang is standing on the far left of the second row

Fig. 7
Sketches by Wm. D. Wilson based on Jean Labatut's conference photo-frieze

Fig. 8
Top down: Shangdong Secondary Technical School, 1951; Bauhaus Dessau Building, 1926; Faculty of Architecture at Tongji University (former St. John's architecture department), 1953



DARONG WANG
 Fenwick, Aug. 26 1961

Dear Dr. Gropius,

I have received with much pleasure the mailing label issue of *Progress* you sent me. The contents are both stimulating and instructive, and the cover design and color scheme are excellent. Thank you very much for your thoughtful note.

It was with great pride and joy that I read about your new achievements and the worldwide honors you have been receiving during the past years. Your ideas and work have always been a source of inspiration to me.

Here are a few photographs of the interior of my own house, built more than ten years ago - I hope that I have succeeded in making the building look Chinese!

With my sincere respects and warmest affection,

Darong Wang

RECEIVED
 AUG 29 1961
 THE ARCHITECTS COLLEGE

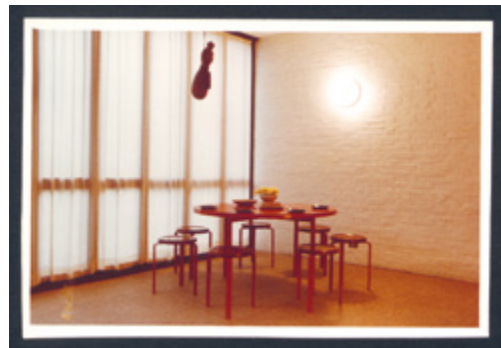


Fig. 9
 Wang (bottom right) at Gropius' Harvard Master Class in 1942

Fig. 10a-d
 Accompanying his letter, dated 26th August 1961, Wang sent Gropius three photographs of his house

- [F] What are the social, political, and economic preconditions for Bauhaus reception? And how do they vary from one period or country to another?
- [I] What can we learn from the history of the Bauhaus and Modernism when facing current issues? And how can this enable us to gain new insights into the past?

The Legacy Revisited, and/or Revised?

encounters with bauhaus
and modern design

When Chinese artists first encountered such modernities through traveling and living in 1920s–1930s, the technological circumstance in the motherland thwarted their potential back home:

[F] Zheng could only implement his progressive will in Hong Kong (HK) and Singapore, where he was lauded as a pioneer who broadened horizons concerning modern design. When Chinese architects studied with Bauhäusler and tried to do better in the 1940s–1950s, likewise, turbulent political and social upheavals hampered their endeavours on the mainland: Huang's partners of could only «hitch wagons to horses» elsewhere, for example after 1949: AA alumnus Luke Him Sau in HK, renowned for residential apartments; as well as another Gropius' GSD protégé Fig. 9, Wang in Taiwan (so-called «Free China» during the Cold War); his Sun Yat-Sen Memorial Hall remains one of Taipei's sightseeing landmarks in the twenty-first century.

modern architecture and national
identity construction

criticism of international style's
claim to universal validity

Having completed the house he designed for himself in the city by 1953, Wang wrote to Gropius years later in 1961 «I hope that I have succeeded in making the building look Chinese!»²⁶ Fig. 10. This should be read as criticism of the claim to universal validity to be found in the notion «International Style» and hence leads to a tentative conclusion here: The Bauhaus is a way, rather than an object. In other words, the Bauhaus is presented less as the exceptional result of an extraordinary time—the collapse of the German Empire and dramatic birth of a new republic—and more as a paradigmatic case of a broader European project to solve the problems associated with «good design»²⁷ in an industrial economy.

bauhaus as a collection of
attitudes towards design
issues of the industrial age

- [I] «All history» Benedetto Croce recalled in 1915, adopting a diachronic perspective, «is contemporary history», by which he means that all serious study of the past is informed by the problems and needs of the writer's own time, and the more conscious historians are of their contemporary motives, the more accurate their investigations of the past will be.²⁸ Why do most Bauhaus-100 celebrations take place at architecture, rather than at art schools? The «Vorkurs» was never devised exclusively for training architects, not to mention the fact that not under the Bauhaus founder's leadership, but of his successor Hannes Meyer—dubbed the «unknown» Bauhaus director—building education was made a school priority: A year before Gropius left the Bauhaus, the department of architecture was officially established in April 1927.

contemporaneity of history

bauhaus centenary

- [N] How do our own cultural, social, and political beliefs and stances affect our understanding of the Bauhaus, Modernism, and modernity?
- [O] What is the significance and relevance of the Bauhaus and Modernism today—a historical phenomenon or a resource for the present? And what, if anything, constitutes their current relevance?

Might one venture the thesis that instead of asking what all kinds of Modernist architects, designers or artists in China owe to the Bauhaus, it makes more sense to conceive the Bauhaus as a collection of attitudes, something beyond names and objects that could have been acquired, appropriated, or adopted—in each case in a particular way. And that indeed still works and matters after the historical Bauhaus' demise.

demand to decentralize
the Bauhaus

[N] [O]

What we do need today is to decentralize the Bauhaus and to foster interest in processes of reception, translation, and transformation and their impact on local people.

local impact of transfer
processes

I would like to conclude with a short paragraph in Edward Said's *Orientalism* which I slightly modify by simply replacing «the Oriental» by «the *Bauhäusler*»: «The nexus of knowledge and power creating «the *Bauhäusler*» and in a sense obliterating him [her] as a human being is therefore not for me an exclusively academic matter. Yet it is an intellectual matter of some very obvious importance. Too often literature and culture are presumed to be politically, even historically innocent; it has regularly seemed otherwise to me [...] that society and literary culture can only be understood and studied together».²⁹

power relations and geopolitics

intellectual colonialism

Coda: A Reflection with Hindsight

Did Gropius ever reply to Wang's letter, mentioned above, sent on 26th August 1961? There was no direct response, yet a later reply did come, albeit not until 1968, hand-written in person by Gropius, one year before his death, with an intriguing poem by Greek diplomat and poet George Seferis Fig. 11 30:

All I want is to speak simply;
for this grace I pray
For we have loaded down even the song
with so many kinds of music
That gradually it sinks
And our art we so decorated
that beneath the gilt
Its face is eaten away
And it is now time for us to say
the few words we have to say
Because tomorrow our soul sets sail.

"All I want is to speak simply;
for this grace I pray
For we have loaded down even the song
with so many kinds of music
That gradually it sinks.
And our art we so decorated
that beneath the gilt
Its face is eaten away.
And it is not time for us to say
the few words we have to say
Because tomorrow our soul sets sail."

by the great poet Seferis.
Walter Gropius.
Cambridge / Mass / 1968

Fig. 11
Dated 14th August 1968, Gropius's
hand-written poem posted to Wang

Notes

- 1 Barry Bergdoll and Leah Dickerman (eds.): *Bauhaus 1919–1933: Workshops for Modernity*, exhib. cat. Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, NY, 2009, p. 337.
- 2 Alfred Barr created the first U.S. course on modern art and architecture, in which he emphasized the continuity of creative production between fine and applied arts, see Robert Wiesenberger, *The Bauhaus and Harvard*, <https://www.harvardart-museums.org/tour/the-bauhaus/slide/6339> (Consulted on April 4, 2020).
- 3 Bergdoll/Dickerman (as Note 1), p. 332.
- 4 Chang Chunyan, «The Spread of the Bauhaus in China», <http://www.bauhaus-imaginista.org/articles/735/the-spread-of-the-bauhaus-in-china?0> (Consulted on January 22, 2020).
- 5 Zhou Yuxi and Zhou Wuzhong, «An Investigation on the Early Spread of Bauhaus in China: Take the Modern Native Art Literature as the Center 包豪斯在中國的早期傳播考察：以近代本土藝術文獻為中心», in: *Hundred Schools in Arts* 35 (Mar 2019), p. 183–188.
- 6 Ibid. The reason why the author still includes Gropius' picture in addition to «red» Bauhaus director Hannes Meyer might relate to this being in the aftermath of the successful Deutsche Werkbund exhibition in Paris, at which Gropius, Bayer, Breuer, Moholy-Nagy—who left the school in 1928 together—played leading roles.
- 7 Lian Mian, «Chinese Modern Design Pioneer Zheng Ke and «Bauhaus» Connection—As well as His Relationship with Pang Xunqin» 中國現代設計先驅鄭可的「包豪斯」情結—兼述其與龐薰綦之關係, in: *New Arts: Journal of the National Academy of Art* 39 (Nov 2018), pp. 40–50.
- 8 Ibid. See also Pang Xunqin, *This Was How I Became* 就是這樣走過來的, Beijing: San Lian Bookshop, 2005, pp. 111–117.
- 9 Chang (as Note 4).
- 10 Chang Chunyan, «The Phases and Paths of Bauhaus Dissemination in China» 包豪斯在中國傳播的階段和路徑, in: *Chinese Art* (Jan 2019), pp. 38–43.
- 11 Kuan Seng, «Between Beaux-Arts and Modernism: Dong Dayou and the Architecture of 1930s Shanghai», in: *Chinese Architecture and the Beaux-Arts*, (eds.) Tony Atkin, Nancy S. Steinhardt, and Jeffrey W. Cody, Honolulu, Hawai'i: University of Hawai'i Press, 2011, pp. 169–192.
- 12 Peder Anker, *From Bauhaus to Ecohouse: A History of Ecological Design* 從包豪斯到生態建築：一部生態設計的歷史, transl. Shang Chin, Beijing: Tsinghua University Press, 2012, pp. 13–19 [Original text in English, Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press (LSU Press), 2010]. Fry was a leading member of the Modern Architectural Research group (MARS): The Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM) branch in England was founded in 1933 to support Modernist architects in Britain, where architectural Modernism arrived late compared to continental Europe; one need only think of Le Corbusier's *Vers une architecture* (1923) and the lessons from Bauhaus and the Weissenhof Estate in Stuttgart (1927).
- 13 László Moholy-Nagy, «Education and the Bauhaus», in: *Focus* (Winter 1938), pp. 20–27, in which the 1923–1928 *Vorkurs* protagonist detailed his instructions including «three parts: The basic design workshop; analytical and constructive drawing, modelling, photography; scientific subjects».
- 14 Elizabeth Darling, «Focus: A Little Magazine and Architectural Modernism in 1930s Britain», in: *The Journal of Modern Periodical Studies*, Bd. 3, No. 1 (2012), pp. 39–63.
- 15 Leah Hsiao and Michael White, «The Bauhaus and China: Present, Past, and Futures», in: *West 86th: A Journal of Decorative Arts, Design History, and Material Culture*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (Fall–Winter 2015), pp. 176–189, <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/10.1086/685869> (Consulted on April 4, 2020).
- 16 Jill Pearlman, *Inventing American Modernism: Joseph Hudnut, Walter Gropius, and the Bauhaus Legacy at*

- Harvard, Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2007, pp. 50–84.
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- 18 Huang Zuoshen, «The Training of an Architect» 個建築師的培養, in: *Commemorative Accounts of Huang Zuoshen* 黃作燊紀念文集, (eds.) Qian Feng and Wu Jiang, Beijing: China Architecture & Building Press (CABP), pp. 3–14.
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«Anonymous» and «Versioning» Approaches: The Spread of Bauhaus in China

Zoe Zhang



Fig. 1
Ivan Mates, The Art of Contemporary
Europe, translated by Xue Feng, published
by Dajiang Bookstore, Chinese version,
1st edition, 1930

- [N] How do our own cultural, social, and political beliefs and stances affect our understanding of the Bauhaus, Modernism, and modernity?

The Bauhaus' spread in China involves the interlacing of an «anonymous» approach and a «versioning» approach, which also signifies the overlap between the tangible level and the intangible level. It is the reaction of popular culture and elite culture at one and the same time. It spans disciplines such as the fine arts, design (craft), and architecture.

spread of bauhaus through commodity circulation

«Anonymous» means that the design or concept originating from the Bauhaus school is disseminated without the name «Bauhaus» through commodity circulation, interpersonal communication or images. «Anonymous» also implies the multiplicity of subjects and the concealment of logic in the establishment of the «Bauhaus» discourse.

bauhaus discourse

- [N] The discourse transformed into «multiple versions», which shows the different interpretations of «Bauhaus» and its different interpreters. In China, different subjects have varying understandings of «Bauhaus» for various reasons, such as discipline, political standpoint, and historical accident, or the same subject has a different judgment in different periods.

First Stage of Dissemination in the 1930s: The «Anonymous» Bauhaus as a Symbol of Modern Life for the Masses and as a Tool in China's Revival for the Intellectuals

The Chinese translation of the book *The Art of Contemporary Europe* (1926) was published in 1930 in the «Marxist Theory of Literature and Art Series» co-planned by Lu Xun and Feng Xuefeng^{Fig. 1.1}. The word «Bauhaus» was translated into Chinese for the first time by left-wing intellectual Feng Xuefeng. The author Ivan Matsa/ Macza (Иван Людвигович Маца), a Marxist from Hungary, described the Weimar Bauhaus as a collectivist group of artists or a self-sufficient «art commune»,² not just a «work» by Walter Gropius. This book had great influence on left-wing intellectuals.

bauhaus signifying left-wing culture

Also in 1930, Rudolf Hamburger, one of the first architects to realize Functionalist and simple-form architecture in China during the Imitation Period of Art Deco, arrived in Shanghai with his wife Ursula Hamburger.³ With Ursula, Lu Xun organized the German Woodcut Exhibition at the Shanghai German Bookstore in June 1932, exhibiting works by Lyonel Feininger and other artists.⁴

At that time the magazine *Manufacture and Crafts* published photos of the Bauhaus, which was described as a «craft school»^{Fig. 2.5}. The following year, the magazine published an

bauhaus school

[F] What are the social, political, and economic preconditions for Bauhaus reception? And how do they vary from one period or country to another?

article by Chu Xiaoshi, Vice-President and Head of the Design Department at Beijing (Beijing) Art College, advocating that the model of the German craft school should be adopted and proposing a plan for the future China National Craft School.⁶ However, more often than not, in China the word «Bauhaus» was used as a «footnote» to Walter Gropius, Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, or the new architecture movements.⁷

new architecture movement

encounters with bauhaus
and modern design

With international students returning to China in the mid-1930s, the introduction of the Bauhaus into arts, crafts, and architecture circles gradually deepened. One example is the designer/artist Zheng Ke, who started to teach at the Architecture Department of Kwangtung Xiangqin University in 1934.⁸ He had visited the Bauhaus school in Dessau while studying abroad and throughout his life endeavoured to adapt the Bauhaus concept.⁹

Young students from the Xiangqin University founded the *New Architecture* magazine,¹⁰ which responded to the Bauhaus manifesto in its inaugural statement ^{Fig. 3}. Beginning by introducing Gropius and other Modernist architects closely related to the Bauhaus,¹¹ they defined the «Bauhaus» as an «architecture Gestaltung school» based on «comprehensive plastic art».¹²

bauhaus signifying art's power
to transform society

During this period, Chinese students and practitioners from different disciplines had different definitions of the Bauhaus: «art community», «craft school» or «architecture Gestaltung school». However, there was a consensus on one point: They saw in the Bauhaus model that art, architecture, or craftsmanship could transform society, seeing this model as a tool for reviving China in a semi-colonial situation.

[F] While a few intellectuals introduced the Bauhaus deliberately, Bauhaus-derived products entered China in an «anonymous» way. From 1930 to 1937 (before the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression), the Chinese economy and its diplomatic relations with Germany flourished. At this time, the «Bauhaus products» designed by Marcel Breuer and other Bauhäusler were popularized through international trade and local imitation. On the one hand, the steel industry was understood as a symbol of the strength of modern industry and national defence, while, on the other hand, concepts of the modern family and reform of daily life, as represented by the new women's movement, meant that hygienic, durable, simple and efficient products were held in high esteem.

spread of Bauhaus through
commodity circulation

modern architecture
and design as a response
to social modernization

new women's movement

At that time, while resisting political, economic, and cultural colonialism from the West, China had to learn modernization

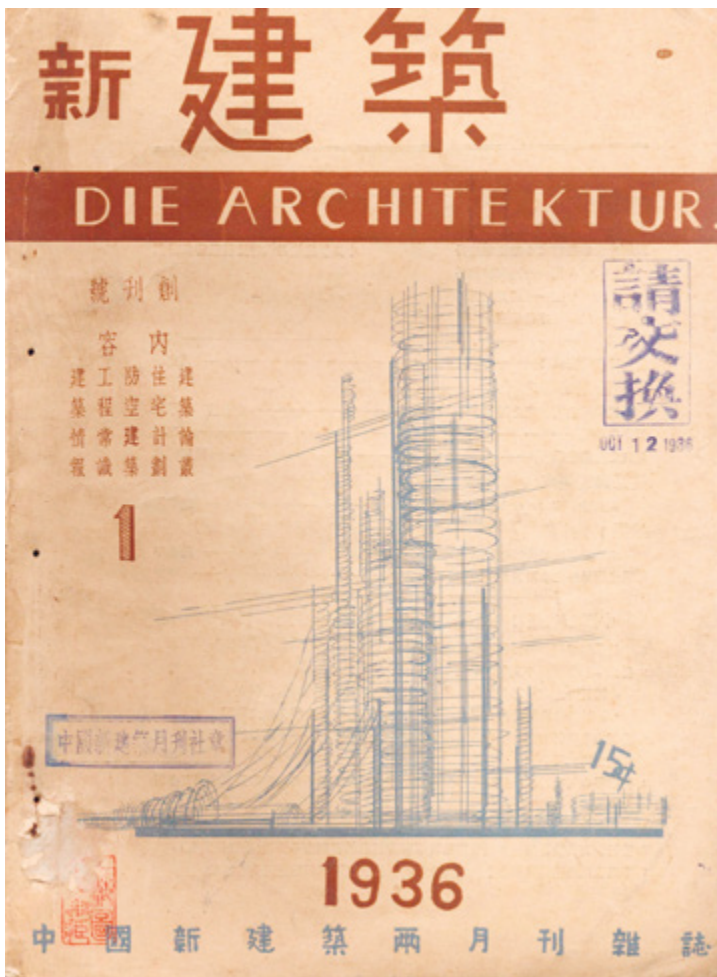


Fig. 2
Manufacture and Crafts, 1931, Issue 2

Fig. 3
Cover of New Architecture magazine,
1936, 1st Issue



Fig. 4
The New Chrome Furniture Produced by Diaward (Introduction to Domestic Products), Weekly Report for Production and Marketing of China National Domestic Products, 1937, Volume 3, Issue 14, p. 1



Fig. 5
Photograph of movie actress Miss Hu Shan, 1937

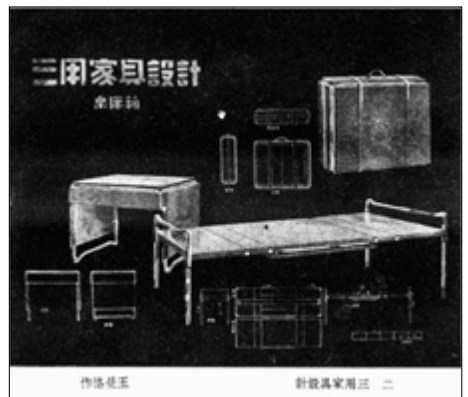


Fig. 6
Wang Manke, Three-Use Furniture, in: A Special Collection of the Second National Exhibition of Chinese Art under the Auspices of the Ministry of Education, Part 3 (Modern Chinese Occidental-Painting, Design, and Sculpture), 1937

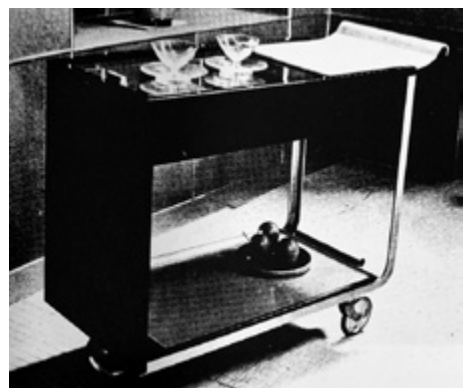


Fig. 7
Crafts Guidance Office of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry of Japan, Catalogue of Exported Industrial Products, No. 81, 1934, p. 42

resisting colonialism and learning
modernization from the west

from the West. It was therefore only by distinguishing «modernization» from «Westernization»/«colonization» that modernization reform could gain legitimacy in China. Modern technology, aesthetics, and lifestyle all needed to be gradually decoupled from the sense of being «Western» in order to integrate with the local realm and to gain identity in China.

The Chinese government therefore applied a temporary copyright system to acquire Western technology at a low cost, and adopted the «Provisional Standards for Chinese Domestic Goods Act» to designate locally-manufactured products containing Western technology as «domestic goods». ¹³ In this context, Bauhaus-derived steel-tube furniture was imitated and improved by Chinese manufacturers, such as the Diaward Steel Furniture Factory and others ^{Fig. 4}. ¹⁴ Neither the original prototype designer nor the local Chinese designer who had redesigned it were credited by name. Although government departments and movie stars could afford the imported products, they still bought Bauhaus-derived furniture produced by local factories. In order to ease the contradiction between «modernization» and «nationalism», the link between «the West» and «modernization» was broken by concealing the initial «Western» background of such furniture with the nationalist label «domestic product».

tension between modernization
and national identity construction

The public could discover these products through widely available publications, exhibitions, domestic product fairs and other activities. At the grand industrial exhibition, «Better Home», which was held in Shanghai in 1935 and 1937, domestic manufacturers such as Diaward, as well as overseas manufacturers like Deutsche Werkstätten, Siemens and «The Modern Home», displayed products. ¹⁵ The spread of Bauhaus in the market by «anonymous» products and in mass culture through «anonymous» images was much wider than introduction of the «Bauhaus» into the elite circle ^{Fig. 5}. Mass culture was a hotbed for creation and diffusion of the Bauhaus «mythology». At this time, the «anonymous» Bauhaus as a symbol of modern life and the different versions of the Bauhaus in different disciplines essentially regarded the Bauhaus as progressive and advanced.

bauhaus symbolizing
modern life

However, we should bear in mind that such Modernist products were limited to middle-class families in a few large cities or only used in institutions and commercial spaces that served the urban middle class. ¹⁶ At the time, not only Bauhaus design, but also modern designs from Britain, France, the United States, Japan, Austria and other countries were localized ^{Fig. 6}.

reception of different versions
of modernism

Second Stage of Dissemination in the 1940s: The Bauhaus as a Resource for China's «New Architecture Movement»

bauhaus pedagogies

Progress had been achieved in introducing the Bauhaus' theory, design practice or pedagogy to China. Due to the Japanese invasion of China, this dissemination extended from coastal cities to areas in Middle China such as Chongqing and Guangxi. More interestingly, «Bauhaus» supporters were to be found among both the colonizer and the colonized during the war.

The Consultancy Offices for the Industrial Arts (kōgei shidōsho 工芸指導所), founded by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (商工省, Shōkōshō) of Japan, hired Bauhaus graduates to design modern products ^{Fig. 7}. Under the guise of the «Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere», Japan opened up opportunities by war to display and sell its modern design products in China. In 1943, Shenji Koike and Bauhaus graduate Iwao Yamawaki, technicians from The Consultancy Offices for the Industrial Arts, joined the «Gestaltung. Culture Alliance for East Asia Development», which was jointly organized by the Japanese government and the Nanjing puppet government then in power.¹⁷ In the same year, this organization held a week-long «Gestaltung. Culture Exhibition for East Asia Development» and «Modern Japanese Gestaltung. Culture Exhibition» in Beijing, Nanjing, Shanghai and other cities.¹⁸ One year before the exhibitions, Shenji Koike investigated China's crafts situation¹⁹ and held a Sino-Japanese symposium on design and craft with the Nanjing puppet government.²⁰ At the symposium, not only the Japanese representatives were supporters of the Bauhaus, but also the Chinese academic Chu Xiaoshi who had advocated learning from the German craft/design school.

When the Chinese government led by Chiang Kai-shek was forced to move west to Chongqing due to the war, many schools and scholars in the East followed the westward movement supporting the Anti-Japanese War. Design in Chongqing during the war period applied principles such as Functionalism more consciously. In 1943, when Japan indiscriminately bombed Chongqing, Li Lunjie, a graduate of Xiangqin University in Kwangtung, published a book in Chongqing on the international new architecture movement, with reference to the *Bauhausbücher*.²¹ The author declared that the Bauhaus was one of the three most important resources of China's «new architecture movement». The educational experiments influenced by the «Bauhaus» also expanded to western China. To give but one example, in 1945, Liang

new architecture movement

new pedagogies

bauhaus school acting
as a precedent

Sicheng, an architect and architectural historian, who took refuge in Chongqing, wrote to the Director of Tsinghua University in Beijing, Mei Yiqi, suggesting that the Department of Architecture of Tsinghua University should be established based on the Bauhaus educational model.²² Other Bauhaus supporters, such as Zheng Ke, Hsia Chang-Shi²³, Pang Xunqin, also moved westward one after another.

Bauhaus dissemination in the east was not stopped by the war. When Shanghai was occupied by Japanese troops in 1943, Henry Huang, who had studied under Gropius at Harvard, and Richard Paulick,²⁴ who had worked in Gropius' architectural office in the late 20s, replaced the previous Beaux-Art system with the Bauhaus teaching method in the newly created Department of Architecture at St. John's University.²⁵ By the end of the 1940s, their first students were working in urban planning, architecture, furniture, and textile design projects. However, it was difficult for them to achieve commercial success. Because the eastern city was occupied by Japanese troops and most factories were moved or ruined, there was a severe economic decline. The industrial productivity retained in China was basically used for preparing for war and ensuring the population's survival.

From the end of World War II to the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC), the defeat of Japan and Germany meant that the US, through religious activities, international trade, and academic visits, became a main source of information on forms of «modernization» such as the «Bauhaus». The signing of the «Sino-American Treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation» in 1946 also led to a massive influx of American goods and culture into China. The number of American schools in China, such as St. John's University, increased correspondingly and the number of Chinese scholars visiting the United States with US funding reached a peak.²⁶ Zhou Buyi, Luo Weidong, Li Ying went to America and started their learning inspired by the Bauhäusler. Liang Sicheng's «Drafting Plan of Curriculum and Course for the Department of Construction and Architecture of Tsinghua University»,²⁷ published in 1949, is the result of his visit to the US. Gropius was invited by a US-supported institution, the United Board for Christian Colleges in China, to begin designing the East China University campus in Shanghai. After the founding of the PRC, the power of the US in mainland China began to be eliminated.²⁸ Therefore, US influence on «Bauhaus» dissemination on the mainland quickly weakened, while it continued to influence Taiwan and Hong Kong.

- [F] What are the social, political, and economic preconditions for Bauhaus reception? And how do they vary from one period or country to another?

Third Stage in the 1950s—a Politicized Bauhaus Representing Degenerated Culture of Western Capitalism and the Survival of an «Anonymous» Bauhaus

spread of bauhaus through commodity circulation

bauhaus discourse

critique of bauhaus' formalistic approach

bauhaus signifying western capitalist culture and production

bauhaus reception and geopolitics

The dissemination of the «Bauhaus» in China was a process of «anonymization». However, behind this anonymization lay the struggle between two different «Bauhaus» discourses based on different ideologies. Nevertheless, this did not impede the spread of the (anonymous) Bauhaus in the form of material culture.

- [F] The «Bauhaus» was regarded as a Western formalistic culture by the Chinese authorities in the 1950s and was sidelined in the light of Stalin's slogan «socialist in content and national in form». In 1953, Liang Sicheng's article «Soviet Experts Helped Us to Correct the Concepts of Architectural Design» marked the implementation of Soviet cultural guidelines in China's architectural realm.²⁹ The following year, Liang Sicheng and Lin Huiyin, who had always previously praised the Bauhaus, translated Jozsef Revai's book on the problem of new architecture in Hungary and criticized the «formalism» of the Bauhaus in the translation's footnotes.³⁰

From 1953 to 1954, Bauhaus graduate Selman Selmanagić and Bauhaus graduate Marianne Brandt, who was Vice Director and provisional Head of the Bauhaus Metal Workshop, both marginalized in the GDR, worked for the «GDR Industrial Exhibition»^{Fig. 8} and «GDR Applied Art Exhibition» in Beijing and Shanghai. The «GDR Industrial Exhibition» received 700,000 visitors in Beijing, which shows its great impact on the public.³¹ During the same period as the exhibitions, these Bauhäusler also visited universities and met with leading figures in Chinese arts and crafts, such as Pang Xunqin and Zheng Ke, who knew the Bauhaus.³² In addition, Bauhaus graduate Franz Ehrlich was commissioned by the GDR to design and plan the China Chamber of Commerce building in Beijing from 1954 to 1956.³³

A number of representatives from the GDR were sent to China from 1954 to 1958, such as the Bauhäusler Walter Funkat, Director of the Kunsthochschule Burg Giebichenstein in Halle.³⁴ Conversely, many Chinese scholars visited the GDR, for instance Professor Deng Bai from Zhejiang Art Academy (now China Academy of Art), Hangzhou, and Professor Ai Zhongxin from Central Academy of Fine Arts, Beijing. Ai Zhongxin visited Selmanagić in 1956 and after returning to China reported on his design for the extension to the Hochschule für angewandte Kunst in



Fig. 8
Catalogue of GDR Industry Exhibition,
Ominous Press, 1953

bauhaus reception
and geopolitics

industrialized building

bauhaus signifying western
capitalist culture and production

bauhaus representing
modernization

bauhaus signifying western
capitalist culture and production

bauhaus reception
and geopolitics
processes of oblivion
and repression

Berlin-Weißensee (today weißensee kunsthochschule berlin).³⁵ Deng Bai published the design suggestions of experts from the GDR and Poland on Chinese porcelain.³⁶

In his speech at the National Conference of Builders, Architects, Workers on December 7, 1954, Nikita Khrushchev set the target of extensive introduction of industrial methods, improving the quality and reducing the cost of construction and criticized Stalin's aesthetics. This caused the Chinese authorities to criticize Liang Sicheng's retro-style monumental architecture for «formalism» at the beginning of 1955. Against the backdrop of criticism directed against the wastefulness of retro style, as well as the «Hundred Flowers Movement», a period in 1956 in the PRC during which the Party (CPC) encouraged citizens to express their opinions of the Communist regime openly, scholars such as Tsinghua Professor Zhou Buyi³⁷, Tongji Professor Luo Weidong³⁸, and Zheng Ke from the Central Academy of Arts and Crafts, Beijing³⁹ had opportunities to re-introduce Bauhaus. However, these people were quickly categorized as «rightists» for introducing Western capitalist culture and suffered political persecution.

Although China's goal of becoming a modern industrial country was continued from Sun Yat-sen to PRC, fierce debates unfolded on the nature of modernization and how to achieve it. Stripped from the discourses of «Westernization» and «colonialism» in the 1930s, the Bauhaus had always represented advanced culture and modernization. However, in the mainstream discourse of mainland China in the 1950s, this «version» was replaced by a politicized «Bauhaus» that represented the degenerated culture of Western capitalism.

Despite this, the «Bauhaus» still has an «anonymous» effect on the mainland. For example, the «Bauentwurfslehre» by the Bauhäusler Ernst Neufert, who had worked in Walter Gropius' architectural office, was used as an important reference for the architecture department of Tongji University.⁴⁰ Having studied with Henry Huang and Richard Paulick, the new generation of designers, Zeng Jian, Li Ying, Li Dehua, and Luo Xiaowei, faced the difficult conditions of post-war reconstruction and invariably applied prefabricated, high-volume and functional designs for public housing projects, including interior design Fig. 9.⁴¹

Due to the breakdown of diplomatic relations with the USSR and the GDR, China lost the support of these states in the 1960s. After the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, hardly any documentary evidence mentioning the «Bauhaus» is to be found

[N] How do our own cultural, social, and political beliefs and stances affect our understanding of the Bauhaus, Modernism, and modernity?

spread of bauhaus through
commodity circulation

in China. On the other side of the Iron Curtain, through the strong support of the US, Japan, and West Germany, the «Bauhaus» representing modernization spread widely in Taiwan.

At this stage, Bauhaus-derived products were not banned due to ideological and political changes. For example, the official catalogue aiming to show the achievement of China's first five-year plan published photos of the new Sanlihe Residence neighbourhood in Beijing ^{Fig. 10.42} The Bauhaus-style, locally produced steel-tube chair can be seen in depictions of a room in the residence. It indicates that Chinese designers with modern ideas also used Bauhaus-derived products in apartments for ordinary workers. These products bearing the Bauhaus imprint still play a role in the daily life of mainland China.

Fourth Stage in the 1980s—Reintroduction of the Bauhaus as Diverse and Different «Versions»

bauhaus reception
and geopolitics

During the early years of China's reform and opening up, liberalism, which had boomed in the 1930s, regained vitality in China in the 1980s, followed by the emergence of nationalism in the 1990s.⁴³ The main problem facing China during this period was the simultaneous influx of multiple schools of thought, which led to the re-introduction of the Bauhaus as well as the controversy concerning it. In addition to internal demand for reforms in mainland China, these changes cannot be separated from the cultural foreign policies of the US, West Germany, and other Western countries.

bauhaus representing
modernism and modernity

different bauhaus versions

heterogeneity of the Bauhaus

[N] During this period, the notion that the Bauhaus represents «Modernism» and more generally «modernity» has been re-accepted. The content of the term «Bauhaus», however, varied considerably between «versions» from the Anglo-American world and «versions» from the GDR—one need only think of the enormous difference between Gropius' individual «Bauhaus» and a collective «Red Bauhaus». That means that geopolitics brought different images of Bauhaus.

new unity of art and technology

At that time «Bauhaus» appeared frequently in the discussion of «technical aesthetics». The fine arts, design and architecture circles had re-introduced the Bauhaus from the perspective of their own disciplines, but mostly agreed with the Bauhaus' concept of total art or the union of art and technology. As a part of the «Enlightenment» movement launched by liberal intellectuals

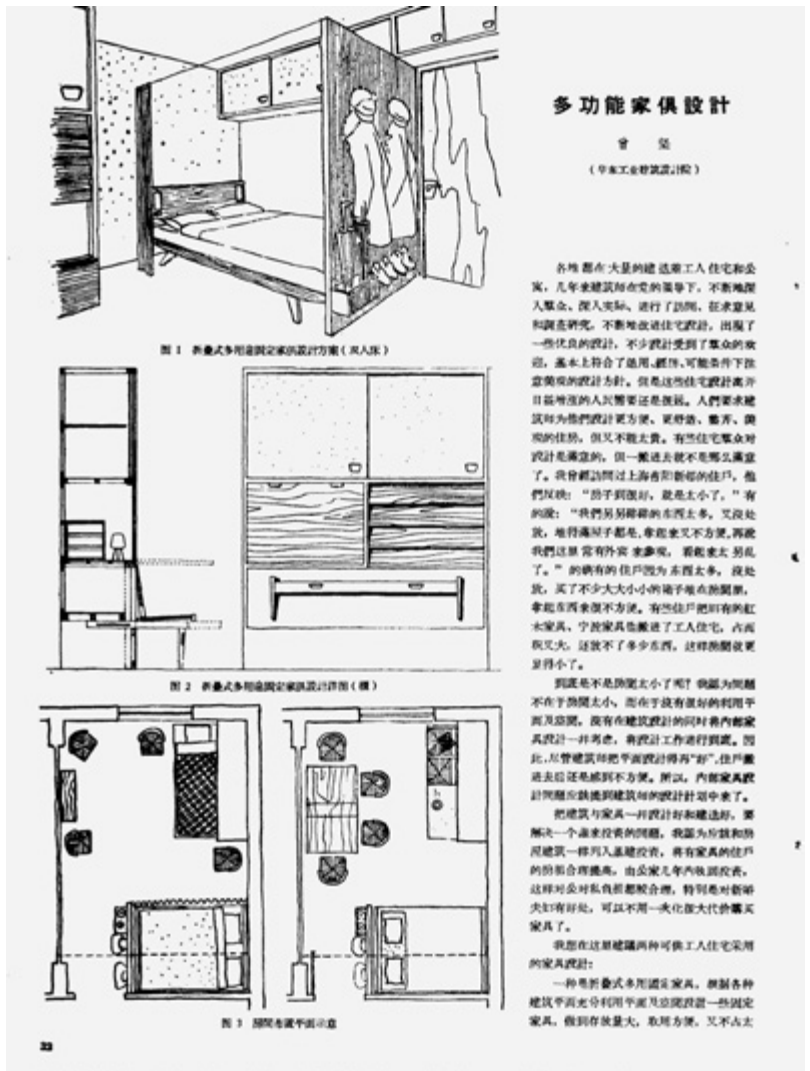


Fig. 9
Interior of the Sanlihe Community in Beijing built in 1953, in: Ten Years of Construction: Commemoration of the 10th Anniversary of the People's Republic of China 1949-1959, Nanjing: China Ministry of Construction, Fig. 103

Fig. 10
Zeng Jian, Design of Multifunctional Furniture, in: Architectural Journal, 1959 (06), p. 32



- [J] The Bauhaus embraces different versions and ways of taking a stand. Which version or stance could help us tackle present and future challenges?
- [O] What is the significance and relevance of the Bauhaus and Modernism today—a historical phenomenon or a resource for the present? And what, if anything, constitutes their current relevance?

in the 1980s, the «Bauhaus» discourse was also involved in the first experimental art movement «85 New Wave».

However, with the confrontation between neo-liberalism and nationalism on the cusp of the 1980s and 1990s in mainland China, several fierce debates in the fields of architecture, art, design also used different versions of the «Bauhaus» to «fight». These debates mainly included questions such as: Is the relationship between arts and crafts and modern design inclusive or alternative? Both sides referenced the Bauhaus or more precisely, two different stages of the Bauhaus—the motto «Art and technology—

- [J] a new unity» had expressed a change of direction in 1923: The young reformers who supported «modern design» emphasized that the Bauhaus combined technology and industry, while the traditional side, trying to maintain traditional arts and crafts, emphasized another former «version» of the Bauhaus that learnt from traditional crafts. By the 1990s, the young reformers had an obvious advantage.

Another debate was the confusion caused by Modernism and Postmodernism—whether to «defend» the Bauhaus or «forget» the Bauhaus? In the early discussions, most scholars intended to make up the missed lesson of «Bauhaus», but there was already a consensus in academic circles that China could not simply copy the Bauhaus model. In fact, in «pleadings» for the Bauhaus, there was a potential fear that Postmodernism may recall the retro ethnic «national style» of the 1950s to 60s and its «ghost», suppressing Modernist ideas. This choice is inevitable when the reform policy just applied, and the ideological inertia of the entire society has not been completely reversed.

- [O] the Bauhaus? In the early discussions, most scholars intended to make up the missed lesson of «Bauhaus», but there was already a consensus in academic circles that China could not simply copy the Bauhaus model. In fact, in «pleadings» for the Bauhaus, there was a potential fear that Postmodernism may recall the retro ethnic «national style» of the 1950s to 60s and its «ghost», suppressing Modernist ideas. This choice is inevitable when the reform policy just applied, and the ideological inertia of the entire society has not been completely reversed.

In addition to academic circles, the «Bauhaus» discourse was brought to the commercial and production fields since the 1980s. For example, the Ministry of Health entrusted the Department of Decorative Arts of Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts to hold the first and second National Medical Packaging Design Training and this was perceived by the reformists of the Academy as a chance to teach basic modern design and with bringing Bauhaus ideas into play.⁴⁴ «Bauhaus» discourse grew more popular in the 1990s. For example, the local generalist newspapers *Hangzhou Daily*,⁴⁵ *China Construction News*,⁴⁶ *Beijing Youth Daily*,⁴⁷ and *Shanghai Wenhui Daily*⁴⁸ all published brief introductions to the Bauhaus school.

However, the popularity of «Bauhaus» discourse has generated more «versions» of it. From the late 1990s to the first few years of the 21st century, China experienced a real-estate boom.

postmodern attack
on modernism

different bauhaus versions

[N] How do our own cultural, social, and political beliefs and stances affect our understanding of the Bauhaus, Modernism, and modernity?

bauhaus brand

In the mass market, the name «Bauhaus» was frequently associated with real estate, interior decoration, industrial design, and branding. Not only did real-estate projects such as the «Bauhaus International Community» appear, but the «Bauhaus» had ridiculous labels applied to it, such as «a famous brand in the international architectural design industry» or a design school founded by «Morris». ⁴⁹ Unlike the Diaward in the 1930s, the name «Bauhaus» was deliberately promoted to increase product sales. This also signifies that the spread of the Bauhaus in China was no longer «anonymous».

bauhaus as a complex of material culture, ideas, and geopolitics

The dissemination of the Bauhaus in China involves both facts and interpretations. It should be regarded as a cultural phenomenon formed by material culture, ideas, and politics, not just the spread of ideas. «Anonymous» and «versioning» approaches respectively reveal continuity and rupture in the dissemination of the Bauhaus. When one «version» surfaced, the other «versions» became anonymous, diving «underwater» and continuing. «Anonymous» dissemination can be understood as another «version» beside all other «versions». In fact, it also participates in the construction of discourse. And reflecting on this phenomenon can help us better understand the complex process of the special «modernity» in China.

[N]

Notes

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Panel Discussion II

with Atli Magnus Seelow, David Maulén de los Reyes, Susanne Neubauer, Chin-Wei Chang, and the Audience chaired by Joaquín Medina Warmburg

encounters with bauhaus
and modern design

learning processes

swedish functionalism

functionalism as a concept

swedish functionalism vs.
german modernism/bauhaus style

power relations and geopolitics

dependency and periphery
as a concept

construction of a «third world»

interplay of projection and
appropriation

Joaquín Medina Warmburg

In our «Bauhaus and Bauhaus Pedagogy in Sweden, Latin America and China» section, we are again dealing with transfer experiences in the broadest sense of the term, with encounters, unfamiliar and perhaps also destabilizing situations, which people engage with in different ways, trying to either actually maintain an attitude or develop new attitudes—like Bruno Taut, for example, who very quickly articulated preconceived opinions and passed judgments, which he subsequently gradually revised. In the process, adjustments may also be made that are essential in order to remain true to modern attitudes in the long term. In contrast to the contributions to the discussion in Section I, we have also expanded the scope of the subject matter, in particular to encompass product design.

The identification of the welfare state and Functionalism in Sweden is particularly interesting. As we have heard from Atli Magnus Seelow, misunderstandings often arise between transmitters and receivers in transfer processes due to the latter's specific expectations. In this context, the identification of Swedish Functionalism with German Modernism is an interesting topic for discussion, especially in view of our thematic focus—transfer, translation, and transformation processes in the political realm.

Susanne Neubauer's paper explicitly addressed the question of the politicized field in which these processes take place, and in this context, I would like to follow up in more detail on the ideological and cultural construction of the concept of «dependence» or «periphery». There is a backstory to this in the very high numbers of Latin American students at the HfG Ulm [Ulm School of Design], who helped shape the discourse there, including leftist discourse, with Tomás Maldonado playing a leading role. And at the same time, I am always suspicious about such assertions for the question arises who helped whom. Who helped whom when the HfG Ulm was closed down? Was it really about the centre supporting the periphery, with protagonists who went to the periphery and built something there, or did the construction of the «Third World», «dependency» and the «periphery» first give these young graduates, former HfG lecturers, a meaningful function, making them a source of hope and providing them with meaningful activities? I suspect this means it was an encounter where the exchanges were mutually beneficial.

David Maulén de los Reyes recently pointed out an interesting connection with Gui Bonsiepe. He views him as part of a Bauhaus tradition or lineage of Bauhaus reception in Chile,

bauhaus reception
different bauhaus versions

hfg ulm's criticism
of the bauhaus

reception of different versions
of modernism

functionalism as a concept
dependency and periphery
as a concept

intellectual colonialism

identification of functionalism
with the welfare state

functionalism as a concept

which at the same time includes the HfG Ulm's criticism of the Bauhaus. However, that was not the only Bauhaus tradition in Chile. Instead, several academics at faculties and schools of architecture adopted positions that went in the opposite direction, for example Emilio Duhart, who had studied at Harvard and subsequently, in his articles in the context of the curriculum reform, published Walter Gropius' early study *Idee und Aufbau des staatlichen Bauhauses Weimar* [The Theory and Organization of the Bauhaus] (1923) and invited Josef Albers to Chile. If one looks at both stances, they are not part of a common lineage, but rather, especially in the ideological and political realm, contrary positions that were in conflict with each other and also related to power struggles in the educational field. I would like to discuss this and connect it with Bonsiepe's arrival on the scene in the late 1960s.

Finally, Chin Wei-Chang's paper put many things into perspective. From the Chinese standpoint, the Bauhaus seems to be one of many options, which relativizes the idea of an overwhelming Bauhaus in global reception. Particularly in view of the Edward Said quotation that Chin-Wei Chang paraphrased, it seems obvious to replace the term «Bauhaus» by «Functionalism» or «periphery», which would give us a good topic for grappling, in Said's sense, with the intellectual colonialism associated with the projections contained in these terms.

Let us start with the first topic and the question I already mentioned concerning the identification of Functionalism and the welfare state in Sweden. And since there is a direct lineage of tradition or a direct transfer here—much more direct than, for example, in China, where the transfer takes a detour via Cambridge, London and Paris—the question arises as to why the term «Functionalism», of all things, which is obviously also politically charged in this context, has come to epitomize transfer or translation processes involving the Bauhaus in Sweden. One could perhaps also have chosen the term «rationalization», which Adolf Behne defined in his publication *Der moderne Zweckbau* [The Modern Functional Building] (1923), differentiating it from «Functionalism», as fulfilling a practical purpose à la longue, which means an approach to satisfying a practical purpose that takes into account the changing demands of several generations and refrains from the greatest possible adaptation to a purpose that is as specialized as possible.

[H] What does it mean to understand the Bauhaus as a transnational and transcultural network of relationships?

Atli Magnus Seelow

Yes, it is not easy to explain why in Sweden Functionalism very quickly became a generic term for everything modern. In Sweden, everything is indeed «Functionalist», just as here in Germany «Bauhaus style» has become established as the epitome of modernity. And even if there is no direct explanation for this, I would at least like to try to cite a number of indirect clues as to why this process functions like this: Let me begin by noting that Uno Åhrén uses the terms «utilitarian art» and «functional» for Le Corbusier's architecture, with the latter term emerging in 1927. In 1930, i.e. at the Stockholm exhibition, this term was already in use and having a broad impact. That allows us to conclude that at that time the term «functional» was in the throes of becoming a designation referencing «*Neues Leben*» [New Living or a New Lifestyle]. I suspect that after the Great Depression, people were looking for a term that could express economic efficiency even more vigorously than the term «rationalism». That is suggested by Le Corbusier's comment in *Gli elementi dell' architettura funzionale* [Elements of Functionalist Architecture] (1932) the major overview publication edited by Alberto Sartoris, a CIAM founding member and a key player in the world of rationalist architecture, that he convinced Sartoris to change the title from «architettura rationale» to «architettura funzionale». This volume brings together a large number of buildings and projects from the Nordic countries for the first time, including around nine examples from Sweden. And there is also what I would describe as a new departure in architecture and design on the one hand coinciding with a sense of a new political departure on the other, which explains the strong impact of Functionalism in Sweden. Particularly after the 1930 Stockholm exhibition, Functionalism was seen as overcoming the world economic crisis, as overcoming the conservative government and as the beginning of almost forty years of Social Democratic rule in Sweden, a period associated with the construction of the Social Democratic welfare state.

swedish functionalism vs.
german modernism/bauhaus style

functionalism as a concept
utilitarian architecture

new living—a new lifestyle

new political, social, and
architectural awakening

identification of functionalism
with the welfare state

social democratic welfare state

Joaquín Medina Warmburg

[H] In this play of interactions between transmitters and receivers, in the interplay and transformation of expectations and a sense of mission about the message transmitted, the question arises of whether it is sufficient or fitting to imagine the Bauhaus transfer between Germany and Sweden as being a one-way street. Or, to put it in tangible terms, is there also a transfer that goes in the

processes of transfer,
translation, and transformation

interplay of projection and
appropriation

opposite direction, in other words, some contribution from Sweden or Scandinavia that would have had an influence on the Bauhaus, directly or indirectly?

Atli Magnus Seelow

Well, there was probably no comparable direct influence in the opposite direction, apart from the Swedish architect Sune Lindström, who also spent a year studying at the Bauhaus in Dessau. And there were not too many direct contacts at all. In this context, it is of course important to mention the friendship between Sven Markelius, a Swedish architect and a very early CIAM founding member, and Walter Gropius. Markelius had met the Bauhaus founder in 1927 during a trip to Germany, during which he also visited the Bauhaus school in Dessau. He was very impressed by Gropius' ideas during this trip. Contacts then intensified after the Bauhaus was closed during the Nazi era with the emigration of Fred Forbat and Werner Taesler to Sweden. In 1938 Fred Forbat, a Hungarian-German architect and urban planner who had worked in Walter Gropius' studio from 1920 to 1922, albeit with some interruptions, and had also taught at the Bauhaus in Weimar, accepted an invitation to Sweden from the architect Uno Åhrén. During his time there he inter alia worked for architect Sune Lindström, preparing the general plan for the city of Lund from 1938 to 1945. German architect Werner Taesler, who had studied at the Bauhaus in Dessau in 1929, went into exile in Sweden in 1935. But here again, the direction of transfer was from Germany to Sweden. Essentially, there was no reverse transfer moving in the opposite direction, in any case not in the way we would like to imagine.

emigration and exile

processes of transfer,
translation, and transformation

There are nonetheless a number of interesting aspects of German-Scandinavian exchanges after 1933. 1940 saw the publication on the German book market of a publication in German by Danish architect and town planner Steen Eiler Rasmussen, entitled *Nordische Baukunst*—a very strange book containing examples of both progressive and conservative architecture from the Nordic countries. Conversely, it was also possible to view—probably in a model exhibition in Oslo in 1936 or 1938—a small selection of German architecture, although without any examples of progressive architecture.

exchange processes

The very unsatisfactory state of available research is another reason why we know so little about German-Scandinavian or German-Swedish exchanges during this period. We hardly know when and who from which Nordic countries took part in the

CIAM congresses. Our knowledge is mainly based on the memoirs of Sven Markelius' widow, who was asked about these points fifty years later.

Joaquín Medina Warmburg

At this point we should take a closer look at Sven Markelius' boarding house approaches in contrast to comparable projects by Walter Gropius. In the early 1930s Gropius published his ideas on rationalizing housing construction in Swedish magazines. In CIAM he had derived these ideas historically from the transformation of sociological structures, in particular the dissolution of the traditional family, the emergence of the nuclear family with a working wife, as well as the increased numbers of single and divorced people, new forms of sociability, the club house, and how supply arrangements are organized within the house. The state therefore had to take on new roles, for example relating to care for the elderly and children. Modern architecture was also meant to respond to this phenomenon of modernization by offering new forms of shared living in a modernized society. In other words: Gropius understood social modernization with its new needs as a prerequisite for modern architecture.

In the depiction of Swedish Functionalism, the relationship between societal or socio-economic conditions and modern architecture appears downright inverted: First there is modern architecture, as something complete that is imported or transferred, and only after that the idea of a welfare state that is in the first instance produced by modern architecture. This would be, so to speak, the inverse and highly «non-Functionalist» route to Functionalism. To what extent must or could such concepts relating to building typology and social issues be adapted to the local conditions and Swedish ideas of «Functionalism» by émigré Bauhaus staff and students?

Atli Magnus Seelow

I think it's important to differentiate. Because in the Nordic countries, rationalization efforts were made at a very early stage, independently of modern architecture. Immediately after the First World War, various forms of cooperatives were founded, also with their own architecture and engineering offices, some of which were very progressive or even more progressive than the corresponding efforts in mainland Europe. To name just a few examples: Osvald Almqvist, one of the most progressive Swedish architects,

rationalizing housing construction

modern architecture
and design as a response
to social modernization

swedish functionalism

identification of functionalism
with the welfare state

rationalization

cooperative housing construction

- [F] What are the social, political, and economic preconditions for Bauhaus reception? And how do they vary from one period or country to another?
- [H] What does it mean to understand the Bauhaus as a transnational and transcultural network of relationships?

standardization

who carried out studies on the standardization of kitchens between 1922 and 1927—which is in part earlier than the Frankfurt Kitchen—or the cooperative and architectural office of the cooperative association, which built standardized shop interiors—cooperative stores, some of which still exist in Sweden today. This standardization of shop interiors took place very early in the 1920s and in some cases was so progressive that it was later reflected in Ernst Neufert's *Bauentwurfslehre* [Architects' Data] (1936). Through rationalization and standardization, Sweden sought to counteract the devastating housing situation in Stockholm, which was considered the poorest or worst anywhere in Europe at the turn of the century. As the process of industrialization did not begin until much later in the Nordic countries, essentially in the 1870s and 1880s, it correspondingly unfolded faster than on the continent. The aforementioned early attempts at rationalization and standardization are in essence independent of the processes whereby the Bauhaus or Neues Bauen [New Building] were transferred and translated northward, which only began in the second half of the 1920s. In short, we cannot adequately understand these reception processes unless we look at the preconditions of Swedish Functionalism, i.e. at what already existed in Sweden before Bauhaus reception. For this reception did not take place on a tabula rasa and was not detached from these preconditions.

[F] [H]

Joaquín Medina Warmburg

Let us now move on to Bonsiepe and take a closer look at the concept or the ideology of the periphery. I mentioned earlier that I suspect that it is by no means so clear in which direction assistance moves. Incidentally, I find terms such as «periphery» or «Third World», as well as this ideology of dependence, not at all helpful for the present day. For the 1960s, they were above all useful for designers: for designers who were looking for a meaningful activity in the setting of mass-consumption societies in the German or Western world on this side of the Iron Curtain; for designers, especially German product designers, whose criticism of capitalism and doubts about their role in the capitalist system (as «useful idiots» who, through superficial styling, provide the necessary formal obsolescence in the service of consumption) turned the so-called «Third World» into a hopeful, meaningful construct. In that part of the world, product designers were supposed to provide import substitution within the framework of industrialization programmes and thus contribute to eliminating the dependence

dependency and periphery
as a concept

construction of a «third world»

critique of capitalism

- [H] What does it mean to understand the Bauhaus as a transnational and transcultural network of relationships?
- [I] What can we learn from the history of the Bauhaus and Modernism when facing current issues? And how can this enable us to gain new insights into the past?

of the «periphery» on economic, political and cultural centres, especially the USA and Europe. In this constellation, this construct of the «Third World» or «periphery» could indeed offer a sense of meaning for these young left-wing graduates from the HfG Ulm. In other words, the example of Bonsiepe in Chile also renders visible strained interactions in the field of politics: between the context of the late 1960s in the Federal Republic of Germany and the circumstances in Salvador Allende's Chile. But wasn't this also a kind of intellectual colonialism in Edward Said's sense?

power relations and geopolitics
intellectual colonialism

Susanne Neubauer

Yes, of course, that is a question that needs to be asked. What I find extremely compelling about this research topic is that in the academic examination of our historical subject-matter and the relationship between West Germany and Chile that you describe, which was established at a very specific historical moment in the field of design, we must always reflect critically on our own standpoint and ask ourselves how we deal with it as researchers. It would certainly be an imperialist approach if I were to try to presume, taking the German context as my point of departure, that I could enter into the circumstances of a country I do not know, dissect concepts there and sketch out some kind of grand historical arc. That is why in the research I am doing with Marcelo Mari at the Instituto de Artes Visuais of the Universidade de Brasilia, which moves in the direction of transculturality or globalization, we really want to try to establish this double arc, in other words, to incorporate different perspectives and establish an exchange between them. Coming back to Gui Bonsiepe, it would certainly be interesting to ask him whether he perceived the meaning of the construct «periphery» cited by Joaquín Medina Warmburg in these terms at the time. However, I find his publication on his experiences in Chile¹ incredibly fascinating and progressive, because in the passages in which he writes about the use of resources, I perceive an attitude and approach to the environment, or rather an environmental awareness, that I find very interesting in view of the challenges we face in the 21st century, although the desire to strengthen local production may also be utopian to some degree. Nonetheless, I see this as an early approach to addressing the centre-periphery problem. I think that it should definitely be seen as a positive step if a German designer goes abroad, discusses this topic locally and makes it tangible as a theme in the first place.

self-image of the historian
and researcher

[H]

dependency and periphery
as a concept

[I]

environmental awareness

centre and periphery
as a concept

[G] Which ways of taking a stand can we discover in processes of Bauhaus transfer, translation, and transformation?

Joaquín Medina Warmburg

Why is this something positive?

Susanne Neubauer

[G] In this Chilean context, Bonsiepe was able to take part in a (short-lived) Socialist experiment that he obviously very much identified with politically. And this enabled him to carry out a critique of capitalism on the spot. I think it's legitimate for a young person to take up this field of practice, where it's not just a matter of theory or writing theoretical manifestos, but really part of—and this I think was what made it enticing—a utopian project that could be put into practice and tested, in the hope, as he also wrote, of avoiding a simple repetition of the Russian Revolution's mistakes.

critique of capitalism

Joaquín Medina Warmburg

In this context, it is perhaps also interesting that there is a link here to Hannes Meyer's experiences in Mexico. David Maulén de los Reyes also talked about logical positivism as an element in Tibor Weiner's approaches in Chile, and there are Latin American traditions of positivism: The Argentinean Tomás Maldonado—Gui Bonsiepe was his master student—is one clear example, and another is the German philosopher Max Bense and his enthusiasm for Brasília, especially in the 1960s—so there are also other types of interactions that do not simply lead so clearly into this ideological Socialist nationalization policy. In fact, in Chile there is this concept of the environment, which also comes from Maldonado; it does not have much to do with the issue of the natural world but is more closely related to environments, to these cybernetic visions and systemic approaches that are also related to a critique of the Bauhaus: criticism first of all of the traditional lineage embodied by Max Bill, which was continued thanks to the presence of lecturers from the USA such as Josef Albers, and ultimately culminated in the publication of Maldonado's correspondence with Walter Gropius in the spirit of «unmasking the fairy tale of the rationalist Bauhaus». At the same time, another Bauhaus was held in high esteem: that of Hannes Meyer and his scientific methods. Did Bonsiepe also reflect on this? To what extent was Bonsiepe involved during the Ulm period in Claude Schnaidt's 1965 Hannes Meyer monograph (*Hannes Meyer: Projekte, Bauten und Schriften*), with a foreword by Tomás Maldonado? We do however know that it was precisely this other tradition of the «left-wing» Bauhaus that failed in its attempt to gain a foothold in Latin America. That was

environment as a concept

environments—cybernetic visions
and systemic approaches

hfg ulm's criticism of the bauhaus

different bauhaus versions

power relations and geopolitics

self-image of the architect and designer

hfg ulm's criticism of the Bauhaus «good design» as a concept

universal design principles

bauhaus reception

different Bauhaus versions

also the case in Chile, where the progressive curricula inspired by this stance—Tibor Weiner at the Universidad de Chile—found a pendant in the Bauhaus-Harvard tradition—Emilio Duhart at the Universidad Católica de Chile.

Shouldn't the «Bonsiepe case» also be understood as transposing to local conditions a polarization between hegemonic centres that occurred almost globally during the Cold War, even if at the same time he forms part of a Latin American tradition? In other words, not understood at all as a merely «peripheral» special case, but rather as something that is right in the midst of events and addresses central problems, namely the environmental problem? Did Bonsiepe also see himself in Chile as following in the tradition established by Tibor Weiner and not merely in this European tradition of a critique of the Bauhaus tradition à la Gropius and a revival of the tradition of scientific methods associated with Hannes Meyer?

Susanne Neubauer

I cannot judge that, but I know he criticized Max Bill's concept of «good design» and indirectly, as I understand it, the Bauhaus concepts of universality. I think this is a question that should be addressed to Gui Bonsiepe himself.

Joaquín Medina Warmburg

But that's also connected to Maldonado's «Palace Revolution».

Susanne Neubauer

Yes, definitely.

Joaquín Medina Warmburg

Perhaps then in response to David; it is a question I did already ask. There is this tradition of Hannes Meyer in Chile, but then parallel to that there is the indirect tradition of Walter Gropius, filtered through Harvard, especially through Emilio Duhart, as you showed. You described it as a lineage, in other words, as not very differentiated, but I identify a great deal of tension there. There is a reform plan by Tibor Weiner, and Emilio Duhart makes a counterproposal and then publishes the Weimar Bauhaus' pedagogical concepts from 1923.

David Maulén de los Reyes

What I wanted to point out in my contribution was the Hannes Meyer tradition in Chile. So, let me now try to give an idea or

abstract of the whole process of Bauhaus reception in Chile. In the 40s, in the National University, that is, in the University of Chile, we had the influence of Hannes Meyer and Tibor Weiner. And in the 50s we have the influence of Josef Albers and Walter Gropius in the Catholic University, a private university. But that's of course a bit oversimplified because it is much more complex.

You know, Hannes Meyer was not the only reference in the University of Chile in the Forties, another was the teamwork idea of Walter Gropius—or more exactly, in the same faculty, one teacher referred to or worked with the teamwork idea of Walter Gropius and the other with that of Hannes Meyer. And the Chilean architect Emilio Duhart is also a very important person in Chile. In 1935, Duhart began to study architecture at the Catholic University of Chile (UCCh), which he graduated from in 1941. In 1942 he moved to the United States, where he studied architecture together with Ieoh Ming Pei at Harvard University. During this stay at Harvard, Duhart became acquainted with the modern architecture movement that would become a cornerstone in his career. After having returned to Chile, he worked as an architect and in 1951 he returned to the UCCh to work as a teacher where he would later become director of the Urbanism, Housing and Planning department. Nevertheless, in the Fifties he also gave much support to students from the University of Chile, too.

In 1957, we have this long *Seminarium* for many months where all the tendencies in Chile were discussed in order to develop a big master plan for the next thirty years. And Emilio Duhart was only one voice among many. And in the Sixties, we have the influence of Max Bill, co-founder of the HfG Ulm and its first rector (1953–56), on the ideas of corporate design in Valparaíso. And history is repeating itself with Max Bill on the one hand and Gui Bonsiepe on the other.

In 1972 Bonsiepe wrote an article in which he explained the interface concept, the design of interaction, in which we can find a very important insight: If you copy an answer from another context, it doesn't work. What I want to say is that we can understand the interpretation of Bauhaus ideas as a movement from the Twenties until the Seventies inside the national development project, especially as part of the Public Education in Art scheme in the Twenties, in architecture and design in the Forties and Fifties, in design at the end of Sixties. And it is very interesting that the discussion in the two principal architecture schools in Chile, the University of Chile and the Catholic University of Chile, in the

different bauhaus versions
heterogeneity of the bauhaus

Fifties, at the end of the Second World War, is very similar to that in Dessau in the late Twenties. But you can understand all the interpretation of Bauhaus is inside this project of the nation, from the Twenties until the Seventies.

power relations
and geopolitics

Joaquín Medina Warmburg

But in political discourse there is not simply a project of the nation, but also a dispute between various proposals concerning the university's orientation and also between different affiliations, although it also makes a difference whether we are talking about private or public universities. It is a politicized field or a politicized space, to pick up on the term from the section title.

education reform
bauhaus school
active school

However, I would like to turn now to another interesting point. David, you stated that there were state-subsidized educational models similar to the Bauhaus as early as the 1920s in Latin America. What exactly constituted the purported similarities? How can they be explained? And what kind of position did newcomers like Tibor Weiner adopt in relation to these traditions? To what extent were the modernization ideas of the progressive education movements in Chile compatible with those of the Bauhaus, even if the latter cannot be understood as uniform either?

David Maulén de los Reyes

The similarities between the state-subsidized educational models in Chile and those of the Bauhaus relate on the one hand to the Active School ideas, theories and methodologies, which aimed to encourage students to form their own autonomous criteria rather than producing mechanical copies from a teacher as in the 19th century. And they relate on the other hand to the inseparable connection of departure of both: the political and the educational system. Like the Bauhaus, which was born as a state educational project of the Weimar Republic, the notion of an educational reform of the entire public educational system, with ideas from the Active School, supported by a movement of Chilean teachers and the Chilean labour federation between 1920 and 1924 was the nucleus of a new Chilean constitution and Constituent Assembly of 1925. Even if it did not succeed, the ideas of the educational reform did not disappear.

General Carlos Ibañez, who seized power in 1927, believed he could dominate the social movement using the Italian corporatist model and handed over power in the field of education to the teachers' unions of the Active School during 1928. In the Chilean Ministry of Education's documentation of this year you can see

active school

a lot of information about Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, Friedrich Wilhelm August Fröbel, Maria Montessori, etc.

education reform

propaedeutics—*vorkurs*

After being appointed as Director General of Art Education and Director of the Escuela de Bellas Artes and the Museo de Bellas Artes in 1928, Carlos Isamitt succeeded in changing the entire artistic education of the country, and in the main art school he created an impressive preliminary course, a «*Vorkurs*», which also included subjects such as anthropology, grammar, civic education, in addition to the classic exercises with the psychology of elemental colours and geometric shapes, geometry, anatomy, art history and comparative design, etc., as well as creating courses for workers. Carlos Isamitt had studied the new curricula of art schools applied to industry in Europe and was very enthusiastic about the educational theories of the Active School. At the *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes* in Paris in 1925, he was impressed by the VKhUTEMAS methodology.

This is not just a matter of intellectual colonialism and Isamitt was not only «colonized» by European pedagogical ideas, for he was also a specialist in the investigation of indigenous geometry. It is fair to say that the Active School proposes construction of knowledge by valuing its own cultural variables in a systematic, non-illustrative way.

This process was violently interrupted in 1929. When Ibañez fell in 1931, the social movement continued, but in a fragmented way; only the attempts by architecture students to change the curriculum in 1931 to 1933, and later in 1938, remained.

new pedagogies

Besides similarities between educational models in Chile and the Bauhaus concerning the methodology of the pedagogical model, direct forms of exchange existed even before Tibor Weiner. The Chilean Roberto Davila studied in Dessau and returned as a teacher in the midst of the 1932–33 reform. At that time, Guillermo Ulriksen, a professor at the University of Chile, was already talking about Hannes Meyer's Bernau ADGB Trade Union School. After the failure of that reform, Enrique Gebhard and Waldo Parrañez began to publish the journal *ARQuitectura*, and the *Bauhausbücher* series circulated among them.

A new attempt to change the school of architecture was launched after the Popular Front government won the election in 1938. The students did not manage to change the school, but in 1939 the Popular Front created CORFO, the national production development corporation, which was also the government industrial agency responsible for Cybersyn, INTEC, and ECom in 1970–1973.

new architectural curriculum

active school

co-op design

bauhaus pedagogies

Abraham Schapira, who prepared the curriculum of the University of Chile with Tibor Weiner between 1945 and 1946, stated that it was based on theories of the Active School, as is confirmed by many instances of Co-op design being applied at the University of Chile. Tibor Weiner also mentioned Pestalozzi and Ulriksen continued to speak enthusiastically about Meyer's Co-op design as «the pedagogical methodology of the Bauhaus» in 1946. And the Active School is also mentioned in the declaration from the commission on architectural education at the 1947 Pan American Congress in Lima, drawn up by José Garcíatello.

Joaquín Medina Warmburg

integral co-op architecture

You claim that «Integral Co-op Architecture» successfully found its way to other countries thanks to the Sixth Pan American Congress of Architecture, held in Lima, Peru in 1947. That likewise sounds astonishing, as the organizers and most of the participants followed a completely different line. Fernando Belaúnde Terry, the spokesman for the hosts, had studied in the USA and would, as President of Peru, also advocate a USA-friendly policy. Together with the early Bauhaus member Paul Linder, he arranged Albers' and Gropius' trips to Lima. Their social and pedagogical ideas were not in line with Co-op. Assuming, that such a Co-op influence did indeed exist, how could it have come about under circumstances that were not exactly conducive in either political or academic terms?

David Maulén de los Reyes

From my point of view, the National University of Engineering, UNI Lima, and above all its School of Architecture, represents an intermediate point. It is not as radical as the University of Chile, but it is not as conservative as the Catholic University of Chile. It is also a public university and as such more similar to the University of Chile.

When I started researching, I was a little astonished when the old architects told me that UNI Lima and other schools wanted to follow the model since the presentation of the new curriculum at the University of Chile in 1947. But over time I have found enough information that confirms the influence of this change.

new architectural curriculum

José Garcíatello, the Chilean professor of bio-architecture, presented the new curriculum from the University of Chile, in a document prepared by Abraham Schapira, Jorge Bruno Gonzáles and Tibor Weiner. This text was also presented at the Sixth Congress in the Chilean magazine *Arquitectura y Construcción*. Garcíatello also participated in the committee on architectural

education at the congress, and in its declaration you find ideas and concepts of Hannes Meyer at the Institute of Urbanism in Mexico in 1940 and from the reform of the University of Chile, such as, for example, «the pedagogical system that corresponds to the professional training of the contemporary architect is that of the Active School» (5); that «a scientific attitude of concern and curiosity» has to be stimulated (5); that problem-solving in architecture requires «analysis» and «synthesis» (3) and that the problems of architectural composition are to be solved in «the triple urban, plastic and technical aspect».

new architectural curriculum

During and after this congress, Garcíatello received invitations from various countries to explain the new curriculum of the University of Chile; in his 1953 farewell speech and report, the Rector of the University of Chile mentioned that the 1946 curriculum was taken as a reference by several schools in other countries after this Congress. From 1947 on, there was a systematic exchange between the University of Chile and the University of Lima for several years. The influence of the University of Chile model culminated in the election of its Dean of the Architecture (Hector Mardones Restat) as President of the International Union of Architects (UIA) in 1957.

neoliberalism as a paradigm shift

After 1973 and 1981, the University of Chile was destroyed, and the 1980 constitution, drafted by economists and lawyers from the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile, envisaged that public education would be replaced by education conceived as a market commodity. Processes of oblivion and repression are connected with these changes. When I was studying, people at the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile told me that, through contacts with Albers in 1953, «they had brought the Bauhaus to Chile».

processes of oblivion
and repression

processes of transfer,
translation, and transformation

power relations and
geopolitics

reception of different versions
of modernism

Joaquín Medina Warmburg

I am also very interested in the politicized field in which Bauhaus transfer and translation processes take place, especially in the case of China, as it was hardly mentioned in Chin-Wei Chang's paper. The Bauhaus' centrality was relativized by a large number of schools where Chinese students were trained as architects, but the impression arose that they coexisted on a relatively equal footing; politicization of these options was not discernible. Therefore, I would like to ask whether it was really like this in the sense of the designers who did not only want to produce fetishized goods. Was Art Deco, to cite just one example, a politically connotated option, and if so, in which period?

- [F] What are the social, political, and economic preconditions for Bauhaus reception? And how do they vary from one period or country to another?

Chin-Wei Chang

Yes, I think, Art Deco was an option with a political connotation. But as far as my paper is concerned, my research focus is specifically between 1919 and 1949, so that was before the Communist government under its leader Mao Zedong entered the political arena and that is why I focused on aspects like school policy or the difference between a national university and a missionary university, i.e. on institutional matters and problems. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that school policy is also a political issue and it decides quite a lot how you can organize, for instance, your faculty. If you go to the missionary school, you must have been found very worthy of doing so by your family, otherwise you cannot afford the tuition. At the same time other universities are poor, say, before 1949—national turnover went down under Chiang Kai-shek's Guomindang (GMD) government, the funding was at its limits, and the students had to go to war. So, this is definitely a political issue. Then, the year 1949 constitutes a deep break, because after that China was fully guided by the dictate of learning everything from the Soviet Union.

[F]

Another political issue is Bauhaus reception in China and the politics of remembrance especially with respect to the Bauhaus centenary. Take Tongji University in Shanghai for example: Not only did its College of Architecture and Urban Planning (CAUP) building, as mentioned in my presentation, have affinities to the Bauhaus building in Dessau in terms of its architectural design, but in 2019 it also served as the venue for a significant exhibition and conference—addressing the themes of Bauhaus theatre and the preliminary course (*Vorkurs*) respectively. In addition, parallel to these centenary events, the CAUP-based journal *Time + Architecture* (*Shidai Jianzhu*) published a special issue: «The Bauhaus and Modern Architecture». Nevertheless, the founding of Tongji's Department of Architecture ironically testified to the demise of its ground-breaking counterpart at St. John's, which was modelled on the Bauhaus. After Mao Zedong came to power and inaugurated a new China, the People's Republic of China (PRC), he adjusted the strategy for university re-organization on a national scale. In the case of a missionary university like St. John's, namely an «alien» university supported by American funding, attempts were made to forcibly integrate it with national universities: A victim such as St. John's was first dismembered and subsequently the fragments were annexed to other bodies—in the case of the Architectural Department, to Tongji. Whereas St. John's had previously been

bauhaus reception and geopolitics

bauhaus centenary politics of memory

- [F] What are the social, political, and economic preconditions for Bauhaus reception? And how do they vary from one period or country to another?

able to recruit some foreign teachers, from the USA, from the UK, or even from Hungary and so forth, this was henceforth prohibited. As a result, some Chinese graduates returned and taught at their alma mater, in a fashion closely akin—albeit accidentally—to the Bauhaus. In the light of the foundation of the PRC government, St. John’s University lost all the autonomy it had enjoyed thanks to its war-time exterritorial status.

The reason why my research focuses particularly on the period from 1919 to 1949 is that, after that decisive caesura, China did not reopen again until 1977, which marked the end of the Cultural Revolution. That is why I point out that many translations of famous Bauhaus books into Chinese—e.g. texts by Itten or Kandinsky, to cite just a few examples—appeared simultaneously, right after the adoption of the Chinese policy of Reform and Opening under Deng Xiaoping’s regime. In other words, the historical moment at which reception, translation and transformation of Bauhaus ideas becomes possible is in fact, once again, a very political issue.

- [F]

Joaquín Medina Warmburg

In Taiwan, too, works by Ieoh Ming Pei (cf. Tunghai University Campus in Taichung, 1950s) led to architecture in the Bauhaus-Harvard lineage of tradition that refers to local historical architecture. How can such phenomena be classified in comparison to the mainland in the shared context of the Cold War? Or, to put the question in more general terms, were there also, as in Japan (Bruno Taut), moves towards a self-critique of modernism and a turn towards «regionalist modernism»?

Chin-Wei Chang

This prompts me to my rewarding attendance in 2017 at the Bauhaus centenary symposium *Rethinking Pei in Hong Kong*, where I gave a talk titled «High Modernists at Harvard GSD: I. M. Pei, Walter Gropius, and TAC’s Huatung/Tunghai University». I. M. Pei’s role at Tunghai University in Taichung, to be frank, was as a take-over impresario in place of Gropius at Huatung University in Shanghai. Due to the post-WWII sovereign shift mentioned above, the missionary project had emigrated to what was by then so-called Free China: Taiwan, where the nationalist government fled as an alternative during the Cold War. «Regionalist modernism», as you enquire, did take place but was indebted—surprisingly not to Pei—but significantly to his local colleagues, Chen Chi-kwan

dialogue between modernity
and tradition

self-critique of modernism
regionalist modernism

relationship to history
relationship to traditions
and cultures

universal design principles

modernist architecture and
national identity construction

self-critique of modernism

relationship to history

and Chang Chao-kang, who took the helm of building logistics on site. In contrast, Pei could merely visit them from time to time, given his very time-consuming professional activities in New York by the early 1950s. Alongside this, we need to notice that, unlike Pei, both Chen and Chang carried out their undergraduate training in China: at Southeast University in Nanjing and St. John's in Shanghai, respectively. And it is worth noting that Pei briefly attended the latter institution, too, aged 17 to be exact, although he did not complete his studies there before leaving his motherland for the US, heading first to Penn, then to MIT and later to Harvard. Due to Gropius' lack of interest in history studies both at the Bauhaus and Harvard GSD, his students (including Pei) learnt a universal modern aesthetic—flat roof, ribbon windows, roof gardens, and open spaces, features that predominate unequivocally in Tunghai as well—but it was the Chen-Chang tandem that expanded the palette of that campus in terms of Chinese-ness through detailed design which, I reckon, may be what sparked your question.

It is usually, if not always, tempting to lend plausibility to Harvard-Bauhaus affairs in accounts of Chinese modernities in architecture even to this day. The critical relationship between national identity and the development of Modernist architecture, however, has received piecemeal heed from historians. As we can see at Tunghai University, could such a «foreign» style ever be domesticated? Could Modernism ever become Chinese? Being sanguine about Bauhaus per se should make no pretence to constituting a self-critique of modernism, as Bruno Zevi, Pei's peer at Harvard, reminds us in the first volume of the 1959 *Encyclopedia of World Art*. Criticizing his own masterclass tutor's restrained «use» of history in an essay entitled «Architecture», Zevi asserted that no one had a «more reactionary and biased concept of history» than Gropius. Pei seemed to barely attain region-specific sensibility within the walls of GSD, apart from exercises in surface, volume, space, and colour; it should be noted that his 1946 graduate project on Shanghai Art Museum was highly akin to Corbusian principles, bearing feeble evidence of «[the] organic movement,» as Zevi recounted, «which became active in Europe about 1930 and was critically elaborated about 1940, [and] offered a clear invitation to treat modern architecture historically.» There are, of course, historians who have already traced the processes of what they see as an authentically Chinese Modernism and situated them within the established discussions. They have not, however, formulated a chorus of discourse concerned with the Chinese-ness of

modernist architecture and
national identity construction

Modernism nor figured out the way in which Modernists sought to testify to Modernism as Chinese. For me, it is this kind of problematic issue, hitherto little tackled, that your intriguing question raises.

Joaquín Medina Warmburg

I would like to start the question-and-answer session with the audience now.

Doreen Mende

Thank you very much, especially for the papers, which shed light on this trope of the periphery, more from the point of view of knowledge production and networking than from that of ideology research. I particularly appreciated that the concept of modernity was also updated once again by looking at cybernetic technologies. I think this is a very important step, and I have two questions on that point.

modernity as a concept
second-order cybernetics

The first question is for Susanne Neubauer: Which texts did Gui Bonsiepe write about decolonization, or in which texts does he grapple with this topic? I am asking as during Bonsiepe's time teaching and researching at the HfG Ulm (1960–68)—before his time in Latin America—far-reaching decisions were taken that shaped the course of the decolonization and independence of former colonial states. On December 14th, 1960, the General Assembly of the United Nations issued the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and established committees accordingly. The Bandung States, a loose alliance of Asian and African states that aimed to end colonialism, combat racial discrimination, and foster cultural and economic cooperation, held their first conference in 1955, at which they officially described themselves for the first time as the «Third World», in distinction to the «First World» (Western Bloc) and the «Second World» (Eastern Bloc), and, as a synonym, also called themselves the «Non-Aligned Movement». In the mid-1960s, Tricontinentalism also became established itself as a broad network of liberation movements in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

demand to decolonize design

critique of colonialism

construction of a «third world»

Susanne Neubauer

I still do not have an overview of all Gui Bonsiepe's work and cannot tell you how it is linked to the diverse political counter-movements in Latin America. It would be interesting to know more about Bonsiepe's connections with the large number of movements fighting against globalization, imperialism and for

human rights in the Latin American context. The text I quoted is «Design im Übergang zum Sozialismus: ein technisch-politischer Erfahrungsbericht aus dem Chile der Unidad Popular (1971–73)» [Design in Transition to Socialism. A Techno-Political Field Report from Unidad Popular's Chile (1971–73)] from 1974, which contains two pages on decolonization.

Doreen Mende

The second question is for David Maulén de los Reyes: Were there links between graphics, design, and cinema in the Latin American context? I am thinking of Gui Bonsiepe and Cybersyn, a Socialist cybernetics project that Bonsiepe designed on behalf of Salvador Allende with the aim of paving the way for an alternative route to Socialism; Mário Pedrosa, the Brazilian Marxist art critic and political activist; the *Organization of Solidarity with the People of Asia, Africa, Latin America* (OSPAAAL), founded in 1966 in Havana, Cuba, which communicated this project of liberation and revolution with fantastic graphic designers using graphic and technological means; and the Third Cinema movement in Argentina, with Fernando Solana, an Argentinean film director and politician, who in 1968 created the paradigm of revolutionary activist cinema with his film *The Hour of the Furnaces* (Spanish: *La hora de los hornos*). I have not been able to find any information on this yet.

In short, I'm very interested to hear whether there is a specific alliance between the *Cybersyn* project in Chile and the *Organization of Solidarity with People in Africa, Asia and Latin America* (OSPAAAL) and its graphic designers, and the Third Cinema movement in Argentina—all revolutionary movements attached to ideas of Marxism, Leninism, Socialism, Internationalism, Tricontinentalism.

David Maulén de los Reyes

Well, obviously, the context is the same and it is interconnected, but I think it is interconnected in a more complex way, because this process I tried to show is not only a Chilean process; it is all around the continent, from the Twenties until the Seventies, we have projects where the state is trying to do the project of Modernity. And there can be connections between the processes in all the countries at the same time, that is why I showed this meeting in Peru after the Second World War where the movement is not a national movement or a movement from only one school. For example, the Sixth Pan American Congress of Architecture in Lima

in 1947 discussed Tucumán in Argentina as a model for a regional movement and that can be connected all the time. And when *Cybersyn* was made, obviously, the Socialist government was an improvement, but for example, the little spoon you showed is so special, you see the white spoon made by Bonsiepe. But this spoon is possible within a project that runs for twenty years. Augusto Pinochet, who followed Salvador Allende after the military coup, had to be convinced to continue with the project because he wanted to stop it. This white plastic spoon was to teach people how to use powdered milk, but it was a project that ran for twenty years with different governments. For example, you need to understand this in order to understand the value of this sign. Bonsiepe used to say if you want to work with me, first you have to study economics, in the Economics faculty we are not only going to make beautiful objects. And that's how he came to talk about interfaces, because he had to try to develop how to know the value of use in the aesthetic field. For example, he began to talk about this concept of interaction design, but he was thinking how to translate economic politics into architectural fields. For design interaction, everything is connected. And especially, the *Cybersyn* project was two things: On the one hand, a network about online information—it doesn't exist nowadays, as you can get information online in real time—and on the other hand, a tool to enforce management of national industries' production throughout the country, but in an industrialized way. And this Chilean project was part of the (Cordillera de los) Andes project—*Pacto Andino*—, where Chile was going to do radio systems, industrial products etc., but it was not only Chile's project, but rather a project involving many countries at the same time. For example, if Uruguay produced maté, la yerba mate, the Chileans would build machines for industrialization of la yerba mate. It was an interregional project for development.

Notes

- 1 Gui Bonsiepe, «Design im Übergang zum Sozialismus: ein technisch-politischer Erfahrungsbericht aus dem Chile der Unidad Popular (1971–73)», in: Bernhard Bürdek et al (eds.), *Designtheorie*, Vol. 1, Hamburg 1974; see also Gui Bonsiepe, *Entwurfskultur und Gesellschaft: Gestaltung zwischen Zentrum und Peripherie*, Basel/Boston, Mass./Berlin 2009. [English translation: Gui Bonsiepe, *Design in Transition to Socialism. A Techno-Political Field Report from Unidad Popular's Chile (1971–73)*], reprinted in: *Civic City Cahier 2, Design and Democracy*, London 2010, p. 5–29].

Section III

Historiography and Politics of Memory. Processes of Reception and Repression

Damnatio Memoriae. The Case of Mart Stam

Simone Hain

- [B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?

architectural historiography
of modernism

As early as 1932, 33-year-old Mart Stam was preoccupied with the idea that he might be counted as dead as far as architectural history, or rather the «West», was concerned, because for over a year and a half he had failed to provide new material for art history.

«We Are Not Working Here with the Intention
of Influencing How Art Develops and Making
New Material Available to Art History»

- [B] On August 20th, 1932, he wrote to Sigfried Giedion, the most important art historian for architects: «You will be amazed to receive another little letter from me after I have been dead for a year and a half. Yes, I am immersed in our Russian work, in one of the most difficult tasks that will ever exist. I know that we won't be able to build a lot of flawless buildings here, that we won't be able to produce wonderful material compositions, that we won't even be able to implement pure floor plans and apartment types, maybe not even flawless city plans. [...] we are not working here with the intention of influencing how art develops and making new material available to art history, but rather because we are witnessing a great cultural-historical development that is almost unprecedented in its scope and extent [...]»¹

societal projects of modernism
reshaping the world

Stam describes his activities in Russia *ex negativo*, knowing full well that in doing so he is violating the well-established relationship between himself and Giedion and all the rules of the game in the industry. Giedion—a pioneer of Modernism and both co-initiator and first Secretary General of the Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM)—had idolized Stam for years as the rising star in the architectural heavens and promoted him as Le Corbusier's successor. The aspect that distinguished Stam from Le Corbusier was precisely this rather particular attitude that did not limit his vision to producing images. He was much more interested in participating in a civilization-building undertaking that constituted a quantum leap in humankind's social reproduction—Karel Teige refers to «plans for another globe».² This avant-garde attitude was linked to an affirmation of belonging to an overarching community of values, in which cultural progress is inextricably linked to another, alternative form of economic management, cooperation and consumption. As a leading representative of the Constructivist movement, Stam operated at the interface between the aesthetic and political avant-garde and shared with

collectivist ethos

constructivism

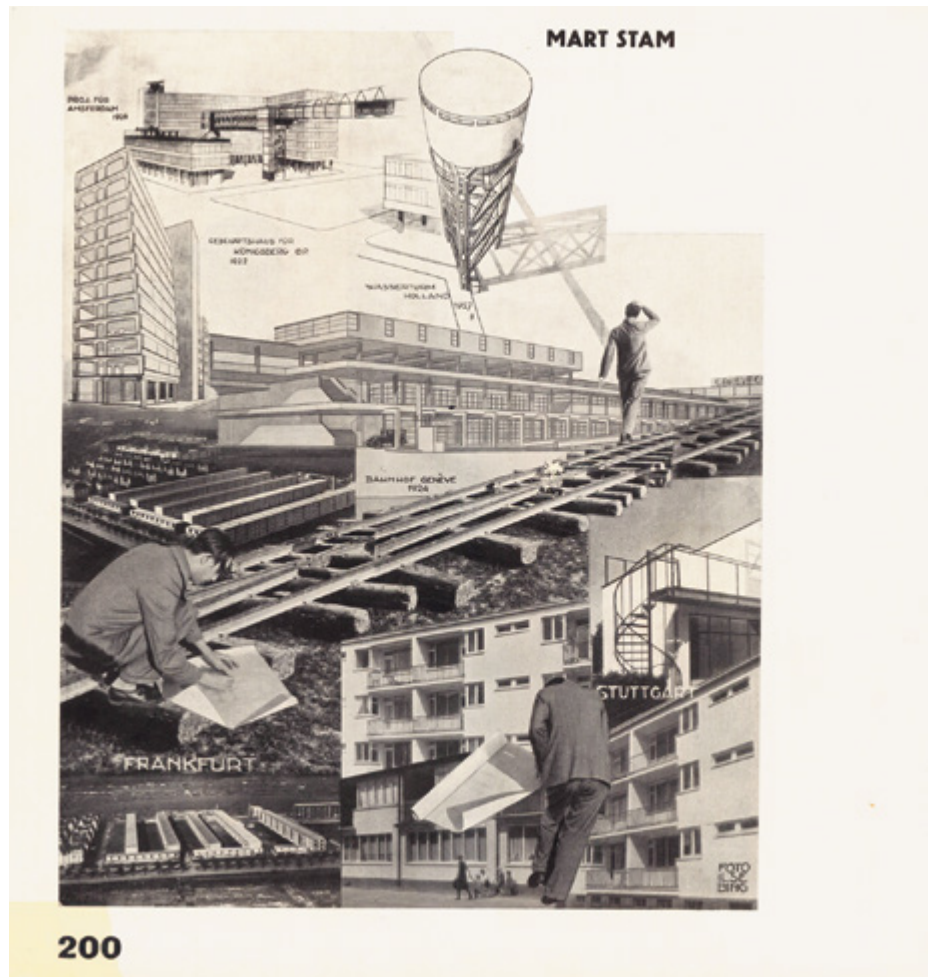


Fig. 1
Projects and buildings by Mart
Stam in a photomontage by Ilse Bing,
in: *Das neue Frankfurt*, 9, 1930



Fig. 2
Lotte Beese, Portrait photograph of
Mart Stam (detail), around 1929/30

- [M] What are the criteria for being included in history or excluded from it, and for historical relevance? What kinds of stand do they reveal, and which blind spots and cognitive shortcomings do they generate?

his fellow Constructivists a conviction that there is a structural force in all life that is self-organizing and pushes for change: *autopoésis*. All one can do is serve this sacred power, and authorship is an illusion.

Stam's lines from *Makiivka* capture something that plays scarcely any part in the current reappraisal of Communism, which focuses on dictatorship and terror: On the one hand, the «travellers to Russia» initially endured severe depressions, yet on the other hand they also reaped rich rewards—on the building sites in this vast, wild country or at the dachas of their Russian friends, with El Lissitzky and Kazimir Malevich. They were largely in agreement in expressing their love for this country of new beginnings, which remained completely incomprehensible in the West, as well as in refraining from any attempt to dominate the country as experts. In keeping with Karl Marx's concept of political economy and the Constructivist theory based on it, they see themselves as workers, although perhaps a little better organized and more efficient because of their bourgeois origins and Western mindset. When they finally left, indeed were even forced to flee, all their «material for art history» remained there in confiscated crates that would never reappear. The dearth of images of their human engagement later became problematic, as did their «homelessness» and «displacement», as Ryan Fred Long points out, not to mention the strictest discretion of their political resistance. If it were not for «co-op 2» in Amsterdam, we would have only learnt by chance what the Bauhaus painters, photographers, and architects did in the Resistance. Hundreds of forged birth certificates and passports, made by a German soldier in uniform, are suddenly found in the attic of a Jewish community in the Netherlands.

The relationship between Giedion and Stam makes absolutely clear what it means to end up with nothing to show for your activities and to be in a sense a blank slate professionally. After Giedion's emigration to the USA, one reads almost nothing more about Stam, the artistic genius and accelerator of Modernism. As Sokratis Georgiadis put it, at the age of 31, Mart Stam was already history for the herald of *Neues Bauen*.³

What had Giedion appreciated about Stam? He was indubitably impressed that during the 1920s Stam ^{Fig. 1,2} was the first in every realm of innovation: structural design, typological development, spatial conception, material aesthetics, urban planning. His little-known Chicago Tribune design alone puts him decades ahead of all his competitors ^{Fig. 3}. These are the kind of inventions

processes of oblivion
and repression

homelessness as a concept
displacement as a concept

[M]

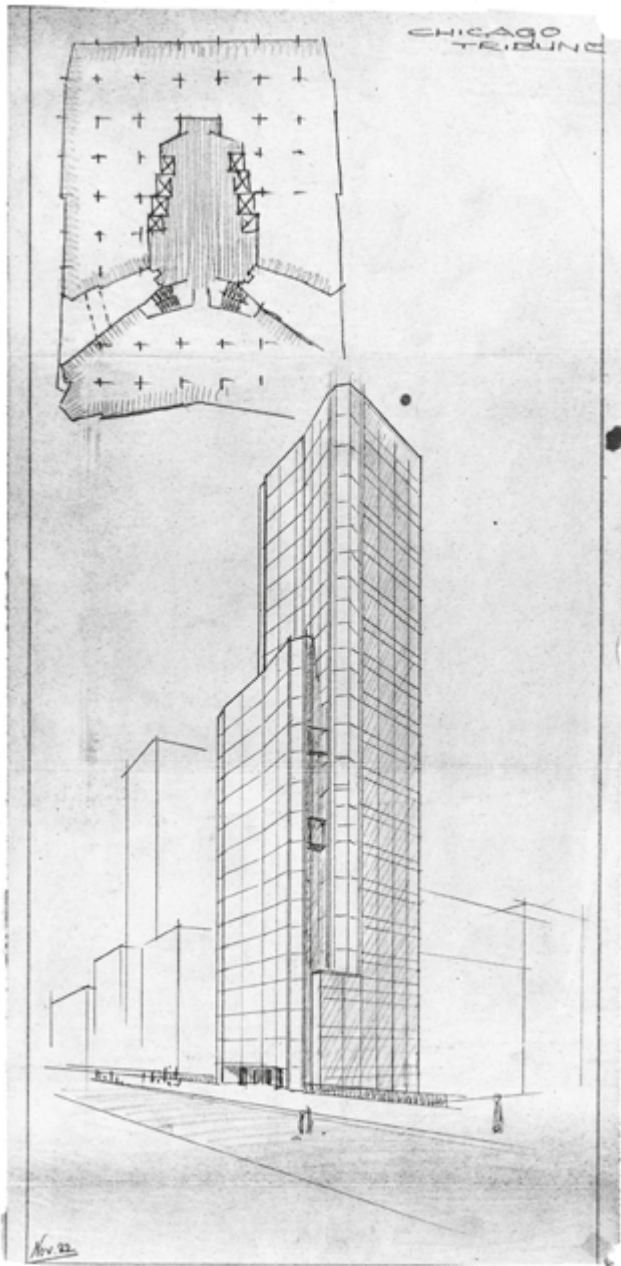


Fig. 3
 Mart Stam's concept sketch for the competition launched by Chicago Tribune in 1922



Fig. 4
 Mart Stam's revolutionary chair—an epitome of Bauhaus design—in the prototype version for the Weißenhof Housing Estate, 1927. Poster by Alp Eren Tekin, 2019.



Fig. 5
 Film clip of «Wo wohnen alte Leute», [«Where old people live»] by Ella Bergmann-Michel with residents on the balconies of the Henry and Emma Budge Home in Frankfurt am Main

with which one makes a name for oneself in art, yet they scarcely make a mark on the history of technology. Stam regarded the cantilever chair ^{Fig. 4} as a fundamental technical idea that would be continuously refined by other developers, just like the bicycle. In this sense, it was perhaps Stam's heroic altruism that left the most profound impression on Giedion. The latter's monumental history of mechanization—*Mechanization Takes Command. A Contribution to Anonymous History*, New York 1948—is an «anonymous» history of technology and its inventors that is not about icons and copyrights, but about common ware, common property. This was Stam's home ground: in a nameless discourse, in which architecture is a specific genre in its own right and is about the production of a world, a frame, but is not art.

The Enigma of Stam Grows Clearer

However, it was not just that Stam was dead for Giedion in terms of the reception track of art history. Stam had felt increasingly persecuted ever since his authorship was first contested over the cantilever chair and the Budge Retirement Home in Frankfurt am Main ^{Figs. 4}. His alleged paranoia began with experiences in the GDR, but intensified after he returned to live in the Netherlands. His status was disputed again and again; a character assassination campaign was underway. He had to be cautious and think carefully about what he said.⁴ The proud giant was a completely broken man.

There was therefore an even greater sense of relief in finally discovering the reasons for the young architect's initially almost unbelievable reputation. Former Bauhaus student Hubert Hoffmann described him as an exceptional person, «preceded by his reputation of having «replaced an entire office at Taut». This was confirmed for us in competitions: a very fast thinker, with captivating logic and a kind of juggler at the drawing board. Rails and angles whirled to and fro—lines and surfaces—perfection—floor plans were created as if by magic. He seemed a little uncanny to us. That arose due to a spectacular introductory lecture he had given in the auditorium: «M-Art»—during which there had been violent attacks on Albers. Unperturbed, he asked the surrounding students: «This is M-Art? Is architecture the art of impressing people?»⁵

Mart Stam, who for Giedion and analytical Swiss historiography was almost superhuman, yet on the other hand was

a self-proclaimed «Anonymous», has nothing at all to offer museum curators who exhibit icons. That is not a contradiction in terms! He was a highly gifted man who, in the architectural sense, lackadaisically left Le Corbusier and Walter Gropius standing, and architects like Ferdinand Kramer or Hermann Henselmann were eclipsed by him. Stam was vulnerable to attack on multiple fronts, for he wanted to possess nothing, to hold no titles. We come to understand why it is so important to consider the judgment of contemporaries from the office and the Rotterdam architecture business, who experienced Stam as a Circensian design machine, referring, in the case of Van Nelle, the Rotterdam Bauhaus twin, simply to «Stam's factory». That attribution from those closely involved denotes a fascination that Stam exuded, which eludes art-centred architectural history. Even today, people in the Netherlands know exactly where Stam's work on «his factory» ended and where the work of the company owner began. Stam's contribution was the abrasive, structurally adventurous constructive part of the project, not the «*lekker*» [appealing] rooftop tearoom. Stam—as always, it seems—completely exhausted himself in the pioneering work, the revolutionary columns, the sandwich-layered structures, the extremely Functionalist building layout. The ensuing Constructivist masterpiece can hold its own in comparisons with Wladimir Tatlin, Konstantin Melnikov or Turin's FIAT architects. With the Van Nelle factory, Stam is at least on a par with Walter Gropius, as Bruno Taut scholar Kurt Junghanns in the GDR was the first to note and acknowledge.

functionalist approach
constructivist approach

The utmost admiration also becomes apparent in the words of Paul Meller, Oud's construction supervisor who describes Stam's rousing performance at Stuttgart's Weißenhof as follows: « Then Stam!!!! God have mercy. Like a young girl from the country who came from the village at 6:10 a.m. and wanted to be fashionable at 7:00 a.m. [...]. His living room stunned us all. It was beautiful [...] and showed me the depravity of my aesthetic attitude [...]. »⁶ With his «*Holländereien*», i.e. his architectonic promotion of Mondrian's art, this Stam was not only the underpinning of Swiss Modernism but also changed the world through design. However, in Stam's eyes these were merely formal virtuosités, simply Dadaist fun on the margins of a completely different project: the «plan for another globe», design politics «on the Czech model». The syntax came from the Netherlands and Belgium, the programmatic approach from Prague, while practice was gleaned in the Soviet Union.

- [B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?

collective design
collectivist ethos

- [B] Stam set out to serve a community idea that had both spiritual and Socialist roots for him. Integrated into a larger collective of constructivist artists and very much in agreement with, for example Karel Teige, the Prague spokesman of this movement, Mart Stam, as a leader among equals, was among those who wanted to bring about the «death of the author». Collective design was the goal, smashing the old aura and drawing on mutual assistance, like in the manifestos of Pjotr Kropotkin. Historically, the principle of «collective design» was associated in the 1920s with undertakings reflected in collective writing projects that were derived from «Una-anima» or Unanimism (after Jules Romains' *La vie unanime*, 1908), such as the journal *Krise und Kritik*, planned by Walter Benjamin with Bertolt Brecht. The Basel architecture magazine *ABC* was another such project. Co-op instead of M-Art. Instruments instead of monuments. This group of early structuralist architects no longer attacked historicism, instead directing their criticism at Le Corbusier and the «by me» principle, with its veneration of the author.

Stam's Steep Path to «Success» is Piecework and Inconclusive for His Lifetime Achievement

Born in 1899, Stam was one of many in his generation who took an informal route to a career, i.e. he did not pursue formal studies. Like Le Corbusier or Mies van der Rohe, it was primarily as a draftsman that he found his way to designing but that did not prevent him from developing self-confidently. He was in Berlin when marvellous construction projects for the trade union buildings were developed there in 1922, under Max Taut—Stam was a key team member for Max Taut—and directly experienced Mies van der Rohe's pioneering spirit in introducing the free floor plan, the curtain wall principle and glass architecture with his high-rise building on Friedrichstraße. He was likewise involved with Piet Mondrian⁷ and the emerging De Stijl movement and at the centre of the revolutionary art of Dada and the Constructivist International. In 1924, together with architects Hans Schmidt, Emil Roth and El Lissitzky, he initiated the first Swiss avant-garde journal *ABC—Beiträge zum Bauen*. When CIAM was founded, the ABC Group became Le Corbusier's greatest challenger. Stam was invited by Mies to the Werkbund exhibition in Stuttgart-Weißenhof and was courted by Gropius as his successor. He taught at

- [B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?

the Bauhaus for one semester, followed the call to Ernst May's *Neues Frankfurt* [New Frankfurt urban planning and housing programme] ^{Fig. 1}, caused a furore with the cantilever chair with no back legs ^{Fig. 4}, built an interdenominational retirement home conceived as a collective dwelling ^{Fig. 5} and developed a strong architectural presence in Prague. Under his influence, Karel Teige declared war on Le Corbusier in 1929 in the «Functionalism dispute». «Where the architect turns on his brain, the inclination to art ends. [...] Instead of monuments, architecture creates instruments.» This sentence is a variation on Stam's general theme of «M-Art».

[B]

The shattering of the erstwhile aura and age-old conventions of mimetic likeness in architecture was almost completed. For the first time ever, art historians had begun to understand cutting-edge developments in architecture as art, be it the machine for living or the pneumatic wall. Stam reached the peak of his success in 1930, at least if innovative creation and artistic perfection are taken as the yardsticks. Up to that point, however, he had focused on individual works, not yet on a new culture.

architectural historiography
of modernism

Turning Point: Escape into Life

In terms of his own logic, Stam could not fail to head to a place where isolated acts became a civilization-forming challenge. He had heard that hundreds of cities, factories, railway lines and canals were being built in Russia. Seemingly unimpressed by the trench warfare in Moscow, he worked tirelessly for *Sotsgorod*, creating new cities in Makiivka, Magnitogorsk, Orsk.

At some point, however, there was a rupture, when Stam found it unacceptable to build a residential town for a coppermine at Lake Balkhasch in the midst of the most inhospitable desert terrain. Stam suggested that the workforce should be allowed to regularly commute 200 kilometres. Little concrete information is available about the dispute, but a delegation from the GDR heard rumours in 1950 that Stalin had personally declared Stam a *persona non grata*. He had allegedly been expelled.

societal projects of modernism
new building of the future
reshaping the world

No Way Back

Anyone who had gone to Moscow was under at least twofold secret service surveillance and was denounced as a Comintern partisan. When the German Wehrmacht invaded the Netherlands in 1939, a squadron of motorcyclists drove ahead of the front and straight to the office addresses of Mart Stam, his wife Lotte Beese, and others, hoping to confiscate plans of Soviet industrial cities or data on warehouses or other information about the Soviet economy that could be essential to the war effort.

In 1948 when Stam moved to the Soviet-occupied zone, which later became the GDR, he once again flung himself entirely into the project: He wanted to revive the Bauhaus tradition in higher education policy and, following the example of the Design Council in London, sought to establish a design policy headquarters for the industrial sector, which was already nationalized. He managed to set up a central research and development institute that would be equipped with a pool of design patents, technological innovations or advertising services for all industrial sectors to utilise in future. There has been no research on the extent to which Stam thus established the future GDR's industrial design system and its details, and his role is also repeatedly called into question. A continuous, direct connection from the Bauhaus to the early GDR via the Communist Bauhaus members—Franz Ehrlich, Waldemar Alder, Max Gebhardt as well as Herbert Hirche, Wils Ebert, Hubert Hoffmann—is more than clearly documented in Selman Selmanagić's papers.⁸ Stam's oeuvre has however scarcely been researched, as is also the case for the relevant documentation.⁹ Unfortunately, reception of the GDR Bauhaus is not even mentioned in this 100th anniversary year.¹⁰ The Bauhaus was purportedly taboo in the GDR, but in fact it was a driving force.

In the GDR, Stam headed two High Schools: the Staatliche Hochschule für Werkkunst, Dresden [State High School for Industrial Art], and, on a provisional basis, the city's Akademie der Bildenden Künste [Academy of Fine Arts], until both were transformed by him in early 1949 to form the Hochschule für Bildende Künste [Dresden Academy of Fine Arts], with Stam as Director; and Weißensee Kunsthochschule Berlin [art college], after 1950, the Berlin-Weißensee applied arts college, the Hochschule für angewandte Kunst (later Weißensee Kunsthochschule Berlin [Weißensee Academy of Art]) Fig. 6 where he founded the Institut für industrielle Formgestaltung [Institute for Industrial Design]

bauhaus reception in the
german democratic republic

bauhaus centenary

bauhaus reception in the
german democratic republic

processes of oblivion
and repression

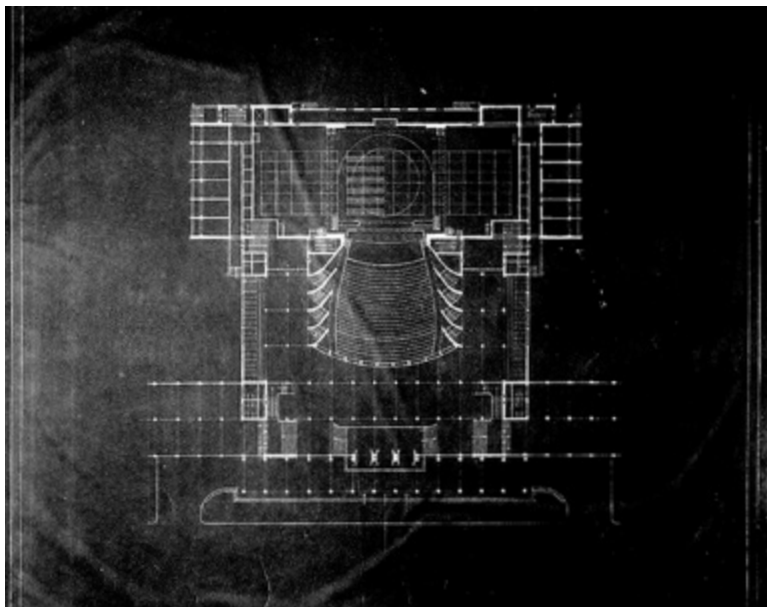


Fig. 6
Rector Mart Stam with architect and
Bauhäusler Selman Selmanagić at one of
the famous carnivals at the Berlin-
Weißensee Art Academy, probably in 1951

Fig. 7
Competition entry for a cultural centre in
Boehlen (GDR), 1950, floor plan

- [M] What are the criteria for being included in history or excluded from it, and for historical relevance? What kinds of stand do they reveal, and which blind spots and cognitive shortcomings do they generate?

(1950) as its Director. In addition, his range of activities encompassed designing exhibitions as well as drawing up reconstruction and building plans ^{Fig. 7}.

Mart Stam in Architectural History

- [M] While Stam was indubitably famous, even held in the highest esteem by his colleagues, there has always been a hint of doubt about this, especially since he was not self-employed most of the time. Against this backdrop, the cantilever chair has remained controversial, as has his contribution to the Van Nelle factory. Until 1991 there were no publications about him at all; he had last been interviewed by Karel Teige for *Stavba* in 1935. Jean-Louis Cohen and Marco de Michelis had nonetheless reflected in 1979 on his urban development work in the Soviet Union.¹¹ In the GDR, Stam was first honoured in 1976 by Gerhard Strauss and then mentioned in 1979 in the journal *Deutsche Architektur* on the occasion of his 80th birthday.

After the end of the Cold War, hopes were therefore all the higher that Stam's estate, which was obtained by the Deutsches Architekturmuseum (DAM) thanks to Werner Möller, could be studied and given the presentation it merited, and it was all the more pressing to do so. Parallel to reception of Karel Teige, Hans Schmidt and Hannes Meyer, in 1991 the *Rassegna* 47/3 edition, *Mart Stam 1899–1986*, edited by Werner Möller and Gerrit Oorthuys, was published, with an article on Stam's engagement in the GDR,¹² as were the publication *Mart Stam*, edited by Werner Oechslin, *Reise in die Schweiz 1923–25*, and the first monograph by Simone Rümmele, *Mart Stam*. In 1994 Sima Ingberman's monograph on ABC¹³ was a real triumph and demonstrated Stam's leading role, appropriately embedded in the collective. All these Stam scholars seemed to be well on the way to opening a path that would enable Constructivism outside the Soviet Union, especially the ABC Group and Mart Stam, to join the hero-driven history of Modernism.

In 1997—two years before Stam's 100th birthday—DAM showed a markedly pared-down exhibition, which was only possible thanks to a sponsor. It was entitled *Mart Stam 1899–1986, Architect—Visionary—Designer. His Road to Success 1919–1930* and, just as Giedion had done, acknowledged only ten years of iconic production in Stam's biography. It abandoned him at the

- [M] What are the criteria for being included in history or excluded from it, and for historical relevance? What kinds of stand do they reveal, and which blind spots and cognitive shortcomings do they generate?
- [N] How do our own cultural, social, and political beliefs and stances affect our understanding of the Bauhaus, Modernism, and modernity?

depoliticization
of the avant-garde

bauhaus as a testing ground
for socialism

critique of capitalism

- [N] very moment he embraced Communism. This depoliticization of the avant-garde seems to me to be symptomatic of German architectural history. It is full of taboos. Nobody talks any more about *Neues Bauen*, Constructivism and Functionalism as aesthetic projects accompanying the 1918 revolution. Yet the avant-garde aesthetic revolution, the founding of the Bauhaus, was itself, even simply in terms of the self-image of all those involved, a long-due reaction to capitalism's profound crisis, a sublimation of revolutionary energies, and indifferent only to party politics—or with the words of Oskar Schlemmer (1927): «Didn't the majority of the German people want to build the Cathedral of Socialism in 1918?»¹⁴

- [M] It is also interesting to note DAM's justification for that exhibition that reduced the narrative only to the «success story» and excluded «Stam the loser»: «Normally, it is the quality of the work that determines whether an exhibition merits being shown, but in Stam's case, his radical architectural stance would also be a criterion»: In addition to «key positions in architecture, certain architectural attitudes, which have coherently translated a very original, radical, clear, comprehensible standpoint into an architectural position, also play a role. The aim is not to dictate taste, but to convey a feeling for good architecture.»¹⁵ At the latest at this point, Stam thus appears as an architect who merits an exhibition not because of the quality of his architectural works, but because of his extreme «attitude».

Finally, in 2017/18 the Marta Herford museum dedicated a biographical exhibition to Mart Stam, which also addressed his complex personality. Entitled *Radikaler Modernist. Das Mysterium Mart Stam [Radical Modernist—The Enigma of Mart Stam]*, the museum website announces that the exhibition staged «the highly creative, restless and enigmatic life of Mart Stam, the «Mystery Man» of Modernism in the form of seven themes like an adventurous tour de force through the architecture, design and ideas of the 20th century».¹⁶ With this narrative, historical research finally abandons hermeneutics and analysis. And «attitude» is now cast as enigmatic.

Notes

- 1 Mart Stam to Sigfried Giedion, *Makeevka, Ukraine, Donbass, GORKOMGXOSS 20. August 1952* (facsimile), quoted from Sokratis Georgiadis, «Wie machen Sie das jetzt? Geht Corbusier mit nach Chicago?», *Dokumente zu Mart Stam aus dem Archiv S. Giedion*, in: Werner Oechslin (ed.), *Mart Stam 1923–1925. Eine Reise in die Schweiz*, gta Zürich 1991, p. 142.
- 2 Teige is thus quoted in a picture poem by Jindřich Styrský dated May 1924 with the title «obraz» [picture]. Reproduced in: Zdenek Prus (Hg.), *Tschechische Avantgarde 1922–1940. Reflexe europäischer Kunst und Fotografie in der Buchgestaltung*, Hamburg, Boston 1990. On Teige's work as a PR assistant at the Bauhaus, see also: Simone Hain, «Karel Teige: Typographie, Propaganda, Poesie, Architektur», in: Philipp Oswalt (ed.), *Hannes Meyers neue Bauhauslehre. Von Dessau bis Mexiko*, Bauwelt Fundamente 164, Basel: Birkhäuser Verlag 2019, pp. 349–362.
- 3 Georgiadis 1991 (as Note 1), p. 142.
- 4 Cf. on this point: Werner Möller, *Mart Stam (1899–1986): Architekt—Visionär—Gestalter* [Schriftenreihe zur Plan- und Modellsammlung des Deutschen Architektur-Museums in Frankfurt am Main], Tübingen, Berlin 1997.
- 5 Hubert Hoffmann, «Erinnerungen eines Architekturstudenten», in: Oswalt (as Note 2), pp. (116–129), 124 f.
- 6 Möller 1997, p. 55.
- 7 Stam was a friend of Mondrian, promoted his art and was Chair of the Mondrian Society.
- 8 Selman Selmanagić, Privataarchiv. Cf. Simone Hain, ««Alle Künstler verzahnt Euch!» Bauhäusler gestalten das «Neue Deutschland» und werben für die volkseigene Wirtschaft», in: *bauhaus imaginista* Journal, Edition 3: Moving Away, <http://www.bauhaus-imaginista.org/articles/6221/alle-kunstler-verzahnt-euch/de?0bbf55ceffc-3073699d40c945ada9faf=267a6208d-9f1b500ac8809715c40c948> (Consulted on May 28, 2020).
- 9 The exhibition *The Early Years. Mart Stam*, the Institute and the Collection for Industrial Design of the Werkbundarchiv—Museum der Dinge in cooperation with the Stiftung Industrie- und Alltagskultur from November 26, 2020 to March 22, 2021 is expected to bring about a change.
- 10 The legacy of the Communist Bauhaus teachers and students is only dealt with in passing during the current Bauhaus anniversary; new insights have not been developed. In particular with reference to the Basel Constructivists in the ABC circle and the GDR, the following publications by the author of this essay have been available since the early 1990s although scant attention had been paid to them and they have not been taken into account in research: Simone Hain, ««...Spezifisch, reformistisch, bauhausartig...». Mart Stam in der DDR», Part 1 in: *form+zweck*, Issues 2–3/1991; id., «Kultur und Kohle. Das Böhlen-Projekt. Mart Stam in der DDR», Part 2, in: Issues 4–5/1992, p. 67–73; id., «Verhinderte Wiedergeburt. Stalinismus und Bauhaus», in: Philipp Oswalt, *Bauhaus-Streit. Kontroversen und Kontrahenten*, Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2009, pp. 110–133; id., ««Alle Künstler verzahnt Euch!»...», in: *bauhaus imaginista* Journal (as Note 8).
- 11 See Marco De Michelis, «Ville fonctionnelle, ville soviétique: une impossible rencontre», in: Jean-Louis Cohen, Marco De Michelis and Manfredo Tafuri (eds.), *USSR 1917–1978. La ville, l'architecture*, Rome 1979, pp. 92–139; Jean-Louis Cohen, «La forme urbaine du «réalisme socialiste»», *ibid.*, pp. 140–199.
- 12 Albeit with a title changed by the editors: Simone Hain, «The Dictatorship of the Modern», in: *Rassegna* 47:3 (Mart Stam).
- 13 Sima Ingbermann, *ABC: International Constructivist Architecture, 1922–1939*, Cambridge, Mass./ London: MIT Press, c1994, was the first to present European Constructivism outside the Soviet Union and to establish the connection between Soviet and European Constructivism.
- 14 Oskar Schlemmer, diary, April 9, 1927, quoted from Andreas Hüneke (ed.), *Oskar Schlemmer. Idealist der Form. Briefe, Tagebücher, Schriften*, Leipzig 1989, p. 170. [English translation: *The Letters and Diaries of Oskar Schlemmer*, (ed.) Tut Schlemmer, trans. Krishna Winston, Evanston/IL 1990, p. 200].
- 15 Preface by Evelyn Hils-Brockhoff, in: Möller (as Note 5), p. 6.
- 16 <http://marta-herford.de/ausstellungen/radikaler-modernist/> (Consulted on April 19, 2020) [English: <https://marta-herford.de/en/ausstellungen/radikaler-modernist/> (Consulted on June 1, 2020)]

Hannes Meyer and the Bauhaus Brand

Philipp Oswalt

bauhaus brand
bauhaus values

bauhaus style

Nowadays, nobody doubts any longer that the Bauhaus has become a brand.¹ That is what makes it so enormously influential, as was also demonstrated by the 100th anniversary celebrations. Brands are however strange constructs. A brand image is a «subjectively evaluated, i.e. psychologically, socially and culturally processed, image of reality».² In the first instance that is ahistorical. The brand message encompasses a canon of values—in the case of the Bauhaus, qualities such as objectivity, functionality, being fit for purpose, economical, simple, high quality, modern, technically advanced, well designed, artistic, creative, innovative, social, universal and timeless. It is essential that this canon of values is combined with an incisive appearance, which guarantees recognizability and sets the brand apart, distinguishing it from its surroundings. The Bauhaus style is therefore an indispensable part of the Bauhaus brand: simple, pared-down geometric forms, elementary primary colours, and compositions that avoid hierarchization and centring, whether through dynamic asymmetry or arrangement as a serial sequence. A remarkable wide variety of potential articulations exists within this corridor of options.

Reducing Complexity and Smoothing Down History

bauhaus brand
identity formation

bauhaus myths

The decisive factor for a brand is its presence in the here and now. This usually encompasses a foundational myth—such as Steve Jobs' garage in the case of Apple—that reveals little about the actual founding history, serving instead as an important building block in the current brand narrative. Conversely, the period between the fictitious founding moment and the present, with its manifold, contradictory and often crisis-ridden phases of development, continues to be largely suppressed. Brands' significance and purpose lies not in critical reflection and historiography, but rather in identity building, orientation and positioning in the frame of today. That requires idealization and a reduction of complexity that deviates from actual history and suppresses contradictions and caesurae, with a view to constructing a simple, succinct impression that is easy to grasp. And that also holds true for the Bauhaus.

The Bauhaus' founding myth encompasses the seven years that run from its inception in Weimar in 1919 to the inauguration of the Bauhaus building in Dessau in 1926. With hindsight, this phase fuses into a single quintessence, into one consistent, concise core message. Walter Gropius was the founder of this brand, in

bauhaus idea of always up-to-date,
universally valid design

a twofold sense: On the one hand, he gave the institution (which had per se already existed previously) its name, devised its concept and headed it for nine years. Just as importantly, he spent decades intensively and proactively crafting the brand image, adapting it to a variety of different contexts and to the shifting zeitgeist. This continued although Gropius left the institution in 1928 and despite the Bauhaus' decision to disband in 1933. The Bauhaus brand survived the demise of the institution.

Loss of Emancipatory Promise

bauhaus brand's ambivalent effect

bauhaus imaginiste
hfg ulm's criticism of the bauhaus

bauhaus historiography

interpretative power of the
bauhaus' founder

processes of oblivion and
repression

new unity of art and the people
societal emancipatory role or art

new unity of art and technology

loss of emancipatory promise

However, it is precisely this brand-formation, which keeps the Bauhaus «alive», that impedes and prevents productive approaches to dealing with its legacy. Alongside Black Mountain College in the USA, the two productive new developments after 1933 that made explicit programmatic reference to the historical Bauhaus were the International Movement for an Imaginist Bauhaus, as the forerunner of the Situationist International, and the Hochschule für Gestaltung (HfG) Ulm [Ulm School of Design]. In the process, both nevertheless turned against the Bauhaus brand developed by Gropius and referenced precisely those aspects of the historical Bauhaus that Gropius and his entourage had marginalized or even completely concealed in Bauhaus historiography, a phenomenon that continues to have ramifications today. On the one hand, there is the early Bauhaus, still influenced by the rapturously revolutionary ideas of the Arbeitsrat für Kunst [Workers' Council for Art]. It proclaimed that «art and the people must form an entity». Asger Jorn referenced this quasi-revolutionary, societal emancipatory role of art in 1954 with his «Bauhaus imaginiste». That was however precisely the aspect that Gropius had disavowed in 1923 with his slogan, paraphrasing Peter Behrens, «Art and technology—a new unity». The social (and political) was replaced by the technological. He subsequently did a great deal to push the Bauhaus' early history into the background or even to repress it entirely, for instance in his exhibitions in Paris in 1930³ and in 1938 at the Museum of Modern Art in New York.⁴

- [J] The Bauhaus embraces different versions and ways of taking a stand. Which version or stance could help us tackle present and future challenges?

Hannes Meyer: Utility Value Versus Bauhaus Style

critique of bauhaus style

critique of bauhaus'
formalistic approach

utility value vs. bauhaus style

hfg ulm's criticism of the bauhaus

bauhaus legacies

bauhaus brand
iconic symbolic value vs.
social utility value

bauhaus brand's effect of
social distinction

social, functional, and scientific approach

utility value vs. bauhaus style

[J]

Gropius' historiography was even more consistent in denying the work of the later Bauhaus under the leadership of his successor Hannes Meyer, the second Bauhaus Director. The period when Meyer headed the Bauhaus was not only superfluous for the subsequent establishment of the brand but detrimental to it. That held true even purely in terms of canonization of the formal language, for Meyer had criticized the Bauhaus style and endeavoured to overcome it. Brick architecture incorporating pent roofs was created instead of white cubes with flat roofs and blueprints were even drawn up for wooden buildings. In furniture design, wood was also increasingly used instead of tubular steel. Ergonomic-organic forms replaced the rigid geometries developed previously. Although these changes did improve the objects' economic viability and practical value, abandoning the established iconic design language meant that the recognizability and distinctive cachet of the design products were lost. Although soon repressed and concealed, this part of the Bauhaus legacy nevertheless influenced the Hochschule für Gestaltung in Ulm, founded in 1953. It was precisely the aspects that were objectionable in the branding context that proved productive when it came to building on the heritage of the Bauhaus. That is hardly surprising, since Hannes Meyer, during his time as Director, had addressed the weaknesses of the Bauhaus that had become apparent in 1926/1927.⁵ The synthesis of art and technology had proven futile, both for art and for applied design. The emergence of a striking formal canon constituted an obstacle to developing functional, inexpensive consumer products. Although the objects developed by the Bauhaus were chic and modern, they were expensive, of limited practical use and therefore were impossible to market as mass goods. When Hannes Meyer took up his post, he was confronted with the glaring discrepancy between the brand's promises and the brand reality. He focused on making the design process more objective and scientific, while diminishing the artistic emphasis. Instead of design with an authorial imprint, the emphasis shifted to cooperation with industry and a focus on the brand's utility value.⁶ In this context, Meyer could also benefit from lessons learnt previously through experience in the workshops. In the case of Kandem lamps and Bauhaus wallpaper, the Bauhaus succeeded for the first time in developing modern industrial products, as well as manufacturing and selling tens of thousands of these products. However, these

- [1] What can we learn from the history of the Bauhaus and Modernism when facing current issues? And how can this enable us to gain new insights into the past?

designs were not strikingly iconic and thus escaped the fetishization experienced by Bauhaus design from the post-war era to the present day. Rather than Kandem lamps, expensive, not particularly functional Wagenfeld lamps have become the leading icon of the Bauhaus brand.⁷

Iconic Symbolic versus Social Utility Value

- [1] This reveals not merely the woeful state of Bauhaus reception but also a fundamental problem in modern design. The success of a design product is determined not by its practical value but by its symbolic value. This holds true to an even greater degree if an iconic design can be imbued with symbolic meaning. The canon of values cited above is inextricably linked to the Bauhaus style. It is no impediment that Bauhaus products de facto mostly fail to display these values. The essential point is that they successfully symbolize these values—which they indeed continue to do today. Ethical consumerism has become a buzzword in market research today.⁸ By purchasing goods, I commit myself to the values they embody and affirm the canon of values that I advocate. Nowadays, design objects are, more than ever, laden with ethical values—and are claimed for instance to be ecological, sustainable, creative, individual, progressive, rooted in the local context and socially responsible. That persists even though the production, use and disposal of these objects often thwart these symbolized values. This is illustrated in an analysis by the Potsdam Institut für Klimafolgenforschung [Institute for Climate Impact Research] on how attitudes to climate policy relate to real-world emission-generating behaviour in various social milieus.⁹ The group categorized by the Sinus Institute for market and social research as wealthy «post-materialists», who are in favour of climate change mitigation, emits more than double the level of greenhouse gases produced by the much poorer «consumer materialists» group, who oppose climate protection. The post-materialists consume products branded as ecological and sustainable and thus profess their values. However, the symbolic charge does not provide a response to the problems that arise, on the contrary. Their consumer behaviour becomes a form of surrogate action that impedes genuine changes and solutions.¹⁰

iconic symbolic value vs.
social utility value

bauhaus values
bauhaus style

need for lifestyle changes

A comparable conflict between iconic symbolic value and social utility value underlies the disagreement between Walter Gropius and Hannes Meyer. However, it is precisely this disagreement

- [I] What can we learn from the history of the Bauhaus and Modernism when facing current issues? And how can this enable us to gain new insights into the past?
- [O] What is the significance and relevance of the Bauhaus and Modernism today—a historical phenomenon or a resource for the present? And what, if anything, constitutes their current relevance?

lessons from the bauhaus

that is concealed by the Bauhaus branding, which means that the lessons learnt by the institution from 1927–1930 are truncated, along with the associated ongoing development of the Bauhaus idea.

Contemporary Relevance of the Repressed Legacy

bauhaus legacies

- [I] [O] Renewed, more in-depth engagement with the Bauhaus in the Hannes Meyer era is overdue, not merely with a view to correcting Bauhaus historiography. It also opens an understanding of a fundamental conflict faced by modern consumer design in the era of fully fledged consumer capitalism that remains unresolved to this day and is perhaps impossible to resolve. The current relevance of this largely repressed legacy lies above all in awareness of this problem rather than in specific methods or design solutions.¹¹

Notes

- 1 Cf. in more detail on this point Philipp Oswalt, *Marke Bauhaus 1919–2019: der Sieg der ikonischen Form über den Gebrauch*, Zürich: Scheidegger & Spiess, 2020.
- 2 Gerhard Kleining, quoted in Wolfgang J. Koschnick, *Focus-Lexikon: Werbeplanung—Mediaplanung—Marktforschung—Kommunikationsforschung—Mediaforschung*, H–O, 3., Vol. 2, Know-how to use, Munich: Focus-Magazin-Verlag, 2003, p. 1212.
- 3 *Section allemande* at the 1930 exhibition of the Société des artistes décoratifs français in Paris.
- 4 *Bauhaus 1919–1928*. See on this point: Philipp Oswalt: «1933–1989. Posthume Glättung und Kalter Krieg», in: Oswalt 2020 (as Note 1), pp. 50–68.
- 5 See on this point: Philipp Oswalt, «Die verschwiegenen Bauhauskrisen», in: *Hannes Meyer und das Bauhaus. Im Streit der Deutungen*, (eds.) Thomas Flierl and Philipp Oswalt, Leipzig: Spector, 2018, pp. 247–276.
- 6 See on this point inter alia: Philipp Oswalt (ed.), *Hannes Meyers neue Bauhauslehre: von Dessau nach Mexiko*, Bauwelt-Fundamente 164, Gütersloh Berlin Basel: Bauverlag Birkhäuser, 2019.
- 7 Philipp Oswalt, «Wagenfeld-Lampe. Ein Gebrauchsobjekt als Bildikone», in: Oswalt 2020 (as Note 1), pp. 204–229.
- 8 See on this point for example Birger P. Priddat, «Moralischer Konsum», in: *Arch+*, Issue 222, *Kann Gestaltung Gesellschaft verändern*, Aachen/Berlin 2016, pp. 64 f.; Wolfgang Ullrich, «Konsum als Design», *ibid.*, pp. 115–119.
- 9 Fritz Reusswig, «Ökologie2. Naturbeziehungen moderner Gesellschaften unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Klimawandels». Lecture, Hochschule für Gestaltung Offenbach, Winter Semester 2008; Fritz Reusswig and Herbert Greisberger, «Energie als Stilfrage? Lebensstile und ihre Bedeutung für den gesamtgesellschaftlichen Energieverbrauch», in: *Wissenschaft & Umwelt. Interdisziplinär* 11/ 2008, pp. 196–203.
- 10 See on this point: Philipp Oswalt, Stephan Barthel, Julia von Mende, Anne Schmidt, «Der 9-Milliarden-Personen-Haushalt», in: *Bauwelt*, Issue 37/ 2016, pp. 22 f.
- 11 Zygmunt Bauman, *Retrotopia*, New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2017.

In the Shadow of Memory—Munio Weinraub Gitai and Shmuel Mestechkin

Ronny Schüler



Fig. 1
Munio Weinraub with friends from
HaShomer HaTza'ir around 1923
Photograph: unknown



Fig. 2
Shmuel Mestechkin (top row, 1st from
left) at the Mechanical Technical School
of the Mizrachi Movement

bauhaus centenary
 bauhaus as a major german export
 tel aviv as bauhaus' world capital

neues bauen [new building]
 social-utopian aspirations

bauhaus brand
 displacement processes
 gentrification

bauhaus' history of reception
 processes of oblivion
 and repression

new political, social, and
 architectural awakening

bauhaus as a testing ground
 for socialism

socially engaged architecture

In its 100th anniversary year, the Bauhaus was celebrated as the «most successful German cultural export». In this context, the marketing of Tel Aviv as the «world capital of Bauhaus» with its purported «4,000 Bauhaus buildings» is particularly ambivalent.¹ It exemplifies and discloses the contradiction between the foundational ideals of this avant-garde art, architecture and design school and its current popularization in the spirit of neoliberal exploitation interests: Scant attention is paid to the political and social-utopian ambitions of *Neues Bauen*, which were also represented by the Bauhaus students who emigrated to Palestine in the 1930s to help build a Jewish homeland. Those ambitions have given rise to the exact opposite: Under the aegis of the «Bauhaus» label, processes of displacement and social disintegration are exacerbated, along with a de facto deterioration in the residential environment near the city centre.

The 2019 centenary year thus made clear that a critical examination of the history of reception, further chapters of which were written with the Bauhaus anniversary, still contains revealing insights.² Far removed from historical points of reference, «the Bauhaus» develops its own vibrant existence in popular city guides, photo books and estate agents' brochures.

«The Architects Who Brought the Bauhaus to Israel»

Moving beyond the «White City», this article focuses on the political stance of two less well-known Bauhaus graduates: Munio Weinraub (1909–1970)—who later went by the name of «Gitai»—and Shmuel Mestechkin (1908–2004). To this day, while overshadowed by their renowned fellow student Arie Sharon (1900–1984), both are considered to be among the «architects who brought the Bauhaus to Israel»,³ and, in terms of the scope and quality of their architectural work, they are also held to have a special position among the twenty-five students—eight of whom were architects—active in the British Mandate area after time at the Bauhaus. They share Eastern European origins and strong Zionist and Socialist influences in their youth. They arrived at the Bauhaus in Dessau independently of each other, between 1926 and 1932, presumably attracted by the spirit of artistic and social renewal, as crystallized in what was known as Lyonel Feininger's «Cathedral of Socialism» on the title page of the 1919 Bauhaus Manifesto. The idea of socially committed building became associated with the Bauhaus

architecture as
a collective practice

architectural education

social, functional, and
scientific approach

bauhaus reception and
geopolitics

with the establishment of structured architectural education under Hannes Meyer from 1927 and especially after he became Director in 1928. Meyer, his office partner Hans Wittwer and later also Ludwig Hilberseimer were part of the left-leaning wing of *Neues Bauen*. In their role teaching architecture at the Bauhaus, they represented a planning and design process based on scientific methods, as advocated by the Basel ABC Group.⁴ All this made the Bauhaus an obvious training option for both politically left-wing and Jewish students.⁵

Looking at the example of Munio (Weinraub) Gitai and Shmuel Mestechkin on the one hand reveals the decisive role played by political and ideological motives in the transfer of Bauhaus ideas to Palestine.⁶ On the other hand, this also allows us to shed light on the specific logic of Bauhaus reception in Israel today. The focus here is on the less well-known projects for the labour movement, which manifest a political-ideological stance and thus do not fit at all into the neoliberal marketing fairy-tale of «Bauhaus in Israel».

A Testing Ground for Zionism at the Bauhaus

emigration and exile

bauhaus as a testing ground
for socialism

bauhaus and
nation-/state-building

bauhaus school

Munio Weinraub was born on 6th March 1909 in Szumlany. He spent his youth in the industrial town of Bielsko, in eastern Silesia, where he came into contact with the youth movement *HaShomer HaTza'ir* («The Young Guard»), which he joined at the age of fourteen ^{Fig. 1}. *HaShomer HaTza'ir* was founded in 1916 by merging the Zionist scouting movement *HaShomer* («The Guard») with Socialist youth organization *Ze'irei Zion* («Youth of Zion»). Combining ideas from the British Boy Scouts, the romantic tendencies of the German *Wandervögel* movement and study of political and cultural theories, it prepared Munio Weinraub to emigrate to Palestine and participate in building a new Socialist Jewish nation.⁷

Weinraub, who began studying at the Bauhaus in Summer 1930,⁸ encountered Hannes Meyer only briefly and primarily in his role as Director.⁹ The extent to which he identified with Meyer's ideas became clear when he took part in political demonstrations by students against Meyer's summary dismissal and was suspended from the Bauhaus in October 1930. He did not return until the 1931 winter semester, after working for several months in Mies van der Rohe's Berlin office.¹⁰ One major focus for him was the housing and urban planning seminar with Ludwig Hilberseimer.¹¹

emigration and exile

Shmuel Mestechkin, born on 12 May 1908 in Vasylkiv near Kiev, came from a family of convinced Zionists and Socialists who had emigrated to Palestine as early as 1923 as part of the Third Aliyah (1919–1923)—his eldest brother Mordechai had already joined the movement *Ze'irei Zion* («Youth of Zion»). Between 1923 and 1926, Mestechkin trained as a metalworker in Tel Aviv¹² Fig. 2 and was politically active: In 1924, he was one of the founders of the *HaNo'ar HaOved* («Working Youth») movement, which was linked to the *Histadrut*, the General Federation of Workers in Israel, and maintained close relations with the labour parties and the kibbutz movement.

labour movement
kibbutz movement

bauhaus school

Against the advice of leading members of *HaNo'ar HaOved*, Mestechkin went to the Bauhaus in Dessau.¹³ Thanks to his manual training, he could begin his studies immediately. From October 1931, he completed two semesters of the preliminary course with an emphasis on the technical field of «bau/ausbau» and sat in on classes by Ludwig Hilberseimer.

collective living and working

bauhaus as a testing ground
for socialism

Munio Weinraub Gitai and Shmuel Mestechkin are connected to Arieh Sharon by their Eastern European origins and the political influence of Labour Zionism. That probably also holds true of the attraction that the Bauhaus exerted on them. We know from Sharon that he hoped it would liberate him from conventions and develop new forms of living and production,¹⁴ and that he was reminded of his experiences with the youth movement *HaShomer HaTza'ir* through the emotionally powerful media appeal to young people: «I noticed on a bookstall a magazine bearing the title «Junge Menschen» (Young People), which I bought, faithful to my youth movement past. Reading it on the train to Berlin, I found that it was devoted to the ideas of the Bauhaus.»¹⁵ He was particularly taken with Hannes Meyer's social rather than formally aesthetic approach to architectural problems: «Regarded as a tough and uncompromising pragmatist, he based his architectural course on the analysis of all socio-economic problems involved in designing human environments. As a result of his thinking, we tended to aim in the new «Building Department» at the solution of social and human architectural problems, instead of concentrating on aesthetics and form in design.»¹⁶ Mestechkin is also reported to have found the atmosphere at the Bauhaus reminiscent of his youth with *HaNo'ar HaOved*: In particular, the work ethos is mentioned, along with a socio-critical consciousness and the aim of counteracting processes of social disintegration in the capitalist world.¹⁷

social, functional, and
scientific approach

- [E] What are the political prerequisites for socially engaged architecture or design?
 [F] What are the social, political, and economic preconditions for Bauhaus reception? And how do they vary from one period or country to another?

Despite his ideological closeness to Hannes Meyer, Munio Weinraub was influenced by his architectural training under Mies van der Rohe as Director and his practical work for the 1931 building exhibition in Berlin. Ludwig Hilberseimer must certainly have given him the decisive stimuli in the field of urban planning for his later building activities in Palestine.

Weinraub left the Bauhaus in April 1932 after only two semesters at the school. He did not accept Hannes Meyer's invitation to the Soviet Union¹⁸ but instead emigrated to Palestine in June 1934 after further studies and practice-oriented trips to Frankfurt/Main, Basel, and Zurich. As the Dessau Bauhaus was closed in October 1932, Mestechkin initially spent a semester abroad in Vienna. It proved impossible for him to resume his studies at the Bauhaus, now in Berlin, as the school closed definitively under pressure from the National Socialists in July 1933. In 1934 he also returned to Palestine.

emigration and exile

Building for the Labour Movement

The two former Bauhaus students had very differing experiences of arriving in British Mandate Palestine in 1934. Weinraub settled in Haifa as a new immigrant and founded his own architectural office, subsequently entering in an office partnership with Alfred Mansfeld in 1937. Mestechkin returned to his family circle in Tel Aviv and resumed his commitment to *HaNo'ar HaOved*. From 1934 he worked for architect Joseph Neufeld and in 1937 opened his own office, where he subsequently concentrated on building projects for the kibbutz and labour movement.

kibbutz movement
labour movement

societal projects of modernism

- [E] [F] Planning and building for the Jewish community in Palestine were largely based on Zionist organizations' political and economic commitment: With support from the Jewish National Fund, land was acquired and developed by the Palestine Land Development Company. The General Federation of Workers in Israel, the *Histadrut*, became the most important client for architects. It was founded as the first overarching Jewish trade union for Palestine, but its work extended far beyond purely trade union activities. The *Histadrut* played a central role as a health insurance company, a cultural and educational institution and a business group.¹⁹ When it was founded in December 1920, the *Histadrut* was already conceived as an organizational and ideological precursor of the state structure. This included a separate «Office for Construction

and Public Works», which was gradually absorbed into the *Soleh Boneh* company. Another subsidiary, *Chevrat Shikun*, concentrated on developing workers' and housing cooperatives. The various *Me'ot Ovdim* in Tel Aviv are among the best-known projects of this kind ^{Fig. 3}. They were built between 1931 and 1936 in conjunction with Arie Sharon and today are the only buildings in the White City area that can be associated with the Bauhaus in formal and conceptual terms, as well as in terms of those involved in the project.²⁰ By the late 1940s, the *Histadrut*, with its numerous companies, had become the largest building contractor in the country.²¹

The *Histadrut* was also the most important client for Munio Weinraub and his partner Alfred Mansfeld, with whom he worked until 1959. They built workers' houses, administrative buildings, cultural institutions, and housing estates for the *Histadrut* mainly in Haifa and the surrounding area.²² Their commitment and design approach are particularly impressive in the *Krayot*, the workers' housing estates north of Haifa. They are based on Leberecht Migge's principle «everyone self-sufficient» and appear, as Ita Heinze-Greenberg puts it, «[...] as if someone had staged Gropius' «Baukasten im Großen» [full-scale construction kit] under the Mediterranean skies» ^{Fig. 4}.²³ The first three self-sufficient settlements were established in the early 1930s: *Kiryat Chaim* (1930–1933), *Kiryat Bialik* (1934) ^{Fig. 5} and *Kiryat Motzkin* (1935). They were planned as co-operatively organized trade-union estates and membership of the *Histadrut* was a pre-condition to live there, as stipulated in the statutes.²⁴ Organized within a strict grid, each of the narrow plots had 1,000 to 2,000 m² for cultivation. The terraced development that had originally been planned was replaced by detached, small-scale residential buildings to allow for later extensions, given the great pressure of immigration. In Hilberseimer's seminars Weinraub had dealt with minimal floor plans and the concept of the «growing house» and produced corresponding designs for the *Krayot* with approx. 60m² living space.²⁵

In the 1940s and 50s, the Weinraub-Mansfeld team took on increasingly large projects in the *Krayot* and built most of the community centres, workers' clubs, schools, coop stores, cultural and administrative buildings. One impressive testimony to their work is *Beit Ha'am*, the community and cultural centre in *Kiryat Chaim* ^{Fig. 6}. Like all their buildings, *Beit Ha'am* is characterized by modesty of expression and efficient construction and detailing.



Fig. 3
Arieh Sharon, south-east façade of
the Me'onot Ovdim IV, V, VI, Tel Aviv
1934–1936, Photograph: unknown

Fig. 4
«Self-sufficient settlement» Kiryat Chaim,
1930s, Photograph: unknown

Fig. 5
Munio Weinraub, House of Isidor Pinkus,
Kiryat Bialik, 1937, Photograph: unknown

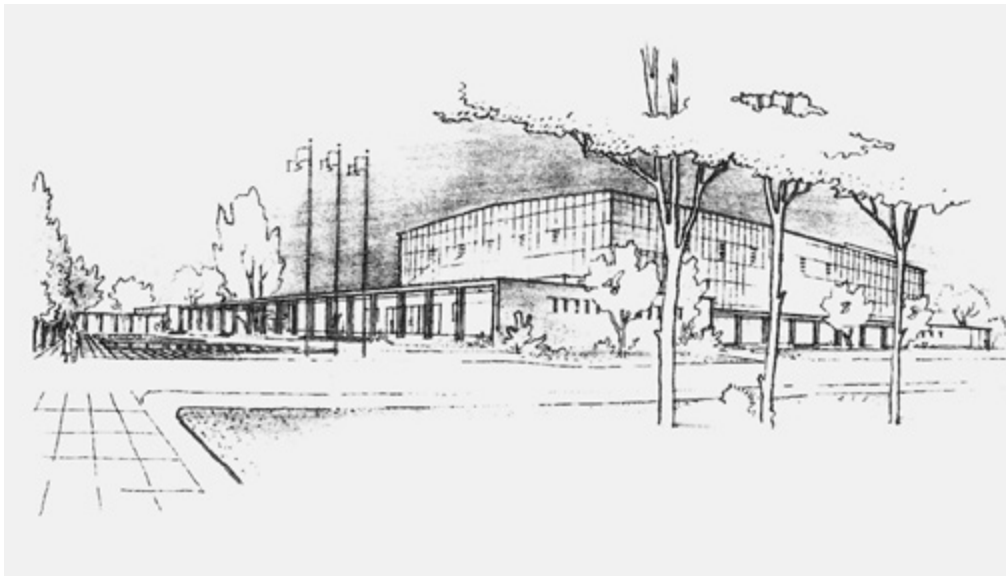


Fig. 6
Munio Weinraub/Alfred Mansfeld,
Competition Entry for Beit Ha'am, Kiryat
Chaim, c. 1947

Fig. 7
Shmuel Mestechkin, Beit HaNo'ar
HaOved, Jerusalem, 1938–1939,
Photograph: unknown

Fig. 8
Shmuel Mestechkin, Beit HaNo'ar
HaOved, Haifa, 1944–1945, Photograph:
unknown

- [B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?
- [C] How can we explore the kinds of stand taken by Bauhaus and Modernist architects and designers and their consistency?

In including arcades and patios, the team not only responded to the Mediterranean climate, but also lent a restrained dignity to public buildings. Richard Ingersoll sees in this a synthesis of Weinraub's experience with Bauhaus pedagogy and the way in which Mansfeld was influenced by studying with August Perret: «The functional and sociological basis of Meyer's design approach, Mies's mandate to design within limits, and the practical and urban concerns of Hilberseimer were mixed with the classical planning and structural rationalism of Perret.»²⁶

- [B] [C] In the *Krayot*, Weinraub and Mansfeld created an architectural language for the ideal of a classless workers' republic through simple structures, serialized solutions for details and discreet monumentality. In the *Krayot* the uniform effect thus created, even in the most diverse types of buildings, becomes an impressive symbol of social commitment, cooperative community spirit and education in the spirit of Labour Zionism.

When he returned, Shmuel Mestechkin resumed his links with *HaNo'ar HaOved* and designed the movement's local branches in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and Haifa. The way in which he worked with topography becomes clear in Jerusalem (1938–1939)—in split-level construction with staggered levels—but at the same time he complied with British Mandate Government specifications and designed the building in the characteristic Jerusalem stone and with a pitched roof ^{Fig. 7}. In Tel Aviv (1941) and Haifa (1941–1949) ^{Fig. 8}, however, he turned to forms of *Neues Bauen*.

One of his «most interesting buildings», to cite Mestechkin himself, was built at the interface between the workers' and kibbutz movement in Na'an. It was the first kibbutz founded in 1930 by *HaNo'ar HaOved*.²⁷ Mestechkin designed the *Beit Berl* rest home ^{Fig. 9} in 1944 as the embodiment of all the principles of «simplicity and care in proportions and forms of expression» he had been taught while training at the Bauhaus.²⁸ Similarities to Hannes Meyer's ADGB Bundesschule can also be identified in its embedding in the topography, its central seminar wing and the stepped design of the residential units.

In 1943 Mestechkin became Chief Architect of the Technical Department of *HaKibbutz HaArtzi*. He was involved there in devising general plans to establish or expand kibbutzim, construction of community facilities such as the iconic dining halls, but also in further developing housing concepts to meet changing demands for more comfortable living standards through growth, prosperity and individualization. The latter meant, inter alia,

- [L] How did widespread ideas about the Bauhaus evolve? How do they relate to historical facts and which stances, interests and mechanisms do they reveal?

shared vs. individual
living spaces

abandoning community ideals and thus shared spaces such as children's homes and a return to the nuclear family, which entailed expanding individual living areas, specifically the original residential cell («room»), to attain the dimensions of a suburban home with a children's room and kitchen. In the process, the planning concepts associated with social utopian ideals were successively called into question.

Bauhaus Reception in Israel

bauhaus reception

Little attention is paid to planning and building for the labour movement, with the exception of work for the kibbutzim—which attracts particular interest in Germany.²⁹ Bauhaus reception in Israel dates back to the period when Arie Sharon and Hans Maria Wingler became acquaintances. It adheres to a perspective that corresponds to Walter Gropius' myth formation and has moved away almost entirely from the historical institution and its social-utopian ideals. The collaboration between Sharon and Wingler gave rise to the *Kibbutz+Bauhaus* exhibition, which was shown at the Bauhaus-Archiv in Berlin-Charlottenburg in 1976, accompanied by a small catalogue and Arie Sharon's extensive professional autobiography.³⁰ Although the exhibition travelled through Europe and North America, it received scant attention in Israel, as was also the case for Sharon's book.

bauhaus myths

[L]

bauhaus reception
and geopolitics

The country was deeply unsettled and in the throes of an economic crisis following the Yom Kippur War in 1973, which was won only with massive military support from the USA. In the 1977 parliamentary elections, the Labour parties ended up in opposition for the first time since the state was founded. Under Menachem Begin, the victorious *Likud* set in motion a radical-liberal restructuring of economy and society in the following years. Consequently, the Socialist state became a testing ground for neoliberalism. There were extensive privatisations; the trade unions' social influence eroded dramatically and resulting from the economic turbulence the kibbutzim also fell into an existential crisis from which they could never recover.

neoliberalism as
a paradigm shift

reception of *neues bauen*
[new building]

The reception of *Neues Bauen* in Palestine unfolded simultaneously and both Shmuel Mestechkin and Munio Weinraub Gitai, together with Arie Sharon, were principal witnesses to the Bauhaus' influence from the very beginning.³¹ However, while Sharon had secured his own historicization with

[N] How do our own cultural, social, and political beliefs and stances affect our understanding of the Bauhaus, Modernism, and modernity?

bauhaus and
nation-/state-building

processes of oblivion
and repression

Kibbutz+Bauhaus and was recently celebrated as «The Nation's Architect»³², the first comprehensive monograph on Weinraub Gitai was only published in 1994 at the instigation of his son Amos,³³ followed by exhibitions at the Israel Museum (1994), the Centre Pompidou in Paris (1996/97)³⁴, and the Pinakothek der Moderne in Munich (Architekturmuseum of Munich Technical University) (2008/09).³⁵ A monograph on Shmuel Mestechkin was published thanks to *Yad Ya'ari*, the archive and research centre of *HaShomer HaTza'ir*.³⁶ It cultivates not only the movement's ideals but also Mestechkin's legacy, in a library and seminar building that he designed.

However, the state that the Socialist-Zionist Bauhaus students Shmuel Mestechkin and Munio Weinraub Gitai identified with and whose construction they had supported in various roles had long vanished when Bauhaus reception tentatively began to develop. The promise that they had once pursued all the way to the Bauhaus of acquiring analytical design methods that would be useful in creating the «New Jew» and a «New Society» in the land of Israel had faded. There was no longer any scope in the newly emerging self-image of Israeli society for the ethos of social engagement and cooperative community spirit.

[N]

loss of social-utopian
aspirations



Fig. 9
Shmuel Mestechkin, Beit Berl
(Katznelson), Kibbutz Na'an 1943-1945,
Photograph: unknown

Notes

- 1 Sascha Chaimowicz, «Weiße Stadt: Der Schatz von Tel Aviv», in: *ZEIT Magazine*, 04.04.2018.
- 2 Cf. inter alia Ita Heinze-Greenberg, «Bauhaus Tel Aviv—Übertragung und Vermittlung», in: *Entwürfe der Moderne: Bauhaus-Ausstellungen 1923–2019*, Klassik Stiftung Weimar Jahrbuch 2019, (eds.) Hellmut Th. Seemann and Thorsten Valk, Göttingen 2019, pp. 279–299; Alexandra Klei, *Wie das Bauhaus nach Tel Aviv kam. Re-Konstruktion einer Idee in Text, Bild und Architektur*, Berlin 2019; Philipp Oswalt: *Marke Bauhaus 1919–2019. Der Sieg der ikonischen Form über den Gebrauch*, Zürich 2020, esp. pp. 292–323.
- 3 Michael Levin, «Die Architekten die das Bauhaus nach Israel brachten», in: *Kav*, 2 (January 1981), pp. 65–79 (Hebrew).
- 4 Klaus-Jürgen Winkler, *Baulehre und Entwerfen am Bauhaus 1919–1933*, Weimar 2003, p. 21.
- 5 Richard Ingersoll, *Munio Gitai Weinraub—Bauhaus Architect in Eretz Israel*, Milan 1994, pp. 19–21.
- 6 Cf. Jörg Stabenow/Ronny Schüler (eds.), *The Transfer of Modernity—Architectural Modernism in Palestine (1923–1948)*, Berlin 2019; Ronny Schüler, «Forms, Ideals, and Methods: Bauhaus Transfers to Mandatory Palestine», in: *Volkenkuckucksheim, International Journal of Architectural Theory*, 24 (2019), 39, pp. 11–33.
- 7 Ingersoll 1994 (as Note 5), p. 19; Ita Heinze-Greenberg: «Von Dessau nach Haifa: Neues Bauen im zionistischen Kontext», in: Winfried Nerdinger (ed.), *Munio Weinraub, Amos Gitai—Architektur und Film in Israel*, Munich 2008, pp. 30–50, here: p. 37.
- 8 Cf., Nerdinger 2008 (as Note 7), p. 10.
- 9 Cf. Ingersoll 1994 (as Note 5), p. 24.
- 10 Ibid., p. 26.
- 11 Ibid., pp. 26, 31; Nerdinger 2008 (as Note 7), p. 11.
- 12 Bar Or: *Kibbutz und Bauhaus. Pioniere des Kollektivs*, (ed.) Stiftung Bauhaus Dessau, Leipzig 2012, pp. 48–49.
- 13 Cf. Muki Tzur and Yuval Danieli (eds.), *To Build and to Be Built. The Architecture of the Kibbutz, the Book of Shmuel Mestechkin* [in Hebrew], Tel Aviv 2008, p. 22; Myra Warhaftig, «Sie legten den Grundstein»—*Leben und Wirken deutschsprachiger jüdischer Architekten in Palästina, 1918–1948*, Tübingen/Berlin 1996, p. 150.
- 14 Cf. Tzur/Danieli 2008 (as Note 13), p. 29.
- 15 Arieh Sharon, *Kibbutz + Bauhaus. An Architect's Way in a New Land*, Stuttgart 1976, p. 17.
- 16 Ibid., p. 30.
- 17 Tzur/Danieli 2008 (as Note 13), p. 31.
- 18 Cf. ibid., pp. 24, 153 (Chapter 2, footnote 11).
- 19 Heinze-Greenberg 2008 (as Note 7), p. 42.
- 20 Cf. Schüler 2019 (as Note 6), pp. 20–23.
- 21 Ingersoll 1994 (as Note 5), p. 41.
- 22 Heinze-Greenberg 2008 (as Note 7), p. 42; Ingersoll 1994 (as Note 5), p. 36.
- 23 Heinze-Greenberg 2008 (as Note 7), p. 45.
- 24 Cf. Ingersoll 1994 (as Note 5), p. 58.
- 25 Ibid., pp. 31, 53.
- 26 Ibid., p. 16.
- 27 Tzur/Danieli 2008 (as Note 13), p. 22.
- 28 Shmuel Mestechkin, quote: Warhaftig 1995 (as Note 13), p. 150.
- 29 Cf. inter alia: Jeannine Fiedler/Stiftung Bauhaus Dessau (eds.), *Social Utopias of the Twenties. Bauhaus, Kibbutz and the Dream of the New Man*, Wuppertal 1995; Bar Or 2012 (as Note 12).
- 30 On the relationship between Hans Maria Wingler and Arieh Sharon, cf. Ronny Schüler, «Sharon+Wingler. On the Establishment of a German-Israeli Bauhaus Reception», lecture at the Young Bauhaus Researchers Colloquium of the XIII International Bauhaus Colloquium in Weimar, 27.10.2016.
- 31 Cf. Miron Mislin, *Schüler des Bauhauses, der Technischen Hochschule, der Akademie der Künste und ihre Einflüsse auf die Architektur und Stadtplanung in Israel*, exhib. cat. Berlin 1980; Levin 1981 (as Note 3); Michael Levin, *The White City. International Style Architecture in Israel. A Portrait of an Era*, exhib. cat. The Tel Aviv Museum, Tel Aviv 1984.
- 32 Cf. Eran Neumann (ed.), *Arieh Sharon: The Nation's Architect*, exhib. cat. The Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Tel Aviv 2018.
- 33 Ingersoll 1994 (see Note 5).
- 34 Olivier Cinqualbre and Lionel Richard, *Munio Weinraub Gitai. Szumlany, Dessau, Haifa—parcours d'un architecture*, exhib. cat. Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris 2001.
- 35 Nerdinger 2008 (as Note 7).
- 36 Tzur/Danieli 2008 (as Note 13).

The Myth of the White Bauhaus City Tel Aviv

Philipp Oswalt

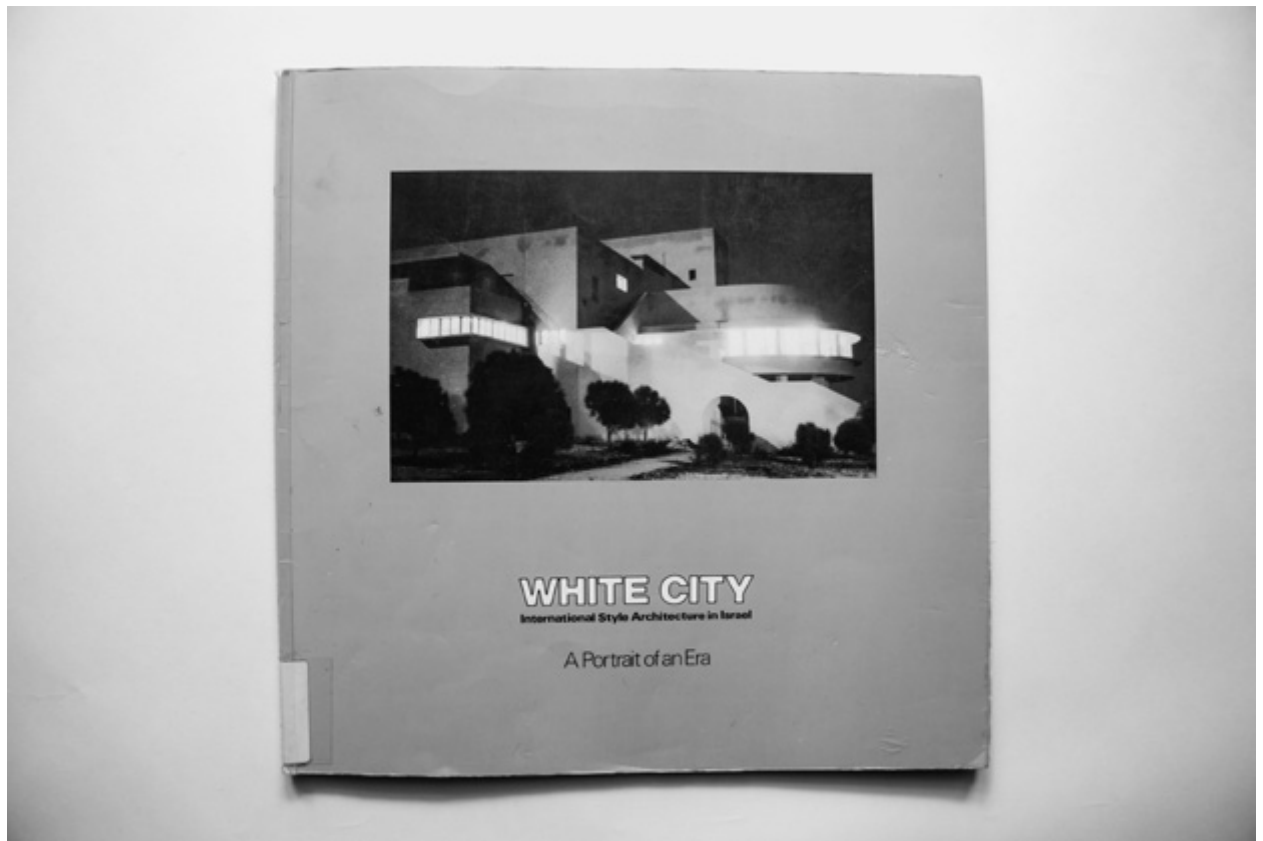


Fig. 1
Cover of the catalogue for the exhibition
«White City. International Style
Architecture in Israel. A Portrait of an
Era», in the Tel Aviv Museum, 1984, by
Michael D. Levin. (Cover picture: Leopold
Krakauer, Bendori House (Teltch Hotel),
103 Derech Hayam, Haifa, 1934–35)

tel aviv as bauhaus' world capital
«bauhaus» white city

social relevance of the bauhaus

bauhaus brand
bauhaus myths

questioning bauhaus brand's
«bauhaus» constructions

questioning entrenched
value judgments

questioning modern design's
power of resistance

«bauhaus» architecture
bauhaus style

european avant-garde
movements

rewriting history

identity formation

No newspaper supplement today can fail to mention Tel Aviv as a «Bauhaus city». Scarcely anywhere seems better suited to illustrating the Bauhaus' social relevance and impact. At the same time, almost nowhere else demonstrates more impressively how the myths surrounding the Bauhaus brand have become detached from historical realities and taken on an independent existence.

The White City is anything but a genuine Bauhaus city.¹ In terms of those involved, it is only marginally connected with the Bauhaus: Over two hundred architects worked in Tel Aviv in the 1930s, but only four of these had studied at the Bauhaus for some time.² The percentage of Bauhaus students involved in planning Auschwitz was higher: From 1940 to 1943, Bauhaus alumnus Fritz Ertl was active as Deputy Director of the Central Construction Office of the Waffen-SS and Police Auschwitz, which consisted of about thirty people.³ It is virtually impossible to make the situation any clearer than by citing these facts: The Bauhaus brand generates new, constructed affiliations to the Bauhaus as a result of particular interests, while actually belonging to the Bauhaus provides «no measure of value» and does not necessarily correspond to a widespread conception of Bauhaus values.⁴

The large number of Bauhaus-style buildings in Tel Aviv is impressive. But they have little to do with the Bauhaus. The architects responsible for the Bauhaus-style buildings were trained in over a dozen European countries, as well as in Palestine and the USA, while the 25 students from Germany who were active in Tel Aviv came from a dozen different schools. What was dubbed the «Bauhaus style» already existed before the Bauhaus. It was above all architects of the Dutch De Stijl movement and the Viennese Modernists around Adolf Loos and Josef Hoffmann who built buildings in this style, which soon became the standard of the European avant-garde. Rather than the Bauhaus, it was the imprimatur of two specific architects that became inscribed in Tel Aviv's architecture: Le Corbusier and Erich Mendelsohn. The former inspired the elevation of the buildings on *pilotis* and the structural sun protection using *brise soleil*, while the preference for curved, round, dynamic forms references the latter architect. These influences formed part of the general understanding of Tel Aviv's defining style until the late 1970s. But why was Tel Aviv's architectural history rewritten in the 1980s?⁵ Brands and myths serve to create identity. However, neither the French Le Corbusier nor the Jewish Erich Mendelsohn made suitable identification

- [D] How can we discover the social and political processes behind buildings and objects, planning and building activities as well as reception processes?
- [L] How did widespread ideas about the Bauhaus evolve? How do they relate to historical facts and which stances, interests and mechanisms do they reveal?

figures: France had imposed an arms embargo on Israel in 1968 and adopted increasingly pro-Arab policies. Mendelsohn had emigrated from Palestine to the USA in 1941 and was considered a renegade.⁶ The Bauhaus, on the other hand, developed into a globally successful brand—not least thanks to West Germany’s engaged cultural foreign policy—with Israeli architects and artists playing a prominent role.⁷ For a long time, the Bauhaus was scarcely discussed in Israel. An early exhibition that Bauhaus-Archiv founder Hans Maria Wingler and the Tel Aviv Museum of Art attempted to launch in 1963 was prevented by Walter Gropius, inter alia because his successor, Hannes Meyer, was to play an important role in the show.⁸ In 1980, the international exhibition *50 Years of Bauhaus*, which had been shown in various other destinations over a more than ten-year period, presented the Bauhaus in Tel Aviv for the first time.⁹

From the White City to the Bauhaus City of Tel Aviv—An Exhibition’s Trailblazing Impact

- [L] Four years later, an exhibition organized by the Tel Aviv Museum of Art for the city’s 75th anniversary in 1984 played an important role in Tel Aviv’s branding as the Bauhaus White City ^{Fig. 1}. Entitled *White City*, it focused on modern urban construction of the 1930s in Israel and was subsequently shown in New York, Berkeley, São Paulo, and Buenos Aires.¹⁰ It had an enormous impact. The ensuing international appreciation led to initial efforts to preserve this architectural heritage. It was to a large extent reception of this exhibition that led to Tel Aviv’s 1930s Modernism being equated with the Bauhaus. This stance was soon also adopted by serious Israeli architectural historians such as Michael Levin, who was also the curator of the exhibition.¹¹

- [D] The «White City» topos in connection with the Bauhaus offered the perfect narrative to hone Tel Aviv’s image as a modern Israeli metropolis. At the time Israel was seeking international recognition, and the Bauhaus brand offered exactly that. Ironically, it was West Germany, of all countries, that had shaped the Bauhaus heritage into an international cultural brand after the end of the National Socialist period, with a view to restoring Germany’s reputation abroad. Now the victims of the National Socialist regime were also making use of this brand. Conflicts within Israel played an equally important role. In 1967, Israel had conquered

«bauhaus» white city

«bauhaus» white city

bauhaus brand

bauhaus as nazi germany's
antithesis

- [D] How can we discover the social and political processes behind buildings and objects, planning and building activities as well as reception processes?

the eastern part of Jerusalem in the Six Day War. In 1980, the government had declared all of Jerusalem to be the undivided capital of Israel. The city thus represented a religious and nationalist vision of Israel. Secular, liberal, and leftist forces, on the other hand, sought to push Tel Aviv's image as a modern, cosmopolitan city. The objective/progressive, social and internationalist orientation of the historic Bauhaus dovetailed neatly with this. In an analysis of the Tel Aviv myth, Israeli architect Sharon Rotbard has shown that «the White City became the elected headquarters of «Good Old Eretz Israel, and for European-oriented Israeli citizens the stoic purity of the Bauhaus Style» expressed «values of order and rationality»»¹²—in contrast to the government's construction and settlement policy. A «moral alibi that keeps Tel Aviv the city of the just, neatly separated from the «rabble» in Judea and Samaria and without any connection to the madmen in Jerusalem».¹³

bauhaus style
bauhaus values

«white city» vs. «black city»

Imbued with a Programme— Identity Building and Exclusion

- [D] The Bauhaus evoked the idea of a good life and a just society. Combined with the image of the White City, the ideals of Zionism could be merged with the ideals of the Bauhaus. In fact, after the founding of Tel Aviv in 1909, the young Zionists had imagined the new Jewish city as being white and called it the «White City» as an expression of a utopian locus and idealistic new beginning. However, the fiction of a blameless, pure Zionism, which finds its counterpart in Tel Aviv, could not be sustained. Tel Aviv emerged as a suburb of Jaffa, largely on land populated and farmed by Palestinians, and initially bought legally by Jewish settlers Fig. 2. The construction work was mostly done by Arab and Jewish Yemeni labourers. In the late 1920s, conflicts between Jews and Palestinians intensified. While Jewish architects such as Alexander Baerwald had previously tried to create a local style by adopting Oriental forms,¹⁴ the International Style that emerged in the early 1930s served to distinguish white-hued European Modernism from the Oriental style.¹⁵

«bauhaus» white city
social-utopian aspirations

international style

identity formation

Clear though the identity-forming role of this architecture was in 1930s Tel Aviv, its social content was minimal Fig. 3. The mostly three-storey apartment buildings were built as private investments by middle-class developers. The floor plans are largely conventional and have no additional programmatic content.¹⁶



Fig. 2
Derelict old Muslim cemetery Sheikh
Murad in southern Tel Aviv. Photograph:
Philipp Oswald, 2015

Fig. 3
Tel Aviv, 1935

Fig. 4
Residential building in the Ein Shemer
kibbutz, 1930/50. Architect: Arie Sharon

In the Shadow of the Bauhaus Hype:
The Suppression of the Historical Bauhaus
and Brutalist Modernism

«bauhaus» white city

processes of oblivion
and repression

kibbutz movement
bauhaus reception

collective living and working

utility value vs. bauhaus style

neoliberalism as a paradigm shift

Tel Aviv's branding as a «White City» in the Bauhaus style displaced the Bauhaus' actual influence in Palestine. The Muslim Bauhaus artist Selman Selmanagić, who sharply criticized the racist conflicts between Jews and Arabs in the 1930s, was not alone in being affected by this.¹⁷

A total of twenty-four former Bauhaus students, who lived and worked in Palestine, shaped Israeli culture—but in a completely different way than narrated by the myth of Tel Aviv as a Bauhaus city. From the 1930s on, the Bauhaus students Arie Sharon, Shmuel Mestechkin and Munio Gitai Weinraub were among the most important architects of the kibbutz movement ^{Fig. 4}. They were closely related to Bauhaus ideas, especially those from the time of Meyer's directorship, such as concepts of collective living and working.¹⁸ Like Meyer's Bauhaus, the kibbutzim practiced radically user-oriented architecture and rejected any desire for style, which is why they had no inhibitions about building pitched roofs—in complete contrast to the International Style. If there was any testing ground for Bauhaus ideas in practice in Palestine, it was the kibbutzim. However, when the Bauhaus boom began in the 1980s, any mention of them was consistently concealed. They could not be exploited by the marketing strategies pursued by the tourism industry or the real-estate market.

Nor did the Bauhaus hype ever address how the Bauhaus students influenced post-war Modernism. After the founding of the state in 1948, Israeli architects moved beyond the imported International Style and discovered their own architectural language. In Tel Aviv, Sharon and Mestechkin realized remarkable large-scale projects, especially in the 1950s and 1960s ^{Fig. 5}—administrative headquarters, schools, university buildings, a hospital, a retirement home, a housing estate, and a concentration camp memorial. This architecture no longer corresponded to the imitative style of 1930s white-hued Modernism, but embodied a new, «grey», Brutalist Modernism, with definite programmatic aspirations, as an independent expression of the new state.

- [L] How did widespread ideas about the Bauhaus evolve? How do they relate to historical facts and which stances, interests and mechanisms do they reveal?

Marketing Campaign and Global City

international style

«bauhaus» white city

bauhaus as a marketing strategy

tel aviv as bauhaus'
world capital

- [L] Ten years after the exhibition *White City*, the International Style had become the Bauhaus. After several years of strategic preparation, in 1994 festival weeks with a plethora of events were held in Tel Aviv under the motto «Bauhaus in Tel Aviv», the highlight being an international UNESCO conference ^{Fig. 6}. After a survey had shown that the term International Style, in contrast to the term Bauhaus, did not arouse any associations in the broader public, the spotlight was turned on the Bauhaus. The city provided billboards for a month-long advertising campaign and the conference was flanked by dozens of events—such as a Bauhaus fashion show and a performance of Oskar Schlemmer's Bauhaus dances.

In the 1990s, the Bauhaus narrative served to reframe Tel Aviv's image as a global city. That called for a business centre and a historical heritage. The «White City», now embodied the latter, and the business district Ayalon City was built along the Ayalon Highway to provide the former. The Azrieli Center, a complex of three skyscrapers and a gigantic shopping mall, was constructed as its centrepiece, referencing the «White City». The office towers form a square, a triangle, and a circle, each wrapped in a white facade grid. Ever since that period, a growing number of new building projects attempt to reference the municipal branding and set their architecture within the tradition of the Bauhaus White City. Current examples are Richard Meier's Rothschild Tower and the Frishman 46 high-rise residential building near Dizengoff Square.

Postmodern Bauhaus—A Fictional Tradition as a Resource and Its Costs

postmodernism

bauhaus style
identity formation

rewriting history

In the late 1970s, Postmodernism replaced post-war Modernism in Israel as elsewhere, in Tel Aviv in the guise of a white Neo-modernism that continues to this day. Architecture was no longer to be shaped by social programmes and functions, an avant-garde spirit and modern building technology, but rather by an *architecture parlante* that made use of mostly fictitious traditions—the Bauhaus style as a locally specific form of nostalgia, tradition and identity building. History was also rewritten when the «White City» of Tel Aviv was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2003: 58 of the 61 listed buildings in the application from the Tel Aviv-Jaffa municipality have no direct reference to the Bauhaus.



Fig. 5
Headquarter of the kibbutz movement
HaKibbutz HaArzi in Tel Aviv, built
in 1969, Architect: Shmuel Mestechkin.
Photograph: Christoph Petras, 2019

Fig. 6
Urban advertising for the International
Style Architecture Conference in Tel Aviv
in May 1994. Photograph: Sergio Lerman



Fig. 7
White Night Dinner on the occasion of
the annual White Night in Tel Aviv in
June. Photograph: Miriam Alster, 2018

Fig. 8
Online property advertisement: «Bauhaus
architecture» in Tel Aviv, 2019

politics of memory

Nevertheless, the ICOMOS statement notes that the «most important influences on Modernist architecture in Tel Aviv came from the lessons of the Bauhaus».¹⁹ Regardless of its veracity, the narrative serves the longings of the present so well that it is kept alive extremely successfully with numerous activities. To name but a few: In 2000, the privately run Bauhaus Center Tel Aviv opened, offering exhibitions, books, merchandising items, and guided tours in seven languages. Once a year Tel Aviv celebrates the popular *Layla Lavan (White Night Festival)* with events throughout the city Fig. 7. And the Max Liebling Haus, built in 1936, was renovated with financial support from the Federal Republic of Germany and opened as «The White City Center», a visitor center and center for education, research, and exhibitions in Autumn 2019 to mark the Bauhaus centenary.

The Bauhaus hype in Tel Aviv has definitively had positive effects: It has contributed to preserving the architectural heritage, and German- Israeli dialogue has intensified. Above all, not only has a successful brand been created but also a locus of identification for secular, (leftist-) liberal, cosmopolitan Israelis. At the same time, however, the historical misrepresentation has considerable side effects: It ignores the Arab-Israeli conflict and non-European Jews as well as the actual history of the Bauhaus' influence in Israel. The impact on the kibbutz movement and the Brutalist architecture of post-war Modernism is repressed and replaced by an appealing but insubstantial Bauhaus surrogate. In the end, the real-estate industry profits from the Bauhaus brand in the form of classic gentrification Fig. 8.

processes of oblivion
and repression

gentrification

bauhaus brand's
ambivalent effect

politics of memory

The Bauhaus brand has eradicated the Bauhaus' progressive potential. Critical observations are taboo. In 2016, when the Paris Musée des Arts décoratifs referred in its exhibition *L'esprit du Bauhaus*²⁰ to the work of Bauhaus student Fritz Ertl in the Central Construction Office of Auschwitz concentration camp, Francis Kalifat, the President of the Representative Council of French Jewish Institutions (CRIF), sent a note of protest to the museum and the French Ministry of Culture: «The Bauhaus movement has enough lovely projects that make it unnecessary to insult the memory» of approximately one million Jews who were murdered at Auschwitz-Birkenau.²¹

Notes

- 1 This essay is a summary of a more detailed text: Philipp Oswalt, «Weiße Stadt Tel Aviv. Eine deutsch-israelische Fiktion», in: id. (ed.), *Marke Bauhaus 1919–2019: der Sieg der ikonischen Form über den Gebrauch*, Zürich 2020, pp. 292–303.
- 2 Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen, Stuttgart and Technische Universität München (ed.), *Tel Aviv: Neues Bauen, 1930–1939*, Tübingen: Wasmuth, 1993, p. 247.
- 3 Cf. Adina Seeger, «Fritz Ertl—Bauhausschüler und Baumeister im KZ Auschwitz-Birkenau», in: *Hannes Meyers neue Bauhauslehre. Von Dessau nach Mexiko*, (ed.) Philipp Oswalt, *Bauwelt-Fundamente*, Vol. 164, Basel 2019, pp. 497–506.; Gideon Greif and Peter Siebers, *Todesfabrik Auschwitz: Topografie und Alltag in einem Konzentrations- und Vernichtungslager = Death factory Auschwitz = Fabryka śmierci Auschwitz*, first edition, Cologne: Emons, 2016, p. 36 f.
- 4 Cf. Winfried Nerdinger, *Das Bauhaus. Werkstatt der Moderne*, Munich: C.H.Beck, 2018, pp. 115 f.
- 5 On this point, see also Alexandra Klei, *Wie das Bauhaus nach Tel Aviv kam: Re-Konstruktion einer Idee in Text, Bild und Architektur*, Berlin: Neofelis Verlag, 2019.
- 6 Sharon Rotbard, *White City, Black City: Architecture and War in Tel Aviv and Jaffa*, Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2015, pp. 29–32.
- 7 *50 years Bauhaus*, exhib.cat. Stuttgart: Württembergischer Kunstverein, 1968 [Catalogue edited by Wulf Herzogenrath].
- 8 See on this point: Claudia Heitmann, *Die Bauhaus-Rezeption in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1949 bis 1968: Etappen und Institutionen*. Dissertation, Berlin: University of the Arts, 2001, p. 88.
- 9 Helena Rubinstein Pavilion: *Bauhaus—Academy for Design 1919–1933*, in cooperation with the Goethe-Institut, Tel Aviv 1980.
- 10 Exhibition at the Jewish Museum in New York, accompanied by a conference with Michael Levin, Kenneth Frampton, Michael Graves, and Adi Karmi; reviews in the *Sunday New York Times* and *Herald Tribune* by Paul Goldberger on November 25, 1984 and in *Village Voice* by Michael Sorkin; exhibition at the Judah L. Magnes Museum, Berkeley, at the São Paulo Biennial and at the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes in Buenos Aires.
- 11 Michael Levin, «The White City», in: *Progressive Architecture*, 11 (1984), p. 114. There we read: «In the 1930s, an influx of Bauhaus-trained architects turned Tel Aviv and other Israeli cities into a national experiment in the International Style».
- 12 Rotbard 2015 (as Note 6), p. 27; see also: Robert Flahive, «Producing World Heritage in the White City Tel Aviv», in: *International Social Science Journal*, Vol. 67, Nr. 225–226 (September–December 2017), p. 115, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/issj.12153> (Consulted on April 7, 2020).
- 13 Sharon Rotbard, «weiße stadt, schwarze stadt. architektur und krieg in tel aviv und jaffa», in: *Bauhaus*, Nr. 2, (November 2011), p. 39.
- 14 His design for the Technion in Haifa, built 1912–1924, is a good example of this.
- 15 Julius Posener, «Traditionelles und modernes Bauen in Palästina», in: *Das Werk*, 25, Nr. 9 (1938), p. 263; A Ratner, «Architecture in Palestine», in: *Palestine & Middle East Economic Magazine*, Nr. 7–8 (1933), pp. 293–296. I should like to thank Ines Sonder for the reference to this text.
- 16 This is also Winfried Nerdinger's assessment, in: Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen, Stuttgart and Technische Universität München 1993 (as Note 2), pp. 10, 12; and Zvi Efrat's assessment, in: «Bauhausbauten ohne Bauhaus. wie die weiße moderne zum israelischen volksgut wurde—und langsam ergraute», in: *Bauhaus*, Nr. 2 (November 2011), p. 11.
- 17 Letter from Selman Selmanagić to Hajo Rose, October 1, 1935, Bauhaus-Archiv, Berlin, Selman Selmanagić, folder 2.
- 18 See on this point: Galia Bar-Or et al. (ed.), *Kibbutz und Bauhaus—Pioniere des Kollektivs*, to accompany the eponymous exhibition, Bauhaus Dessau, 2012, 1st edition, *Bauhaus-Taschenbuch 3*, Leipzig: Spector Books, 2012.
- 19 ICOMOS, «Advisory Body Evaluation (ICOMOS)», 2003, <https://whc.unesco.org/document/151735.57> (Consulted on April 7, 2020).
- 20 Elodie Emery, «L'architecte nazi qui fait polémique au musée des Arts Déco», December 11, 2016, in: *Marianne*, <https://www.marianne.net/culture/l-architecte-nazi-qui-fait-polemique-au-musee-des-arts-deco> (Consulted on April 7, 2020).
- 21 «Paris museum calls Auschwitz a «Bauhaus architectural achievement»», in: *Times of Israel*, December 16, 2016, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/paris-museum-calls-auschwitz-a-bauhaus-architectural-achievement/> (Consulted on April 7, 2020).

We Don't Want to Know: Suppressed Narratives of the White City

Hila Cohen-Schneiderman

In Search of the Spirit of a Place

tel aviv as bauhaus' world capital
«bauhaus» white city

In November 2015 I had my first meeting with the founding staff of the «Liebling Haus», which back then was still called «The White City Center». It was supposed to be a new urban center in the midst of Tel Aviv that would investigate the modern heritage of the city: its unique urban planning and more than 4,000 modernist buildings, «the main influences [...] came from the teachings of the Bauhaus, and from examples of Le Corbusier and Erich Mendelsohn», as the ICOMOS statement notes.¹ UNESCO declared Tel Aviv a World Heritage site in 2003, thanks to the personal efforts of architect Nitza Smok, who was the head and the founder of the TLV Municipal Conservation Department during those years. Despite her considerable efforts, until 2015 no broad research or systematic effort was made by the municipality to investigate and understand the conditions in which the city that «rose from the sands» was created, apart from instructions on strict conservation, which led to an extreme rise in prices for White City buildings while accelerating the gentrification process. The myth around the resurrection of the city was that it was built due to the booming local construction industry.

gentrification

The Center's team had an empty building they had received from the municipality in order to accommodate the future institution. It was the «Liebling Haus» (1936–37), a typical modernist apartment building designed by architect Dov Karmi at the initiative of realtor Max Liebling and constructed in the 1930s modernist building boom in Tel Aviv. What brought this «building boom», and how come a beautiful residential building is in the hands of the municipality? These were questions that had not yet occurred to me. Later I learned that in the 1960s, after the deaths of Toni and Max Liebling (the building's owners) the building was donated to the city of Tel Aviv-Jaffa. According to Toni Liebling's will, «the house at 29 Idelson St. will go to the Tel Aviv Municipality as a gift under the instruction that it should, once the inhabitants can be evacuated, function as an orphanage, a children's residence, a home for the aged, or a dormitory for needy students, or also as a museum.» For many years, the building served the municipality as an office space. One can imagine how bureaucratic lifestyle can change a space.

In order to establish the Center, and to finally execute Toni Liebling's will, extremely complicated rigorous conservation was planned. The Center's team had a year and a half until the

beginning of the renovation process was supposed to physically kick-off. Trying to adapt contemporary approaches to place-making, Shira Levy Benyemini, the Center's Director, offered me a chance to curate a process of «temporal use» in the building, suggesting it could maybe be some kind of artistic residency that would create beautiful art works between those walls. Sharon Golan Yaron, the Center's initiator and content manager, spoke about the tangible and intangible quality of conservation process, and about the ability to capture «the spirit of the place». Both Golan Yaron and Levy Benyemini used to be part of the conservation department. The Center was a conceptual extension of the department and aimed to raise and discuss conservation questions with the broader public using various means.

Artists, I believe, do not just reflect the spirit of a place; they create it. The «spirit of the place» is not given, it is a construct. Suddenly it occurred to me that the staff working in the conservation department of Tel Aviv-Jaffa—and in practically any such department, at least in Israel—are mainly architects. However, conservation is a broad cultural concept, and urban preservation is certainly not just about buildings. In the end, the role of the Conservation Department is to preserve the spirit of a place, and who creates that if not artists and people involved with culture? So why would they not be among those who also preserve it? It was clear to me that the artists of the future «Liebling Program» should assist the department to re-think the term «conservation» and demonstrate new methods and practices for conserving the intangible. Nevertheless, the «Liebling Haus» was about to become a heritage center, in other words—a place that would have the responsibility and the power to write and tell the narrative of Tel Aviv, to establish the current ethos of the White City. Therefore, the artists invited to the residency engage in their independent artistic practice with questions of «story-telling» in multi-disciplinary mediums: Visual art, theater, writing, music, design, typography and more. I searched for artists that have devoted themselves to «Archival Fever», who are interested in forgotten histories and who ask questions through their practice, to shed new light on lost knowledge.

- [D] How can we discover the social and political processes behind buildings and objects, planning and building activities as well as reception processes?

Sometimes a Tile is a Gate—The Language of Material Culture

language of material culture

- [D] While starting to investigate the physicality of the building at 29 Idelson St., Golan Yaron had told us that during a visit of the famous conservation architect Wilfried Brenne to the building, a yellow tile fell from the staircase wall into the palm of her hand. Curious and surprised, they read the inscription on the back: «Villeroy & Boch—Mettlach—Made in Germany». Immediately they understood that all the tiles in the building (which came in 3 different colors but had the same shape and style) were in fact imported from Germany. That was in 1936; Hitler's policy towards the Jews was extremely harsh. How could this German product arrive in Palestine? «The Transfer Agreement», Brenne suggested.^{Fig. 1a, b}

- [D] When hearing this story, I had a feeling that I had already heard something about it. I remembered a paragraph from my history book in high school that talked about the «Fifth Aliyah»—the fifth wave of Jewish immigrants arriving in Palestine from Europe. This paragraph described in short and dry sentences how, thanks to the «Transfer Agreement» (1933–1939), 50,000 Jews had come from Germany to Palestine during the 30s. Since then I had never heard anything about this Agreement again, and never knew that it was not just German Jews that were «imported» to Palestine through the Agreement, but also German materials and goods. Looking at the yellow-brownish tiles in the wide and beautiful staircase of the building, I wondered whether this modern building was «made in Germany» and—through the ironies of history—imported to Palestine during a period in which the Nazi regime eliminated the Bauhaus school and persecuted Jews? Was the White City resurrected only thanks to massive import of German goods? And how far did the influence of this Agreement on Jewish settlement in Palestine extend?

The «Transfer Agreement»—Outset of an Artistic Research

The Transfer Agreement immediately caught the attention of three artists from the residency program—Ilit Azoulay (artist), Lou Moria (designer), Nir Shauloff (theater maker), and the author. Later Jonathan Toutou, a conceptual artist, also joined us, and together we delved into an in-depth research project that led to a book entitled «The Lift» and to two site-specific art exhibitions: The first

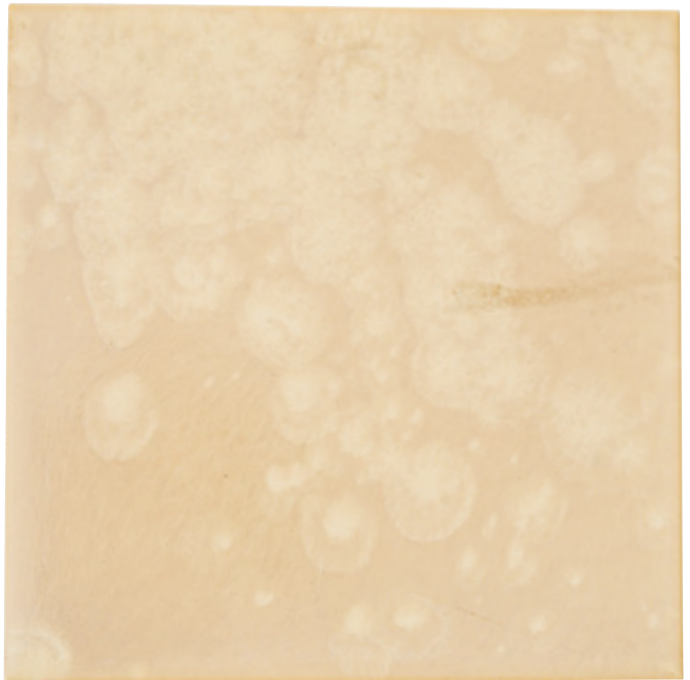


Fig. 1a, b
Ceramic tile manufactured by Villeroy & Boch, Germany; retrieved from Liebling Haus, 29 Idelson Street, Tel Aviv, architect: Dov Karmi, constructed 1936–37

was the opening show at the Liebling Haus in September 2019, and the second was at Bauhaus Dessau in October 2019.

As awkward as it may sound, the «Transfer Agreement» was signed on August 28, 1933 between Reich authorities and the Zionist Federation. It remained in effect until the outbreak of World War II in September 1939 and has had a massive influence on the local economy and real estate in Palestine till this day. The Agreement was created with the intention to regulating economic relations in a way that would allow German Jews to leave Germany without losing all their assets, while making this process rather beneficial for Germany's economy.

As is well known, when the Nazis rose to power, a process of anti-Jewish legislation began in Germany, including economic decrees intended to strengthen the German economy and drive the Jews out of the Reich. Due to foreign currency regulations, which were in force even before 1933, German Jews who were compelled to leave their homeland could not liquidate their financial and other assets. Businessman Sam Cohen and the Jewish Agency's political department took steps to regulate the Jews' departure that would make it possible for those leaving to salvage their property and savings. The Zionist activists identified the potential innate to these grim circumstances to establish the Jewish *Yishuv* (settlement) in Palestine, and decisively promoted the Transfer Agreement.

The Agreement allowed German Jews to sell property and real estate, and to deposit the proceeds and their savings in designated bank accounts, which entitled them to immigration certificates—visas for Palestine issued by the British Mandatory administration. The deposited funds were invested in procurement of goods and building materials, which were exported from Germany to Palestine, where they were sold; the proceeds were supposed to return to the depositors minus various fees and commissions. More than 50,000 German Jews arrived in Palestine as part of this Agreement. The accumulated capital—which totaled ca. 150 million Reichsmark—was transferred to the Jewish Yishuv via the Anglo-Palestine Bank Ltd, a trust by the name of Haavara Ltd based in Tel Aviv, and its German branch—the Palestine Trust Company, Paltreu Ltd (Palästina Treuhandstelle zur Beratung deutscher Juden). The Nazi regime, for its part, encouraged the departure of Jews from Germany, thereby increasing the number of available workplaces and ensuring export of goods, which undermined the American trade boycott.

During our research we learned about the immeasurable influence of the Agreement on the local economy in Palestine. Some of the strongest families in the Israeli economy today transferred or build their business through this Agreement. Wertheimer, Strauss, Schocken and many more, thousands of companies were established, and innumerable German goods were sent to Haifa, Jaffa and Tel Aviv ports. The small market in Palestine was flooded with goods, which threatened local manufacturers. The manufacturers' association tried to control the flow of imported goods, and in their struggle, they were able to impose restrictions on the Ha'avara company. The protests and criticism, alongside the merchants' need to sell, led the Jewish agency to open another branch of the Ha'avara company: «NEMICO»—Near and Middle East Commercial Corporation ^{Fig. 2}. The goal of the company (that was entirely in Jewish ownership) was to expand the market: It had branches throughout the Middle East—in Alexandria, Cairo, Baghdad, Aleppo and more. The role of the name «Nemico» was to blur the connection to Ha'avara company, for fear of criticism because a Zionist institution was unofficially importing German goods to the Middle East during the time of the Nazi regime.

Although the Transfer Agreement indubitably had a positive influence on the Jewish economy and building endeavors in Palestine, over and above the fact that 50,000 Jews were able to leave burning Germany, which, in retrospect, meant saving their lives, the story of this Agreement remains an untold lacuna in Israeli society. The last comprehensive article in Hebrew on this Agreement was published in 1974 by Yoav Gelber, who mainly focused on the political efforts behind the signing of the Agreement, its evolution, and inner conflicts within the Zionist movement regarding it. In 1984 Edwin Black, an American publicist, and the son of two Holocaust survivors, wrote the controversial book *The Transfer Agreement: The Untold Story of the Secret Agreement between the Third Reich and Jewish Palestine*. The book created a media storm in the United States but was never translated into Hebrew. Israeli society and government, so it seems, did not want to know. Thus, although the story of the Agreement was brought to public light several times, it soon enough returned to darkness and oblivion. Over the years, a few more essays and studies were written about the political forces and circumstances that initiated the Transfer Agreement, but none so far has focused on the raw materials, which traveled in tens of thousands of containers («lifts» or «liftvans») and transformed material culture in the region.

חברה מסחרית למזרח הקרוב והתיכון בע"מ
 THE NEAR AND MIDDLE EAST COMMERCIAL CORP. LTD.

Head Office:
 TEL-AVIV
 Rothschild Boulevard 28
 P. O. B. 614. Tel. 1110
 Telegrams:
 NEMICO, Tel-Aviv

Registered Office:
 JERUSALEM

Branches:
 CAIRO
 ALEXANDRIA
 BEYROUTH
 DAMASCUS
 BAGHDAD

AGENTS:
 PORT SAID
 ALEPPO
 BAISRA

חברה מסחרית
 תל אביב - 614
 סניפים ונציגות
 תל אביב 1110
 טלגרמים:
 נמיקו תל אביב

Herren
 Dr. Werner Senator
 Dr. Georg Landsauer
 Dr. Werner Feilchenfeld
 Dr. Richard Ginsberg

נא לתשובה על: 21290 7658/61 2.2.1937
 In reply please quote: YOUR REF. OUR REF. YOUR LETTER Tel-Aviv

Sehr geehrte Herren,

wir erlauben uns hiermit, Sie zu der am
Donnerstag den 4.2.1937, nachm. um 3 1/2 Uhr. in den Räumen
 der Haavara Allenbyst. 56 stattfindenden Boardssitzung höflich
 einzuladen.

Tagesordnung.

- 1) Aegyptenbericht
- 2) Fall Textilfabrik Irak
- 3) Situation im Irak-Geschäft.

Mit vorzüglicher Hochachtung
 חברה מסחרית

למזרח הקרוב והתיכון בע"מ

תל אביב

2.2.1937

The Near and Middle East

Commercial Corp. Ltd.

Head Office Tel-Aviv

Handwritten signature and date



Fig. 2
 Official letter from Nemico to
 Haavara Ltd, 2.2.1937; L57/206

Fig. 3
 Porters Complete the Packaging of the
 Mayer Family Lift in Berlin, October 1933

- [D] How can we discover the social and political processes behind buildings and objects, planning and building activities as well as reception processes?
- [I] What can we learn from the history of the Bauhaus and Modernism when facing current issues? And how can this enable us to gain new insights into the past?

The subject of the Agreement is currently being investigated by Joachim Nicolas Trezib and Ines Sonder, a duo of scholars who were also the academic advisors of our project, and their research mainly concerns RASCO—a company that was established through the Agreement and had a massive role in the construction of Jewish settlement across Palestine.

- [I] The tangle of relations was not only between the Zionists and the Germans, for Palestine was under the Mandate during those days and the British had highly protected economic and commercial interests in the region. Throughout the project, we attempted to locate Palestinian scholars who dealt with the effects of the Agreement on the Palestinians' market and society at the time, but none of the historians we have met were aware of the Agreement, let alone its implications. It seems that until comprehensive research is conducted on the impact of the Transfer Agreement, both from the Israeli and Palestinian side, and until the national narrative is able to bear complexity and multi-layered knowledge, the story of the Transfer Agreement will continue to be forgotten.

- [D] Our agenda in the artistic research project was to address the Agreement with an «upside down», or rather «bottom-up» approach. We sought to penetrate the hermetic national narrative through a personal and intimate point of view. In the Central Zionist Archives, for instance, we searched for data that revealed personal stories through official letters or for the poetics hidden in the bureaucracy. At the same time, we were in dialogue with people and private archives who shared with us objects, photographs, and memories of their family material culture. We asked to focus on the immigrants themselves, and by that to bind together the «immigrant object» and the «immigrant human-being» Fig. 3.

language of material culture

«Transferumbau: Liebling–Dessau»

«Transferumbau» is a German portmanteau word comprising the terms «transfer» and «reconstruction» in the sense of transforming something and building something new. This peculiar word, that seemed as if someone had invented it specifically for use in this Agreement, was handwritten in black marker on a cardboard folder that was found in the Central Zionist Archives Fig. 4. The folder contains fascinating correspondence and surprising documents that expose the power relations behind the import of building materials. We reflected on this term not only in the

power of art

giving voice to repressed narratives

cultural heritage as a bundle
of relationships

commercial context (shipment of German goods), but also in relation to the families who packed their most precious possessions into wooden crates in order to set up their «new» home in an unknown country with their «old» and familiar objects. Many of these families never wanted to leave Germany, and suddenly found themselves in the young, sandy Tel Aviv with heavy «Biedermeier» furniture that seemed alien in the modern straight-lined apartments they resided in, and in the warm Mediterranean climate. Often, however, the journey of the objects went awry: «Lifts» were shaken, and their contents broken and damaged; others disappeared or were stolen, and families lost their entire world. We were therefore trying to represent not necessarily what we found, but rather what was still lost. In this manner, these were «art» exhibitions rather than archival exhibitions. We did not want to tell the historical story of the Agreement but to give voice to the multiple repressed narratives through broken bricolages, haunted sounds, and surreal installations.

The «Transferumbau» project led for programmatic reasons to a collaboration between the Liebling Haus and Bauhaus Dessau and the art exhibitions were presented in both venues in parallel. The exhibition «Transferumbau: Liebling» emerged from the body of the building at 29 Idelson St.: from documentation of the families who used to reside in the building, which revealed the gap between the modern architectural style and the residents' bourgeois taste in home decor ^{Fig. 5}, and from its materiality, which was gradually exposed as renovation work to adapt the apartment building to its new public function progressed. Gradually, more and more materials, such as black silicate bricks, steel pipes, heating elements, etc., were revealed inside and amidst its walls, all of them made in Nazi Germany.

The exhibition at the Liebling Haus spanned the temporal strata of the building's existence, the various tenants who lived in its apartments until the 1970s, the municipality workers who settled in it and transformed its rooms into offices, and the imported materials which were embedded in its walls and have remained there to the present. One of the main works in the exhibition was the audio-visual installation *Leo Frank's Lost Container, or The Vacuum Cleaner's Demise*, based on an archival document ^{Fig. 6}—a list of objects, personal belongings and furniture that transformed the Lieblings' living room into a glass showcase. This list is a heartbreaking testimony and a reflection of the friction between what people imagine that they will need in their new land

(a German vacuum cleaner, an iron bed, a chair) and what they believed would make them feel at home (violin, chaise longue, a coal bucket). Abstract objects were shrouded ^{Fig. 11}, seeming like a cross between furniture and a *kurkar* rock, wrapped and ready to be transported or maybe found after many years near the shore. Behind them was a plant, a hybrid of three different tropical plants grafted together ^{Fig. 8, 9}. The sound work ^{Fig. 10} played from time to time, mixed with the suction sound of the small vacuum cleaner produced in Germany in the 1930s.

The exhibition in Dessau addressed the movement of building materials, objects, and ideas, shipped from Germany to Palestine in the 1930s, which now returned to their country of origin. It was trapped in the time-space between the Liebling Haus and Bauhaus Dessau, oscillating between two orders of materials: cement and textile. More specifically, the exhibition unfolded between leftover construction waste sent from Liebling Haus back to Germany in a container, and a 30-meter woven curtain, which transformed into a structure reconstructing the floor plan of one of the Liebling Haus apartments. The exhibition space in Dessau used to be the former school weaving workshop, and the large woven curtain was actually double-sided: One side functioned as homage to modernist textile design à la Anni Albers, while the other featured a floral ornamental pattern inspired by the Biedermeier style, expressing the constant tension between the modern buildings of Tel Aviv, and the ornamental bourgeois style of their residents ^{Fig. 7}.

The massive curtain mirrors the complexities of the Transfer Agreement: The curtain was produced at the last textile factory in Israel called Etun. The family owned Gebrueder Horn textile factory was founded in 1868 in Fulda, Germany. In 1934, the Nazis nationalized it, and Dr. Paul Horn and his wife Melanie fled to Palestine, where they founded the new factory, Etun. The first machines were imported as part of the Transfer Agreement and the factory became a leading textile manufacturer and supplier. In February 1970, the Horns were killed in the PFLP-GC's (the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine—General Command's) terror attack on a Swissair flight, and the third generation took over. The factory continued to grow highly successfully for many years, until the shift to textile production in China led to the collapse of the textile industry in Israel. In August 2019, the factory ceased operations, and a Palestinian entrepreneur from Jenin bought the machines and transferred them to the West Bank.



Fig. 8, 9
Exhibition view, «Transferumbau:
Liebling», 2019

Fig. 10
From the exhibition «Transferumbau:
Liebling», I Left the Library, I Burned the
Book, Audio Visual Installation, by Nir
Shauloff, 2019

Fig. 11
From the exhibition «Transferumbau:
Liebling», Leo Frank's Lost Container, or
the vacuum cleaner's demise, Installation:
Lou Moria; Sound: Nir Shauloff, 2019



- [D] How can we discover the social and political processes behind buildings and objects, planning and building activities as well as reception processes?
- [K] There are many facets of Modernism and modernity as well as many ambivalent aspects. What does that mean for our own concepts and visions?

The fabric featured in the exhibition was the last item ever produced at the factory.

The two exhibitions drew large crowds—thousands of people attended the opening event of the new municipal center in the Liebling Haus, while every week thousands visited Bauhaus Dessau for the centenary celebrations of the Bauhaus school. In Israel, the exhibitions and book attracted media interest to the story of the Agreement, but once again not for long. In the age of populism, challenging taboos has become quite normal and has therefore lost its power to shake public attention in the long run.

- [K] And yet, the visitors kept coming. They were interested in hearing an untold episode in the history of their country. What caught their attention was the personal link; they wanted to find out if their family was related to the Agreement or discover whether the building they were living in was also based on German materials.
- [D] The encrypted art works ignited their imagination, obliged them to pay attention to the different voices that were stifled, and to the politics behind the building materials that we usually take for granted. It was clear that for many of their questions we did not have the answers nor have a reliable source to study from. The number of documents and files in Israeli and German archives that are still untouched is enormous. There is so much to investigate from economical, architectural, social and many more aspects that could provide dozens of postgraduate theses. The public exposure for both exhibitions and their explosive content was beyond our imagination. But was it possible for this project to change the narrative of the White City?

power of art

giving voice to repressed narratives

The White City: A Tangle of Power Relations

politics of memory

cultural heritage as a bundle of relationships

entangled history

Going back to the first meeting with the Liebling Haus team, I soon enough learned that the center had a secured budget for 10 years thanks to an agreement between the Municipality of Tel Aviv and the German government—the German Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community to be precise. I asked myself what was the German interest in funding such an endeavor, wondering why they are interested in promoting the White City and realized that this may be an attempt to emphasize the cultural connection between the two nations before the Nazi era and the rupture of the Holocaust. The current agreement, and the new institution allow both nations to empha-

- [I] What can we learn from the history of the Bauhaus and Modernism when facing current issues? And how can this enable us to gain new insights into the past?
- [K] There are many facets of Modernism and modernity as well as many ambivalent aspects. What does that mean for our own concepts and visions?

size their joint cultural heritage—the Bauhaus—and in many ways to continue where they stopped. This is also a way to reclaim the German influence on the White City, while perceiving it as an extension of the Bauhaus school in spirit, and as part of the jubilee celebrations. That was before the artistic research project of the Transfer Agreement had begun, and before it was revealed how the White City is in practice a Nazi-Zionist endeavor in concept and in cement. It seems that any attempt to bypass the Holocaust in Israeli-German relations still leads straight back to it.

- [K] When we suggested the artistic research project to the center's team, they immediately understood its importance, accepted and supported it with no hesitation. They also acknowledged that choosing this project as the center's opening exhibition is a radical act. I truly believe that, over and above the public attention that the exhibitions received through the media and visitors, this project's most important achievement lies in the official adoption, by a public municipal center that holds the power and the responsibility to tell the White City's story, of a narrative that recognizes the tremendous impact of the Transfer Agreement on the White City's genesis and acknowledges that it is unclear to what extent the White City could have been built without the Agreement.

I am not in a position to assess how our project has influenced the way people perceive the White City today, or whether they are willing to accept that a Nazi-Zionist instrumental collaboration supported its creation, and the broad influence the Agreement had on the construction of the Jewish settlement in Palestine.

- [I] Only time will tell if the local Israeli narrative will be able to bear this complexity. What I do know is that I believe in the importance of artistic research projects, and in artists' tendency to listen to suppressed voices, their sensibilities that allow them to find hidden stories and revitalize them through their unique artistic language. I would like to see artists continue to be active participants in unraveling narratives of institutions, cities, communities and spaces, in order to allow suppressed voices to emerge to the surface.

entangled history

politics of memory

power of art

giving voice to repressed narratives

Notes

- 1 ICOMOS, «Advisory Body Evaluation (ICOMOS)», 2003, <https://whc.unesco.org/document/151735.57> (Consulted on April 7, 2020).

Panel Discussion III

with Simone Hain, Philipp Oswalt,
Ronny Schüler, and the Audience
chaired by Doreen Mende

- [K] There are many facets of Modernism and modernity as well as many ambivalent aspects. What does that mean for our own concepts and visions?

Doreen Mende

This panel's title is «Historiography and politics of memory, processes of reception and repression» but it could also have been called «The Bauhaus—Geopolitics in the context of <marginal counter-history>», to pick up on this concept of Kenneth Frampton from Ryan Fred Long's lecture. This panel is thus dedicated to the Bauhaus as a Modernist project par excellence: This is a Modernism shaped by violence, wars, and rationalization, which confronts us with a conflictual and ambivalent Modernism as a kind of «Modernism complex». In the words of art historian Maria Stavriniaki, Modernism utilises the «privilege of purity, of whiteness» in a world contaminated by war and genocide.¹ «Material misery», as Walter Benjamin called the situation in Germany after the First World War and the Spartacus Uprising in January 1919, was to be transformed into spiritual or moral wealth, with a universal model for a new society.

In our discussion I would like to talk about the ambivalences of this Modernism complex, which also still characterize our present and which, as ghostly matter, continue to unsettle us—perhaps to the chagrin of those who want to see the Bauhaus as a dominant mono-culture, and to the delight of those who, like the conference organizers and participants, propose that this «marginal counter-history» be connected with a declaration of independence, which was discussed in the last panel in the context of the problem of dependencies. I would also like to use this discussion to introduce a politics of difference into current situations.

Philipp Oswalt has contributed an enormously important discourse on how a political economy implants marketing strategies into the Bauhaus and how a lifestyle is declared on the basis of a marketing strategy discourse, a process that in the case of Palestine and Israel, as a politically highly explosive context, can also be described as «whitening». It is a conflict-laden and important discourse that affords scope to discuss the proxy politics of European Modernism, also in terms of ideological appropriation and expropriation by means of political-economic strategies, as happened in the branding of a «White City» in Tel Aviv. It seems to me as if «the Bauhaus» in Tel Aviv had realized all the traits of European modernist imperatives, as if we were dealing here with European (geo)politics that uses architecture as a means: architecture as a «mass medium» (Beatriz Colomina),² to implant or project «purity»—the White City—, unity, the new and future-oriented. An imperative of European Modernism par excellence. Must we also

bauhaus and geopolitics
marginal counter-history

modernism complex

idea of a new «society»
claim to universal validity

[K]

designing a politics of difference

bauhaus as a marketing strategy

bauhaus brand
«bauhaus» white city

modernist imperatives

architecture as a mass medium

- [M] What are the criteria for being included in history or excluded from it, and for historical relevance? What kinds of stand do they reveal, and which blind spots and cognitive shortcomings do they generate?

imperialism
colonialism

read «the Bauhaus» as a project of Modernism in the context of imperialism, as Samia Henni suggests when she writes «Architecture, for me, is intertwined with articulations of imperialism and colonialism. In the last 50 years, the making of the history and theory of architecture, has not paid enough attention to these articulations. Is this because the peak coincided with the tensions of the Cold War and the self-registration on one of the sides of the Iron Curtain?»³

social -utopian aspirations
labour movement

Ronny Schüler illuminated another facet of the Bauhaus: It is both helpful and essential to recall the Bauhaus' social-utopian concerns and its connection to the 1920s labour movement, as Marion von Osten has repeatedly emphasized in her own research in the context of *bauhaus imaginista*.⁴ At the same time, the Bauhaus in the post-war context also seems to me to be part of the Cold War scenario. What kind of architecture-mediated geopolitical connections existed between Tel Aviv and Moscow? How could the tension between founding a state and internationalism be represented here?

bauhaus and geopolitics

tension between state/nation-building
and internationalism

- [M] And finally, within which Bauhaus narrative could Mart Stam's practice be categorized? Or does the figure of Mart Stam precisely resist such categorization?

bauhaus historiography

First, however, I should like to give the audience the floor. Do you have any questions, comments, remarks, urgent issues that you would like to raise immediately with one or all three contributors?

Ulrich Hartung

bauhaus reception in the federal
republic of germany

I would like to make a comment on Philipp Oswald's paper or, to be more precise, raise a threefold problem I have with it. First, in my opinion, it reveals a problem that perhaps characterizes all those years of Bauhaus reception in the Federal Republic of Germany. Essentially, you can start the question in the same way as the little girl on YouTube who screams «What is your problem?» and then slams the door. What is the problem? I do not see the problem. We have a city here that has in fact experienced the best thing that could have happened to it in the form of its white Modernism, namely uniform yet differentiated architecture. It is wonderful that over and above this there was also a variant of Modernism in the kibbutzim but—and this is my second point—Philipp Oswald does not interpret it in the way we should—to my mind—interpret it, namely in terms of Modernism's diversity. Why can't we concede that Modernism could also have the kind of diversity that

diversity of modernism

- [H] What does it mean to understand the Bauhaus as a transnational and transcultural network of relationships?

value judgments

Postmodernism—in its superficiality could refer to anything at all, including Nazi architecture—has claimed? For some time now, I have had the impression that there is no-one given the benefit of the doubt when dealing with the Bauhaus and Modernism. That means in our case that what could also be described as diversity is always interpreted as something negative with reference to Modernism. That ignores the question of whether there is not also a positive trait in diversity that you cannot or do not want to recognize, because you are not in a position to judge that these individual buildings in Tel Aviv make no contribution whatsoever to helping advance the culture of residential architecture, because you were only in Tel Aviv as a tourist. You would have to live there for longer. And thirdly, this paper is also irresponsible, because in a context in which extraordinary sensitivity would be appropriate, you have revived two of the worst anti-Semitic clichés, namely the entrepreneurial spirit, clever marketing and so on, and the typical cliché of non-creativity. That is extremely politically thoughtless.

Ronny Schüler

In this context, I would like to refer to Alexandra Klei's text *Wie das Bauhaus nach Tel Aviv kam: Re-Konstruktion einer Idee in Text, Bild und Architektur*, published in August 2019, which traces out very precisely the steps and methods deployed in actually constructing this myth. I think that any suspicion of anti-Semitism can be completely ruled out here. What is interesting is in fact the counter-perspective. I find it entirely justified to ask what is wrong with celebrating a brand here? What about if we ask the people who live there? When I talk to my friends in Tel Aviv about the Bauhaus hype, they say: «Don't take it away from us!» So it does have an identity-defining function, but at the same time they are now realizing that branding also plays a part in a gentrification process, which, from a German perspective, is so infinitely much worse than what we are complaining about here. And even people who benefit from German support, for example colleagues in the Liebling-Haus, which has been restored and was inaugurated in the Bauhaus anniversary year as «White City Center», a German-Israeli centre for architecture and cultural heritage management,

bauhaus brand
«bauhaus» white city

identity formation
gentrification

- [H] ...ment, complain about a kind of colonisation or appropriation—if, for example, coverage in the German press gives the impression that it actually belongs to us or that the Jews didn't really take care of it so that we now have to pump German taxpayers' money into it. That means there is also unease within academic circles

- [J] The Bauhaus embraces different versions and ways of taking a stand. Which version or stance could help us tackle present and future challenges?
- [L] How did widespread ideas about the Bauhaus evolve? How do they relate to historical facts and which stances, interests and mechanisms do they reveal?

in Israel, who of course also realize that there were relatively few Bauhaus graduates when the White City was built and who also know that bourgeois urban development has nothing to do with the Bauhaus' central ideals. But they also noticeably feel the kind of uneasiness that comes from this kind of appropriation from the outside. For these reasons alone, I would certainly not be inclined towards the kind of emphatic assertions Philipp Oswalt makes; on the other hand, I would ask: How do the people on the ground feel about it?

Philipp Oswalt

I'd say this critical discourse already has a history that goes back about twenty years; let me just mention Sharon Rotbard here, an important Jewish Israeli scholar, who set the concept of the «White City» in opposition to that of a «Black City», the city of the Arabs who were driven out of their villages and settlements. Other Jewish Israeli researchers have worked on this too, and I clearly refer to them in my text. I only spotted Alexandra Klei's book last week ago and have not managed to read it yet.

Anyway, I find it completely absurd to call my critical reflection anti-Semitic, I have Jewish roots myself and have tried to present both the positive effects and the problematic sides of the situation. Critical reflection must always be possible in scholarship, it is part of the core business of academic study. What I wanted to show was that when I looked at the Bauhaus and at Tel Aviv as a Bauhaus city, it became relatively clear to me how much a dominant image of the Bauhaus—and we are talking here about a state of affairs that was 80, 90 or 100 years ago—is shaped by reception stories or narratives and becomes detached from historical facts. And I find it extremely important for myself to understand the mechanisms behind this. I want to try to understand how this kind of image comes into being, and why it arises. Of course, every kind of historiography is driven by interests, including my own; I don't want to deny that I am not impartial either but simply try to make that explicit, and one might once ask again: Why be so pedantic? If we understand Modernism not merely as a historical phenomenon, but also in the light of its significance for the present, then I cannot envision it as falling into such a pleasingly broad category. Instead, for me it is always about a debate too, about questions such as which Modernism we mean or which Modernism we want. And which Modernism might perhaps also stimulate us today? Then I try to work out what I find somehow acceptable,

«white city» vs. «black city»

[L]

[J]

- [O] What is the significance and relevance of the Bauhaus and Modernism today—a historical phenomenon or a resource for the present? And what, if anything, constitutes their current relevance?

what is problematic, and in this respect I am concerned with exactly this precision, this clarification of what it is all about and

- [O] I also consider that to be absolutely necessary if it is to have any kind of relevance, which is why I am so categorical on this point.

Doreen Mende

bauhaus as a complex of material culture, ideas and (geo-)politics

modernist project as a history of attitudes

tension between state/nation-building and internationalism

societal projects of modernism labour movement

kibbutz movement social-utopian aspirations bauhaus and geopolitics

architecture as a weapon bauhaus and nation/state building

I would like to come back once more to the question of the extent to which this Bauhaus complex is embedded in political-economic, geopolitical and ideological struggles. I think that this panel has clearly shown a wide variety of conflicts and struggles, and that this discussion offers a good opportunity to link into problems and issues raised in the previous panels. I'm interested in the aspects Simone Hain has brought into focus and what Marion von Osten together with Grant Watson and the *bauhaus imaginista* research and exhibition project stand for, in terms of understanding the Modernist project as also being about a history of attitudes. I think we must practice using various vocabularies and methods that make a range of different attitudes possible. It may be difficult but it is more necessary than ever and perhaps the Bauhaus in this context is also a very central kind of platform or a post-historical foil that can make it possible to address the discrepancy between nationalism—with the Bauhaus having a kind of state-founding function—and internationalism, where emancipatory potentials of independence arise from the various Bauhaus geographies. These areas of tension are very tangibly present. They are articulated very differently, as Ronny Schüler has just explained so wonderfully. That's why I'd like to put a question to Ronny: Do we understand the Bauhaus—as Marion von Osten does—as being embedded in labour movements as societal projects of Modernism that tried to pave the way for another society that engages with economy, politics and internationalism? Hannes Meyer is certainly a central figure here. I would also view kibbutz architecture and geopolitics as very central themes in this context. But there is also the question of how this social-utopian project of the kibbutz was received in Moscow. Other issues that tie into that would be the question of architecture as a weapon and the state-founding function of architecture—architecture as a practice of state crafting.

Ronny Schüler

Yes, thank you—that is of course the fundamental question that concerns us: Why was Modernism so successful specifically in Palestine in the 1930s? Tel Aviv, we have heard, is an absolute

labour movement
kibbutz movement

anomaly in this context. Most of what has been produced originates as a specific manifestation in the context of the labour movement and the kibbutz movement. I deliberately did not focus on the kibbutz movement in my paper, as we have already very extensive and wonderful literature on the topic.

Of course, the Soviet Union was always a point of reference. To this day, Stalin portraits still hang in the dining halls in some particularly orthodox kibbutzim, while the majority have since been transformed. People read Soviet writers, the anarchist authors: Pyotr Kropotkin is always mentioned. At the same time, however, it is important to bear in mind that this is a unique, a very characteristic phenomenon. Shmuel Mestechkin, for example, quite deliberately did not choose *HaShomer HaTza'ir*—an international Socialist-Zionist youth organization—, because it was too uncritical of the Soviet Union, and he had seen for himself the kind of pogroms that took place in his homeland after the Revolution. His family had also suffered from them.

bauhaus and geopolitics

kibbutz movement

I really have not engaged with geopolitics, but I have read that the Soviet Union was more a point of reference for intellectuals in the kibbutz movement, especially in *HaShomer HaTza'ir*. Moscow probably had little interest in the region in the 1930s and 40s; geopolitics were determined by Great Britain and France. In this balance of power, the Yishuv, i.e. the Jewish community, did not play a role either in terms of numbers or economically. It was probably more of an irritant to the Mandate authorities because of the nascent conflicts with the Arab population. The money initially came from Europe and then from the USA, in other words, from countries that were capitalist—and, ironically, socialist projects were financed.

I do not know of any special interest in the kibbutzim in the period after the founding of the state—attention was directed more in the opposite direction. However, the Soviets had supported the Arab states in the 1967 and 1973 wars, especially Syria. That must have significantly cooled the kibbutzniks' enthusiasm. The turning point came in 1973, when the USA, which for so long had not been at all interested in the region, suddenly discovered Israel's strategic importance. I showed those photos of the *Aircraft Carrier*: In 2012, the Israeli pavilion at the Venice Biennale dealt with precisely this situation of rupture, and the *Aircraft Carrier*—i.e. the largest aircraft carrier that the USA has, namely the State of Israel—was suddenly located within Cold War geopolitics there.

bauhaus and nation/
state building

national identity construction

architecture as a weapon

Architecture naturally plays an essential role when it comes to nation building or state crafting. Anna Minta dealt with this more than fifteen years ago, looking back on the period between the founding of the State of Israel (1948) and the Six Day War (1967). As well as looking at urban planning and policy on protecting cultural monuments, she also addressed architecture, which was intended to create a new, Israeli identity—and therefore necessarily had to be different from the culture and architecture in Galicia or Morocco. In recent years, Zvi Efrat and Alona Nitzan-Shiftan have published collections of material on this subject. Such considerations existed much earlier, and this could be one reason why *Neues Bauen* [New Building] was successful in the 1930s.

The topic of «architecture as a weapon» is admittedly very delicate. I did not mention it in the lecture, but Shmuel Mestechkin was involved in the «Wall and Tower» operation in 1936. In this operation, prefabricated elements were used to erect a tower and an enclosing wall overnight, which then had to be recognized as a settlement under old Ottoman law. There were already armed conflicts with the Arab population at this time, and these outposts served not only for defence—but also in seizure of land. This is still a problematic issue today, as many kibbutzim have emerged from such settlements. That is where the real explosive power of geopolitics lies when it comes to architecture.

Doreen Mende

modernism complex

bauhaus' history of reception
bauhaus as a social project

bauhaus as a marketing strategy

decolonial approach

Yes, there is a great deal to discuss. This brings me to the question of why the Bauhaus is so suitable as a platform and offers such a wide spectrum of conflicting and ambivalent aspects of this Modernism complex. Is it because of the international dimension of the Bauhaus as a Modernist project? Or is it because of the history of its reception? Simone Hain's lecture clearly emphasized the extent to which the history of reception must be understood as part of the Bauhaus as a social project. The same applies to Philipp Oswalt's paper, which showed how the Bauhaus project operates as a marketing strategy, as if this Modernist principle of architecture as a mass medium was fulfilled precisely in that respect, as Beatriz Colomina put it a few decades later in the publication *Privacy and Publicity: Architecture as Mass Media* (1994). Can we take this relationship of tension as a locus of reflection? Perhaps it would be possible to introduce a de- or anti-colonial approach here, as suggested by Samia Henni or Marion von Osten,

for example: an approach that, on the basis of both architectural practice and architectural theory, attempts to think about politics, or rather about types of colonialism and imperialism as part of architectural practice and theory. Could or should that perhaps be today's mission?

Philipp Oswalt

It is a little difficult to make this clear in a short statement. The point I tried to explain in more detail in my new book *Marke Bauhaus 1919–2019: Der Sieg der ikonischen Form über den Gebrauch* is why the Bauhaus is more present than ever, even eighty years after its closure. I think there are certainly multiple reasons. I would identify one as being the fact that building this brand was perhaps Walter Gropius' greatest achievement. Admittedly, that can be appraised in both positive and negative terms, but I would in the first instance view it as an achievement. The aspect I find so disturbing about it is the discrepancy between what the Bauhaus promised and what it achieved in terms of practice. I have a problem with that. In my understanding, Gropius was not a Functionalist architect, but rather, to put it bluntly, he was an advertising architect, and very successfully, as a matter of fact. And in this respect, the question arises as to whether Gropius should not be read quite differently, because this is also an innovation that undoubtedly touches a nerve in consumer capitalism. And he was already very successful in this role during his Bauhaus period: The 1923 exhibition was an unparalleled PR coup, where he really inscribed himself in European avant-garde history, at a time when his colleagues on the Council of Masters were wondering what they were actually showing or why they were doing this exhibition in the first place due to a lack of results that could be presented. Yes, there were great doubts about that and Gerhard Marcks was already joking back then that they would all be smoking the Bauhaus brand now, i.e. cigarettes; in 1922, when they were debating the exhibition in the Council of Masters, he was the first to discuss building a brand. Gropius however was not to be deterred and was determined to build up a brand, which, as we all know, he did very successfully. These constant disputes about the Bauhaus certainly played a role in brand profiling, these political controversies, and it has to be said that it wasn't just a matter of the National Socialists but also the conservative forces during the Weimar period—at times it is somehow entertaining to see how much CDU supporters identify with the Bauhaus today,

bauhaus brand

bauhaus as a marketing strategy

bauhaus myths

national identity construction

bauhaus as
nazi germany's antithesis

while the CDU's predecessor party was very much in the other camp. Of course, that also contributed to processes of solidarity, as well as to a PR presence, although this demonstrative closure by the National Socialists or under their pressure created a myth that was given a particular boost by the Bauhaus' post-1945 role in constructing West German identity. There are multiple causes for the Bauhaus brand's success. Even the term Bauhaus is simply an incredibly good brand name. It is now disputed whether Gropius invented the name or not. Dietrich Neumann published an article («Wie Gropius einen Namen stahl», in *FAZ.NET* on October 8, 2019), demonstrating that the architect and entrepreneur Albert Gessner had already founded a «Bauhaus GmbH» in Berlin in 1915—in other words, four years earlier. We will probably never find out whether Gropius knew about this or whether he came up with the name himself.

Simone Hain

modernist project
as a history of attitudes

Perhaps I could just pick up on that immediately: It is also part of the Bauhaus narrative of someone sitting in a glass house and trying to throw stones. I am talking about Hannes Meyer, who should probably be given the honour of being the first to defy the anti-social stylisation and marketing trends and the unrestrained branding. In historiographic terms it is regrettable that Meyer, who said of himself, «as Bauhaus director I fought against the Bauhaus style», does not really move beyond this position of being diametrically opposed, which in Gropius' eyes cast him as someone who destroyed the Bauhaus. Meyer is portrayed as being at odds with himself and remains incomprehensible. More radical architects, such as Mart Stam or Hans Schmidt, would never, ever, have become entangled in any copyright issues. Yes, Stam did distance himself a little from Meyer during his time at the Bauhaus by mockingly commenting that «Meyer takes himself too seriously». I think that, while in conflict with Gropius, Hannes Meyer was driven to do something that simply did not fit into the alternative concept of Co-op, a cooperative, labour-based «grassroots Modernism» inspired by Kropotkin. At first it was said that they all worked collectively and anonymously at the Bauhaus, then Meyer himself repeatedly retracted this for reasons of competition and thus pushed himself forward as «that» Hannes Meyer with «his» Bauhaus in an effective promotional strategy that carried his renown as far as Moscow. And that was a twofold tragedy for the completely solid substantive programme.

[N] How do our own cultural, social, and political beliefs and stances affect our understanding of the Bauhaus, Modernism, and modernity?

constructivism

societal projects of modernism

new building of the future
reshaping the world

We need to understand the theory and aesthetics of Constructivism, which had its roots in Basel and in Prague, Vitebsk, Kovno, Amsterdam. This is crucial both for academic research and for contemporary *Baukultur* [creating and interacting with the built environment] and the establishment of tradition. Modernism in the Twenties was Janus-faced, as we have known since Alexander Schwab (1887–1943)⁵. Just because nowadays we no longer think about fundamental alternatives in terms of the ethics of production does not by a long stretch mean we can afford to perceive the Bauhaus exclusively as a vehicle of rampant capitalism. For all those involved at the time, it was an open-ended project, an experiment aimed at shaping the world, which was highly conflictual and therefore escalated in every conceivable political direction. Gropius was a member of the liberal Democratic Party, while Meyer, who had shared Rudolf Steiner's radical economic democratic position, ended up far to the left, and comrade Hans Schmidt became a co-founder of the Communist Partei der Arbeit in Switzerland. The Bauhaus was highly political at every moment of its existence because, as its PR agent Karel Teige aptly put it, it acted «with new images and plans for another globe». Nowhere can this be demonstrated more concretely than in the programmatic alliance that Mart Stam and Piet Mondrian entered with Mies van der Rohe in planning and constructing Stuttgart's Weißenhof housing estate. As Exhibition Director, Mies allowed Stam to speak at length; he gave him plenty of propaganda space, because at the time nobody in architectural circles could express it better than this religiously motivated Dutch Marxist. Then as now, the focus was all about the rational use of land and the collective pleasure of play. His house in the Weißenhofsiedlung, which echoes Mondrian, is pure jazz, as many Stam connoisseurs have aptly pointed out. «Just like floating»: That is how Stam still described this poetic principle of shaping objects and relationships as late as 1967. With his biography, the term «avant-garde» falls by the wayside, as perhaps the idea of revolution does too.

rewriting history

depolitization of the avant-garde

neoliberalism
as a paradigm shift

And there is another aspect: It really struck me in our discussion how these historiographical projects of rephrasing or rewriting from scratch are cyclically linked to the onset of neoliberalism and thus to global, economic processes of change. Historiographical research on Modernism, Bauhaus research in particular, has long been an emancipatory project, a project of the generation of historians shaped by 1968, if you will: Michael Müller, Franziska Bollerey and Karl-Heinz Hüter had good reason

[N]

- [B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?
- [M] What are the criteria for being included in history or excluded from it, and for historical relevance? What kinds of stand do they reveal, and which blind spots and cognitive shortcomings do they generate?

emancipatory promise of
modern architecture and design

modernism as an attitude

to be passionate scholars, researchers who were moved when, for example, they deciphered Gropius' three-tiered Functionalist programme, moving towards a «total architecture». They experienced their material in its actual magnificence and historical unfulfilled promise as a challenge. As an example of a persistent anti-zeitgeist approach, I would like to recall Kristiana Hartmann's defiant *Trotzdem modern* from 1994, *Why Modernity Still Matters* by John Lash and Jonathan Friedmann from 1992, and to mention Anatol Kopp too, who defended the social character of the modern movement against purely ritualised patterns of reception as early as the 1970s. All of us, an entire generation of critical theorists who wanted to envision an open-end project, are defeated by the historically powerful narratives of Postmodernism, which I unfortunately did not have room to address in my paper. I would just like to refer briefly here to the unrealized DAM exhibition project in Frankfurt am Main for Mart Stam's 100th birthday. Its opponents argued that Mart Stam was massively overrated and could at most claim historical validity because of his radical attitude. Some asserted that authorship has not been clarified for many of his projects, which is a sign that we are in a culture of auratic authorship and no longer in a Structuralist or even Marxist discourse. No one opposed the idea of auratic architecture more than Mart Stam: On the train, on the trip to Moscow, the entire May Brigade had to promise him that they would never claim authorship of buildings again. If you look for the reason for this passion, you will come across a Marxist conviction of the Constructivists, the idea that the production and reproduction of space is subject to structural powers that make a leading role of the individual seem downright ridiculous, or to put it in Stam's words, extremely bourgeois. It was about a completely different form of *Baukultur* [constructing and interacting with the built environment], completely penetrating the economy and consumption. However, there is also some evidence to suggest that it was Mart Stam's unsentimental architectural language that offended taste in the 1990s, if not before. Yes, it is also a matter of taste: It's not «lekker architecture» [appealing architecture]. That was the time when the Rotterdam Lijnbaan came under pronounced pressure to refurbish because of its «shabbiness». Docomomo⁶ was founded around this period when the tradition that Modernism was lovable and sustainable began to collapse. The «White City» is a child of Docomomo, a result of a collective rebellion against the rampant Modernist bashing of Postmodernism. Several Docomomo conferences

[M]

[B]

constructivism

- [D] How can we discover the social and political processes behind buildings and objects, planning and building activities as well as reception processes?
- [I] What can we learn from the history of the Bauhaus and Modernism when facing current issues? And how can this enable us to gain new insights into the past?

aimed to demonstrate Modernism's diversity and lived practices. They had become necessary because the built testimonies were crumbling, the Sanatorium Zonnestraal in Hilversum and the Narkomfin flats in Moscow, Avion Hotel in Brno, and the ADGB Bundesschule [Federal Trade Union School] in Bernau. Historical research itself has cycles, asynchronicities and contradictory oscillations. And in a decade that proclaimed the «end of history», as I would learn during a Bruno Taut project, sources of academic funding held that Modernism had been «researched to death». There was scarcely any research worth mentioning; just think of the fate of the «Gropius Professorship» in Weimar.

Doreen Mende

I should just like to conclude by asking a question that is central to our topic and the symposium as a whole: Is it a matter of shaking up a canon and designing a politics of difference in order to criticize and to some extent disarm various forms of interpretative power, in order to make a broader spectrum of narration possible? Or is it a matter of rewriting a narrative and asking how this could find its way into structures of education and discourse. In connection with this, there would be the development of a para-academic vocabulary, in other words, a vocabulary that would be able to oscillate between practice and theory, as well as between past and present and between various contexts. In her paper, Simone Hain elucidated vividly that there is an avant-garde that is not solely about images. How could this avant-garde be rendered visible?

designing a politics
of difference

tension between micro-practice
and macro-concepts

modernism complex

- [D] That is not an easy task: I would say that it can only be carried out in the permanent field of tension between micro-practice and macro-concepts. Perhaps this could be understood as updating a «Bauhaus spirit» in the context of this complex of Modernism. That would make it possible to position the Bauhaus within political and social processes in the entire breadth of its forms of practice—reflection, research, building, organizing, discussing—and to link it to contemporary questions.
- [I]

Notes

- 1 Maria Stavrinaki, «The Threads of the Past: Weaving as a Historical Metaphor in the Bauhaus», lecture in the context of the conference *Multiple Modernen*, 15th and 16th November 2019, during the *bauhaus imaginista* exhibition, Paul Klee Zentrum Bern, Switzerland. Published as: «Dry Time—Anni Albers Weaving the Threads of the Past», in: *bauhaus imaginista* Journal, Edition 2: Learning from, <http://www.bauhaus-imaginista.org/articles/6262/dry-time?0bbf55ceffc3073699d40c945-ada9faf=671a369567b540d932ca-a2dc8777848b> (Consulted on June 10, 2020).
- 2 Beatriz Colomina, *Privacy and Publicity. Modern Architecture as Mass Media*, Cambridge, Mass., London: MIT Press 1994.
- 3 Samia Henni, «The End of Theory?», talk: e-flux Architecture presents: *History/Theory*, New York, November 14, 2017.
- 4 Marion von Osten, inaugural lecture at the conference *Warum das Bauhaus schwer auszuhalten ist*, weißensee kunsthochschule berlin, October 22/23, 2019.
- 5 See for example his publication, published under the pseudonym Albert Sigrist, *Das Buch vom Bauen: Wohnungsnot, Neue Technik, Neue Baukunst, Städtebau*, Berlin 1930, Reprint: Alexander Schwab, *Das Buch vom Bauen. 1930—Wohnungsnot, Neue Technik, Neue Baukunst, Städtebau aus sozialistischer Sicht*, (= *Bauwelt-Fundamente*, 42), Düsseldorf 1973.
- 6 <https://docomomo.de/> (Consulted on June 10, 2020).

Final Discussion

with Titia Rixt Hoekstra, Joaquín
Medina Warmburg, Doreen Mende,
Andrea Bärnreuther, and the Audience
chaired by Annemarie Jaeggi

- [G] Which ways of taking a stand can we discover in processes of Bauhaus transfer, translation, and transformation?

Annemarie Jaeggi

We are now coming to the final session. I would also like to invite Andrea Bärnreuther to join us on stage as she developed the conference concept and I would like to ask her about the idea that sparked this conference. However, before I do that, I would first talk to the speakers who chaired the discussions during the various sections of the conference. We have had a long and intensive day today, with many extremely interesting lectures; they have really taken us all over the world and have dealt with cultural exchange, transfer, translation and transformation processes, while also making us aware of the interplay between transmitters and receivers, as well as giving us a range of different answers to the question of this symposium *Taking a Stand?* That issue of looking at what attitude means in this context was perhaps most clearly expressed in the lecture by Simone Hain: Modernism as an attitude. And this is where I would like to take up the discussion. I suggest that we discuss with you once again what this term «attitude» means and what it perhaps does not mean, and also what it could be at all—not an easy subject, I realize. If we still have the time and inclination, I suggest we also discuss the term «homeless». The understanding of Modernism as an «attitude» and the term «homeless» would be two points that we could bring up again here at the end.

modernism as an attitude

«taking a stand» as a concept

homelessness as a concept

Let me start with you, Mr. Medina-Warmburg: what did you take away from this conference *Taking a Stand?* or from the answers to the initial question about what that entails? In the first section, the question of attitude was raised somewhat more explicitly and discussed in greater detail. You certainly also have your own position on this, especially within the nexus of themes you examined, namely Bauhaus and Modernism in processes of transfer, translation, and transformation.

[G]

processes of transfer,
translation, and transformation

Joaquín Medina Warmburg

What I take away, also generally from our second section, is basically the interplay of projection and appropriation. Above all, the way in which projection of ideas plays out—with an awareness of transmitting a particular message, on the one hand, and expectations on the other. Within the situation of transfer and translation, where there can also perhaps actually be phases of destabilization in the encounter with the unknown Other, these seek to make the many imponderables more concrete and perhaps also to direct them towards a goal. Another central question in this context is

interplay of projection and
appropriation

functionalism as a concept

construction of a «third world»

dependency and periphery as
a concept

learning processes

which intellectual or professional tools architects or product designers have at their disposal to handle this situation. In two cases in our section, this could be examined on the basis of terms with manifest political implications, which—and this was particularly interesting for me—were already occupied or defined in advance. One example concerns the term «Functionalism», which has a very specific content within the process of transfer or translation from Germany to Sweden, even if this term can actually be defined in terms of rather different content. The other example refers to the politically conflict-ridden transfer situation in our two examples from Chile. And in contrast to these situations, where terms such as «Functionalism» or «Third World» provide orientation, we have also seen cases in which this—purported—terminological clarity gradually dissolves through the interaction, so that we can perceive a development. For me, Bruno Taut is actually a prime example of this dichotomy: a projection from which a new understanding develops on the basis of direct experience on the ground—here one could also talk about «learning processes», as suggested in the title of Section I. Let me recall once again: Taut arrived in Japan and within a very short time had a clear opinion about what is actually Japanese. This was only possible because he arrived with this opinion largely formed beforehand, because there is already a prior history of projecting onto Japan or, let's say, of clear conceptions about Japan. In fact, however, he developed completely different criteria over the course of the several years he spent in Japan, so that this fixed or preconceived opinion subsequently became relativized as time went by. I find this very interesting and it is certainly very intriguing to examine this movement and the factors influencing it more closely. Of course, this development is only possible in cases where there is time to gather new experiences and then develop a new attitude.

Annemarie Jaeggi

«taking a stand» as a concept

That is an important keyword. Taking a stand is very often taken to mean being true to oneself, but adopting a clear attitude can also involve a certain development; an attitude can also be revised or broadened or narrowed, while, especially in a political context, such an attitude can also run into turbulence or it can become entrenched. That would also be a question that I would like to pass on to Ms. Hoekstra. How is being at peace with oneself, so to speak, and being true to oneself manifested? After all that we have heard today, we certainly do not see it in terms of style, an

- [N] How do our own cultural, social, and political beliefs and stances affect our understanding of the Bauhaus, Modernism, and modernity?

external stance, if we want to equate that idea of attitude or taking a stand with a «stance».

Titia Rixt Hoekstra

- [N] OK, I don't know if it answers your question, but what it means to live with yourself and to live in honesty with yourself is, I think, a question that we can ask our subjects as historians, but perhaps it is also something we can ask ourselves as historians, because as historians we are adopting a stance vis-à-vis the subjects that we study. And we bring ourselves into the study of our subjects, so whether you are conscious of it or unconscious of it, you always bring yourself into the subjects that you study. This means that it is not only about the attitude or stance of the subject that you study; the question is also what is your own attitude or stance as a historian, what kind of interest do you have? It is in the tradition of Hans Georg Gadamer's ontological hermeneutics: Our understanding of the past is always connected to our own individual horizon as historians, what Gadamer called the «horizon of experience» of each of us. That is not a limitation, but a necessary condition for successful «understanding» of the past. The point where your own attitude or stance meets with that of the subject of your study is where the interpretation of the past starts.

complexity of taking a stand

Another thing is that for the architects discussed here today I see a tension between, on the one hand, their ideological standpoints, their visions of planning and building for a «new world», and, on the other hand, the force of contingency, the twists of fate that were so decisive for their lives. The architects that we discussed here had dreams of a better world and strong opinions about the sort of architecture they wanted to make, but their lives were decided by wars, regime changes, the need to escape: in other words, by world events that they could not control. I think their productivity as architects was located exactly at the crossroads between intentionality and contingency: at the point of having ambitions and ideas and at the same time trying to accept the world as it is and making the most of it. I think this applies to the career of architects like Hannes Meyer and Bruno Taut. Being a visionary architect does not exclude being a pragmatist too. I think for them in the end it was important to «save» their productivity, so that they could still be active as architects, also when circumstances changed. Of course, the critical question might thus be: What did these architects sacrifice in the name of their productivity? Were they still true to their initial idealism? For historians,

- [A] Can we see in the Bauhaus as a whole—despite its apparent heterogeneity—a uniform stance or even something like the epitome of a social attitude?
- [L] How did widespread ideas about the Bauhaus evolve? How do they relate to historical facts and which stances, interests and mechanisms do they reveal?

value judgments
complexity of taking a stand

this also entails a question of judgment. Do you value their flexibility to adjust to different political contexts, their continued productivity as architects, or do you measure them against their honesty towards their initial beliefs?

Annemarie Jaeggi

modernism as an attitude
bauhaus as a social attitude

- [A] If we describe the Modernist project as being about an attitude, as Simone Hain suggested, then we also associate certain things with it that are perhaps stereotypes in the positive sense of the term, in other words, social concerns or the aspiration to include a social aspect. In your section, Ms. Mende, we heard about marked process of displacement in Palestine due to modern societal changes. In view of this, how would you deal with the question of attitude?

Doreen Mende

practice of decolonization

modernism complex

bauhaus as a complex of
material culture, ideas, and
(geo)-politics

Thank you! I think that the question of attitude—and on this I would agree with the previous speaker, Rixt Hoekstra—should not end with an analytical, architectural-historical discussion, but should lead on to the practice of decolonization, which for me contains a very central question—especially with regard to this «Bauhaus complex», as I would like to call the Bauhaus, in order to express a sense that it is multi-layered. We have seen today, especially in the last panel, to what a pronounced degree the Bauhaus is embedded in political and social contexts or is more or less determined by political and social conditions. And here I would also like to contradict an opinion expressed during my panel. I see Israel and Palestine in the context of geopolitics and in the context of Europe's project of modernity, which also includes the British Mandate area. Unless we become aware of this intertwined past—this «entangled history»—it will ultimately not be possible to understand architectural history either.

bauhaus' history of reception

bauhaus signifying
democracy and freedom

decolonial approach

value-generating systems

- [L] I would also like to draw attention here once again to the idea in the history of reception that the Bauhaus project was connected with liberation movements, internationalism, with ideas of a «new man» and was linked to an ideal of freedom that is also a Western humanist ideal. This is precisely the issue Maria Stavri-naki addressed at a Bauhaus conference in Berne in the context of the *bauhaus imaginista* exhibition, where she showed how this history of reception has produced a discourse that is concerned with «value-making systems», in other words, systems that create value, both morally and economically.¹ In our panel, we had a few examples of how the Bauhaus is instrumentalized to carry

- [A] Can we see in the Bauhaus as a whole—despite its apparent heterogeneity—a uniform stance or even something like the epitome of a social attitude?
- [B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?
- [N] How do our own cultural, social, and political beliefs and stances affect our understanding of the Bauhaus, Modernism, and modernity?

out «white washing»: not only the «Bauhaus City» in Tel Aviv as a «White City», but also the reception history of Mart Stam that Simone Hain presented to us, which shows how a political project is simply discarded. In view of this, I believe we are already in the midst of a paradigm shift today. I am very happy that it is possible to discuss the Bauhaus complex and this form of practice in a political context, and that at the same time we are reflecting on and engaging with our own practice. I think that one central aspect is that all the panellists in our section also took a stand themselves.

Annemarie Jaeggi

Andrea Bärnreuther, you had the idea for this conference, and you worked during a preparatory phase on structuring everything and organizing a call for papers. What was the actual idea, and what responses did you receive to the question you asked?

Andrea Bärnreuther

I caught a ball that was thrown to me, that was the first thing. The title of the symposium «Taking a stand? [literal translation of the German title: What does attitude mean here?] debating the Bauhaus and Modernism» reacts to the idea of the Bauhaus or *Neues Bauen* as a «social attitude», a concept that has been particularly prevalent in the context of the anniversary, especially from the political side, because in fact the attitudes of Bauhaus teacher and students and Modernist architects were neither uniform nor immutable. So what I wanted to do was to scrutinize this idea in the symposium and at the same time set the concept of «taking a stand» in motion and first of all ask what is to be understood as «attitude» in our context and how it becomes visible and tangible.

The fundamental question of what attitude means here or what it signifies to take a stand referred both to the historical object, the historical Bauhaus and Modernism, and to the attitude with which we face history and the challenges of the present, because the two cannot be separated from each other. I subsequently circulated the call for papers, as you mentioned, which envisaged enquiring what happened under National Socialism, in emigration and exile and in a divided Germany to the idea of planning and building for a «New World» mooted by Bauhaus architects and Modernist architects. By looking at the National Socialist era in the light of the paradigm of modernization and expanding the perspective to include Modernism in emigration and exile and its partly colonial contexts as well as within the systemic competition between East

bauhaus as a social attitude
modernism as an attitude

bauhaus centenary
politics of memory

«taking a stand» as a concept

- [K] There are many facets of Modernism and modernity as well as many ambivalent aspects. What does that mean for our own concepts and visions?
- [L] How did widespread ideas about the Bauhaus evolve? How do they relate to historical facts and which stances, interests and mechanisms do they reveal?
- [N] How do our own cultural, social, and political beliefs and stances affect our understanding of the Bauhaus, Modernism, and modernity?

[K] and West, the intent was to examine the ambivalences of «Modernity» along with tendencies in thinking and acting that continue to have an impact today.

The balls that were thrown to me in response to my call for papers then caused me to move away from the three historical thematic blocks and to develop precisely the three sections that have formed the symposium, each of which highlights one set of questions, but in essence always contains the other two sets of questions as well. In Section I «Planning and Building for a «New World»? Conflict Situations, Fields of Tension, Learning Processes», the central question is how attitudes can be defined and how they are also articulated in architecture and design or in planning processes. To return to the issue of «right-wing spaces»², I believe that in our context one must go beyond the political position model developed by Slavoj Žižek and taken up by Stephan Trüby. I also think it is essential not to see attitude as something immutable and not to view immutability, which can also signify stubbornness or rigidity, as a value in its own right, but instead to set this concept of attitude in motion in order to open it up to learning processes; those are essential and vital, especially in emigration and exile, but of course also in general and especially in today's migration societies. The concept of attitude must also include a self-critical perspective; to cite social theorist Peter Wagner, who defines Modernism in *bauhaus now* (2019) as an attitude «towards the world and one's own being in the world» and locates it «between triumph and doubt», a «sceptical, doubting attitude», and one can add, even self-criticism is an inseparable part of Modernism.³

«taking a stand» as a concept
learning processes
emigration and exile

self-critique of modernism

- [L] Another central idea that subsequently became the basis for Section III entailed reflecting on our historical location in the Bauhaus anniversary year and to call ourselves into question and determine our position. Anniversaries are always about a politics of remembrance. This means that it is not primarily a matter of developing a picture of the historical object that is as differentiated as possible, but rather about appropriation, the creation of meaning and identification and their use as resources for shaping the future.
- [N] However fundamentally different historiography and the politics of memory may be, they do not exist independently of each other, and attitudes crystallize in the processes of reception and repression they involve, as well as in their «constructions».

bauhaus centenary
politics of memory

identity formation
bauhaus historiography

In contrast to the other two sections, Section II is already based on a Bauhaus understanding within which an attitude is crystallized. The significance of understanding the Bauhaus as

- [G] Which ways of taking a stand can we discover in processes of Bauhaus transfer, translation, and transformation?
- [H] What does it mean to understand the Bauhaus as a transnational and transcultural network of relationships?

bauhaus as a transnational and transcultural network of relationships

bauhaus as a major german export

[G] [H] a transnational and transcultural network of relationships in the political sphere, which is always determined by asymmetrical power relations, becomes immediately clear when this understanding, which also underpins the *bauhaus imaginista* exhibition and research project, is contrasted with the idea of the Bauhaus as a German export hit, which has come even more to the fore during the Bauhaus anniversary year. This understanding opens up questions concerning attitude on various levels from different perspectives in the present and in the past, which also always brings the question of value standards into the equation and which above all requires the Bauhaus, in its explorations, to once again become a driving force for transnational and transcultural exchange and transform the historical asymmetry of power relations and conditions.

Looking at our symposium now, we see that the balls that I have picked up and thrown back into the circle have multiplied and taken many new directions in the discussion, especially when addressing case studies. And I am not only very grateful to all participants for this, but I am also really keen to continue this ball game—although then inevitably mainly bilaterally—along the pathway to a publication, which I imagine—in the Bauhaus spirit—as being more like a workshop than a documentation in the sense of conference proceedings.

Annemarie Jaeggi

Then I shall now pass the ball to the audience.

Ulrich Hartung

Yes, I think what I have after all learned, as someone who admittedly enjoys arguing, is that today, I believe, in the very diverse range of contributions, we have seen not only a very welcome increase in factual information about the Bauhaus in every single contribution—I hope also in mine—but also that this healthy dose of positivism, namely now being able to say one also knows a little more about the phenomenon, is also a value in its own right. I would call for a more relaxed approach, for less fundamental criticism, which has not become more topical or more necessary since 1968; I also call for Modernism to be accorded what is accepted in every Postmodernist coffee-table book, as I have said, namely diversity. In that case it can also be fine to say that the kibbutzim and Zina Dizengoff Square in Tel Aviv, with its truly banalized architecture, existed side by side: so what? After all, there are worse

diversity of modernism

- [C] How can we explore the kinds of stand taken by Bauhaus and Modernist architects and designers and their consistency?
- [K] There are many facets of Modernism and modernity as well as many ambivalent aspects. What does that mean for our own concepts and visions?

things than either of those. For example, banal Wilhelminian-era architecture has always been an abomination, whereas, for good reasons, Modernist architecture comparatively comes out quite well.

Coming back to Richard Paulick for a moment. We can learn a lot from engaging with him in relation to our question of attitude, because someone like him, who—perhaps even out of inner conviction—once turned away from Modernism had such a hard time regaining his attitude towards it later. And that makes it even more interesting not just that he succeeded but also how he did so. I am thinking about history that is not smooth and un-ruffled, but is complicated, entangled, and diverse history: That is what we can see, and we should develop greater awareness of it.

Annemarie Jaeggi

I think that has also become clear today; diversity of opinions is important to us. We will certainly hear something from Mr. Oswald now that will also contribute to such diversity of opinions.

Philipp Oswald

- [C] I would like to add, with reference to the last panel and also the one now under discussion, that I would find it interesting if this question of attitude were always accompanied by the question of consistency or the internal contradictions of this attitude. I commented critically earlier about Gropius' Bauhaus, but of course similar points could be made regarding Meyer's Bauhaus or Mart Stam. Perhaps that really ought to be done; in this respect I tend to be someone who tries to brush history against the grain, as Walter Benjamin put it. Simone Hain used the term humanism a moment ago, and it has to be said that these architects I greatly admire do of course also have their dark sides, and the kibbutz movement, for all its enthusiasm for this kind of bottom-up, democratic Socialism, was of course also a colonialist project, and that is its dark flipside.
- [K] And, of course, Mart Stam was also in the Soviet Union, in Magnitogorsk, for example, during an era when it was a gulag state, so we have to somehow bear that in mind and ask ourselves what that means. These inconsistencies concern the various different facets of the Bauhaus.

Annemarie Jaeggi

I would now like to run through the complex of questions concerning the term «homeless» and nomadism again. Mr. Medina

homelessness as a concept

Warmburg, isn't being nomadic, really being at home nowhere and everywhere, isn't that also part of Modernism and the Bauhaus?

Joaquín Medina Warmburg

historical homelessness

Yes, I'm just thinking of Nerdinger's quote from Walter Benjamin's criticism of the Bauhaus, where he speaks of «living without a trace» and «lodgings» for residential nomads, or of Oskar Schlemmer's dictum: «instead of cathedrals, the machine for living». I think it is actually interesting that this new form of inhabiting the earth around 1922 in the Bauhaus programme or in its ideas on housing—always under the conditions of industrialization—and in contemporary Bauhaus reception or criticism is something that is mirrored in what actually happened in subsequent historical developments, with the emigration of Bauhaus teachers and students, as well as *Neues Bauen* [New Building] architects.

integrating buildings into their respective regions

adapting architecture to local conditions

regionalist modernism

At the same time, however, I also see repeated attempts to counteract this, i.e., especially with regard to Latin America, there are efforts—analogue to Bruno Taut's approach—to locate architecture, to have it put down roots. And I note that architects in Latin America argue that if we really want to remain true to the modern attitude, we have to change our architecture and actually work with the place, with the climatic conditions, with the materials, with the social conditions, and locate our idea of modern architecture in a specific place and bring it back down to earth. There are many examples where the argument is precisely that everything needs to change, also formally in the conception of modern architecture, so that Modernism itself can thus survive.

Annemarie Jaeggi

emigration and exile

And conversely, you could also ask: If I know, in a situation of exile or migration, that I'm only in a place for a few years maybe, or at least only for a certain time, and then I'm going to leave again, so that I don't have any intention of becoming at home there and finding a home, what does that mean for my attitude? That is the other question that one must always factor in: How pronounced is a form of opening up to a place, and is it a real cultural transfer, or to what extent do you perhaps end up sticking persistently to the opinions you brought along with you in those kinds of situation?

Titia Rixt Hoekstra

I think that we had also a bit of discussion about this in our session and that the question of what attitude means in this respect

complexity of taking a stand

homelessness as a concept
historical homelessness

modern vs. historicizing
architecture

is really very complex, because the architects had to make a calculation: What should I do in order to be productive and to do what I want to do? How should I define my position? And what I found out, what other speakers told me, is that it is extremely difficult to have a good definition of that complexity, because it really differs from case to case. Ryan Fred Long told me something particularly interesting: We can understand this sort of homelessness not only in a geographical sense but also in a historical sense. If I understand correctly, the point was that the very concept of modern architecture in itself means a sort of orphan state, in the sense that you no longer have your parents or you no longer have the historical traditions and you have to manage without them, so that homelessness is not only about someone who produces architecture and has to face the fact that he does not have a home, but users of architecture are also faced with a kind of homelessness. Here again, we find the complexity of this whole issue and that is a point that I thought was an interesting notion, something like historical homelessness.

Annemarie Jaeggi

And for Tel Aviv, one could say that an attempt was made to create a homeland, a sense of feeling at home, so to speak—with the European means that people had brought with them, right down to the materials—but actually by using an ideology of being homeless. What would your view be on that point, Ms. Mende?

Doreen Mende

thinking from the perspective
of diasporic conditions

That is a difficult question! This is a completely new arena. Two thoughts occur to me here: 1) Hannah Arendt, in her analysis of totalitarianism, referred to the 20th century as the century of refugees. I think this should be seen as the condition that forms the point of departure for thinking about all this. That is central to the founding of the State of Israel, the large diaspora communities as well as the large cosmopolitan Jewish diaspora community. 2) And as far as homeless ideology is concerned, when I was addressing Konrad Püschel—who also studied at the Bauhaus under Hannes Meyer, was later in Moscow with him, and was instrumental in planning the city of Hamhung in North Korea in 1954—I noticed that he considered it constitutive for his work as an architect and urban planner to study not only the colonial architecture of Japan in Korea, but also the regional native or indigenous architectural culture. There is a comprehensive essay by Püschel in academic

tension between universalism
and regionalism

displacement as a concept

thinking from the perspective of
diasporic conditions

papers from the Bauhaus University in Weimar from 1956/57, and I think that this is very important to take into account as well. This means that we should perhaps speak more of hybrids, without, however, transferring this too markedly into such a contemporary context. Another question that always preoccupied us when we were working on *bauhaus imaginista* concerned the tension that Ryan Fred Long addressed too—the tension between universalism and regionalism, and how these are intertwined and intermesh with one another. And that I think is also something that puts this concept of «displacement» on yet another different plane. In other words, we are all migrants; I think that is something that we also need to bear in mind to some extent when looking at this in a medium-term or long-term constellation. So that here in Berlin, as someone who was born in the GDR, I would even like to bring that factor into the discussion too. But that is not an exception, I would like to make that point clearly—it is not an exception. Of course, we have to differentiate, which means that of course it is also not correct either if I say that we are all migrants, but I think we have to learn to think from the perspective of a diasporic condition, as Hannah Arendt has suggested.

Notes

1 Maria Stavrinaki, «The Threads of the Past: Weaving as a Historical Metaphor in the Bauhaus», lecture in the context of the conference *Multiple Modernen*, 15th and 16th November 2019, during the *bauhaus imaginista* exhibition, Paul Klee Zentrum Bern, Switzerland. Published as: «Dry Time—Anni Albers Weaving the Threads of the Past», in: *bauhaus imaginista Journal*, Edition 2: Learning from, <http://www.bauhaus-imaginista.org> (Consulted on May 5, 2020).

2 See the project initiated by Stephan Trüby «Rechte Räume—Bericht einer Europareise», in: *ARCH+* 235, 29.05.2019, <https://www.archplus.net/home/archiv/ausgabe/46,231,1,0.html>. (Consulted on May 12, 2020)

3 Peter Wagner, «Zwischen Triumph und Zweifel. Ist Moderne eine Haltung?», in: *bauhaus now*, *Das offizielle Magazin zum Bauhaus-jubiläum 2019*, (ed.) 100 Jahre bauhaus. Geschäftsstelle Bauhaus Verbund 2019, Issue 1 (2018), pp. 24–30.

Epilogue

Built on Care: An Architecture Curriculum for Living with an Infected Planet

Elke Krasny

- [1] What can we learn from the history of the Bauhaus and Modernism when facing current issues? And how can this enable us to gain new insights into the past?

bauhaus centenary

modernist promise of
a better future

new building of the future

repairing the future

learning to dwell differently
in the world

100 years of Bauhaus: «Thinking the World Anew»—with the coronavirus outbreak, if not before, the programmatic approach and aspiration of the Bauhaus Centenary in Germany became questionable. «Thinking the World Anew» is necessary, but it is not enough; it offers no idea, concept, or strategy for the existing world, infected as it is, and not only by COVID-19. The question arises of whether we would be better advised to conceive and build architecture that puts «repairing the future» first, rather than adopting the hubris-filled, fatally flawed Modernist promise of architecture building a better future?

Care Materialism—
A New Research Framework for
Investigating Existing Architecture
and Designing New Architecture

care as an issue in architecture
feminist care ethics

[1]

In contrast, I would like here to propose opening up a new perspective with regard to Bauhaus Modernism by relating it to the issue of care in architecture, in particular traditions of thinking about care that have been developed in feminist care ethics. How does one go about addressing Bauhaus legacies through the lens of care? Care as the lens through which one can both investigate existing architecture and design new architecture is understood very broadly here. I borrow a definition from Joan Tronto and Berenice Fisher to think about architecture in architectural history, in architecture curricula, and in present-day architectural production. In 1990, the educational scholar Berenice Fisher and the feminist political theorist and care ethicist Joan Tronto proposed the following useful definition of care: «On the most general level, we suggest that caring be viewed as a species activity that includes everything that we do to maintain, continue, and repair our <world> so that we can live in it as well as possible. That world includes our bodies, our selves, and our environment, all of which we seek to interweave in a complex, life-sustaining web.»¹ Through this definition, architecture can thus be easily understood as an agent crucially connecting social and environmental care with its care response-abilities, which range in scale from the individual human body to the planet humans live on. Picking up on this definition, architecture must therefore also actively address the interrelatedness and interdependence of the bodily, the social, and the environmental, in a nutshell: of the human and the non-human.

- [B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?
- [C] How can we explore the kinds of stand taken by Bauhaus and Modernist architects and designers and their consistency?

Questions for Investigating Bauhaus Legacies through the Framework of Care Materialism

Starting from this definition, how could a critical and historical investigation of care in Bauhaus legacies best be approached? How would one not only analyse the Bauhaus' architectural and spatial production through this contemporary definition of care, but also situate it within the historical understanding and ideology of care in the German and European context a hundred years ago? How would one relate the political, social, economic, technological, and cultural meanings given to care at the beginning of the twentieth century to the ideologies and the orientations that shaped Bauhaus pedagogies? How would one then proceed to connect these questions related to researching the historical dimensions of care with the relevant documents and sources that are representative of the widely different positions within Bauhaus pedagogies, in the light of an awareness that the Bauhaus is not monolithic, but made up of approaches and orientations that differed widely from each other? We might think here of fundamental differences in approach between, for example, Johannes Itten and Walter Gropius and Hannes Meyer and Mies van der Rohe. How would one relate the historical answers to the questions of care that were given by different Bauhaus approaches, on the one hand, with, on the other hand, today's critical theoretical perspectives and insights on care and architecture with regard to the ethics and politics of class, ethnicity, gender, race, able-bodiedness, materials, resources, and the environment? How would one analyse the architectural answers and solutions connected to care in built Bauhaus legacies? How would one analyse the shortcomings and failures, care injustice or care discrimination that are spatially built into Bauhaus legacies?

A Feminist Approach to Analysing Spatialization of Care through Architecture

A theoretically and historically well-founded care materialism, particularly from a feminist angle, would make it possible to trace and analyse the translation of care into space through architecture, in other words, the spatialization of care in its interrelated and interdependent bodily, social, and environmental dimensions. The spatialization of caring labour in the household offers one specific line of investigation here. In feminist Marxist terminology, caring

bauhaus legacies
care as an issue in architecture

bauhaus pedagogies

different bauhaus versions
heterogeneity of the bauhaus

care materialism
care as an issue in architecture

labour is referred to as «reproductive labour»; tracing the spatialization of reproductive labour with a particular focus on the intersecting axes of class, gender, and race would look at needs, spaces, and uses. Care materialism would look at existing examples of built Bauhaus legacies understanding them as a blueprint for organizing reproductive labour. Blueprints, literally and figuratively, offer a means of approaching analysis of the spatialization of caring labour in the household by examining the layout of floor plans, the dimensions of rooms, their location within a building, relationships between different rooms, and how particular spaces relate to light and air. Another line of investigation for this approach to care materialism would look at the intersection of economy and ecology in land use and land treatment. Yet another research area would be concerned with the building materials used and their ecological properties and environmental dimensions. Such a novel approach to the built Bauhaus legacies through the framework of care materialism holds the promise of new and critical insights and would definitively warrant the time and resources needed for several years of research.

An Innovative Architecture Curriculum for Living with an Infected Planet—The Bauhaus as Revolutionary Precedent

architectural education reform
new architectural curriculum

bauhaus school acting
as a precedent

bauhaus legacies
bauhaus as a call for change

interdisciplinary approach

When addressing the question of care in architecture for the future, it should be noted that architectural education is to a large extent manifestly unprepared to meet these challenges. To that end, let us look once more to the Bauhaus and the break with tradition it effected and ask what it holds for us today as strategies, as indications of how to think about reforming pedagogy, as well as implementing and institutionalizing a new architectural curriculum. The first Bauhaus legacy I want to mobilize here in strategic terms is an awareness that it is possible to unsettle and disrupt conventional architectural education and to mobilize the resources to establish a new school of design. Dissatisfaction must have been present at the outset when the Bauhaus was founded in 1919—a profound dissatisfaction with existing models of teaching and designing, of thinking and making. Dissatisfaction is an important factor. It can be the beginning of radical change. The second Bauhaus legacy I want to make use of is the intention to counteract and push back the boundaries of disciplines and overcome the divide between arts and crafts, between art and technology, design and industry.

[O] What is the significance and relevance of the Bauhaus and Modernism today—a historical phenomenon or a resource for the present? And what, if anything, constitutes their current relevance?

[O] At precisely this moment, when the climate crisis collides with the pandemic crisis, I will connect these strategic legacies of the Bauhaus. I shall therefore insist here, in speculative vein, that it is possible to imagine an architecture curriculum rooted in care that acts to counter the deleterious divisions between the ecological, the economic, and the social crisis.²

Questions for a New Architecture Curriculum Focused on Care

For thinking openly, speculatively, and generatively, it is always important to start by searching for the questions that need to be raised. What would constitute the starting points for new orientations of an architectural curriculum? What are the damaging separations that need to be addressed and overcome today for imagining and building architecture that is conscious of the uncertainty of the future? What would be the knowledges (in the plural) that such a curriculum should actively seek out? How will these knowledges be constituted in a collaborative effort of educators, students, experts, the communities involved? What kind of architectural histories will be explored—histories that are developed from an awareness of architecture’s entanglement with the real world, with regimes of power, economic systems, ecologies of environments, technologies and materials, as well as with the everyday lived realities of needs and uses? What kind of architectural economies will be critically taught and developed? What is the significance of care for conceiving and building architecture? How can, could or maybe even will changes arise in the ways in which architecture is being thought about and built, starting from the understanding that we are, in fact, living with a deeply infected planet? What is the fundament for such a curriculum that starts from critically excavating and analysing how architecture is historically and presently implicated in and entangled with the crisis conditions of living with an infected planet? What might a curriculum for imagining and building architecture as a care-full and care-providing practice—in short, a curriculum for future caring architecture—look like? What might a curriculum for imagining and building architecture look like if it were to put «repairing the future» first rather than adopting the hubris-filled, fatally flawed Modernist promise of architecture building a better future?

new architectural curriculum
interdisciplinary approach

collaborative forms of
knowledge production

care as an issue in architecture

repairing the future

learning to dwell differently
in the world

imaginaries and change

The questions raised here concerning ways of beginning to imagine a new architecture curriculum are, of course, complex. They are further complicated by the fact that, on the one hand, these are questions of urgency and emergency in need of immediate answers, while, on the other, answers to these questions cannot be provided quickly or easily. This irresolvable tension must be endured to pave the way to «response-ability» regarding life with and on an infected planet.

feminist care ethics

Starting from care means that we must understand that care is indispensable to human life. Humans are always in need of care. Throughout their lives, humans depend on care in different ways, and throughout their lives they give care in different ways. In the words of Berenice Fisher and Joan Tronto: «Survival establishes the fundamental context of caring. As a species, we have no choice about engaging in caring activities.»³ Having no choice to care does not make humans unfree, even though this is one of the key narratives in Modernist conceptual traditions, which placed the care-free, autonomous, and independent white and male subject of Enlightenment Man in opposition to all other un-free and dependent subjects, with many of them concerned with caring labour, which has also been called «dirty work».⁴ Freedom of care therefore is also not, as today's neoliberal ideology with its hyper-individualism would have us to believe, about individuals having the (false) freedom of tailored market choices concerning care services including health care, child care, or elder care.

Architecture Bridging the Necessity of Care and the Freedom to Care

feminist care ethics

The relationship between freedom and care can be much better understood through concepts of public good or commoning. Freedom comes with care, with both, care-giving and care-receiving. Being free is not to be care-free, but to be free to care. As Joan Tronto argues: «A truly free society makes people free to care. A truly equal society gives people equal chances to be well cared for, and to engage in caring relationships.»⁵

new architectural curriculum
care as an issue in architecture

A new architecture curriculum based on the premise of care would develop both from the necessity of care and the freedom to care. Irrespective of the way political, economic, and social life is organized within the specific structures and traditions of any historical social formation, care is indispensable to

human existence. Care is essential. As humans we are dependent upon physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual care and the necessary provisions for its fundamentals including air, water, food, health, clothing, shelter, sociality, education, and self-expression. The way care is being organized reveals the how and the what of the conditions that are created for living. With architecture central to the provision of care for humans, especially the provision of shelter, there is a necessity for architecture since the care it provides is indispensable for human life and survival. Architecture is most relevant to understanding how care is being organized and distributed in spatial terms in any historical formation, which, of course, includes present-day historical conditions and also the future. Starting from necessity and freedom, which taken together are understood here as fundamental care needs, offers radically new approaches to imagining and building architectures.

Everybody relies on architecture as a form of protection and of shelter. Architecture creates and provides the spatial infrastructure necessary for eating, sleeping, resting, taking care of bodily needs, being together with others in bodily, emotional, and intellectual proximity and exchange, or being alone to think, dream, restore oneself or recuperate. All these essential and life-sustaining activities performed in people's homes are called living. Homes therefore offer the support structure necessary for people to «live». This is fundamental to conceiving architecture as infrastructure offering the kind of support that is indispensable to human life and survival. «The dependency on infrastructure for a livable life seems clear but when infrastructure fails, and fails continuously, how do we understand that condition of life? We have found that that on which we are dependent is, in fact, not there for us, which means we are left without support. Without shelter, we are vulnerable to weather, cold, heat, and disease, perhaps also to assault, hunger, and violence.»⁶ Human life is dependent upon the infrastructural support produced through architecture. Human life is therefore made vulnerable and put at risk if architecture fails to provide this necessary support. This shows that architecture providing the necessary care is «concomitant to the continuation of life».⁷

Rarely has the issue of continuation of life as dependent on having a sheltering home taken on such urgency as today, in the COVID age. The pandemic regime on the infected planet has led to now global instructions for flattening the curve and for stopping the virus from spreading: #stayathome, #staysafe, #stayinshelter. But what about those who do not have a home? «Housing has

become the frontline defence against the coronavirus. Home has rarely been more of a life or death situation», Leilani Farha, UN Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing, notes.⁸ Farha stated that «approximately 1.8 billion people worldwide live in homelessness and grossly inadequate housing, often in overcrowded conditions, lacking access to water and sanitation—making them particularly vulnerable to contracting the virus, as they are often suffering from multiple health issues.»⁹ Does this make architects essential workers? Or, put differently, will architecture education provide the tools that are necessary for architects to become essential critical infrastructure workers, to use the vocabulary of COVID times? Essential workers are those who keep the system running, those who work in health care, the emergency services, the food and agriculture sector, the waste management sector, the water sector, the communication and information technology sector, government operations, the financial services sector, and sheltering services. With no post-pandemic futures anywhere near, with the virus being with humans on this infected planet for years, decades, to come, an architectural curriculum that radically transforms the housing economy, working toward a system that provides housing as basic care infrastructure necessary for all, will be part of the solution to this structural care catastrophe heightened by the pandemic. In Farha's words: «By ensuring access to secure housing with adequate sanitation, States will not only protect the lives of those who are homeless or living in informal settlements but will help protect the entire world's population by flattening the curve of CV19.»¹⁰

The coronavirus outbreak happened on a planet on which millions of lives, human and non-human alike, were already in peril because of the climate catastrophe. The current climate catastrophe results from the planet having been infected for centuries with the virus of colonial «capitalist patriarchy». The authoritative modern master narratives of progress-cum-innovation, growth-cum-profit, and productivity-cum-independence have not only failed to place care at the center of organizing living with the planet, but also cause infection of the planet through extraction and exploitation. «The possibility that humans, or certain forms of human existence, are such an overwhelming malignant force that Life itself faces planetary extinction has changed the topical foci of the humanities and humanistic social sciences and the quantitative social sciences and natural sciences.»¹¹ It should also change the topical foci and priorities in the architecture curriculum.

In 2019, which marked the 40th anniversary of the First World Climate Conference, 11,000 scientists from around the world co-signed the *Warning of a Climate Emergency*.¹² The warning states: «The climate crisis has arrived and is accelerating faster than most scientists expected. It is more severe than anticipated, threatening natural ecosystems and the fate of humanity. [...] climate chain reactions could cause significant disruptions to ecosystems, society, and economies, potentially making large areas of Earth uninhabitable».¹³

With architecture fully implicated in capitalism, and with architecture centrally concerned with the way in which humans inhabit the planet, architecture has thus a dual response-ability to deal with the consequences of climate change. Practicing architect and architectural educator Peggy Deamer has stated «One could say that the history of architecture <is> the history of capital».¹⁴ If this holds true, then refusing architectural business-as-usual is central, in order to prevent architecture from continuing to «build» the future of capitalism. On the contrary, architecture could choose to become the history of life.

What if architecture really chooses to become the history of life? If architecture is a form of life support, architecture as an active agent, together with all those who are behind the production of architecture, must refuse moves to withhold this life support. This is architecture's responsibility. The economy defining the production of architecture needs to be radically changed in order to provide for the infrastructures indispensable to life for all, indispensable for the 99%.¹⁵ Only a different economy, in which meeting vital needs, which are related to the infrastructure required to sustain life, is put first, would result in a different production and provision of architecture. Currently, architecture is fully defined by the interests of capital. Architecture is a product under pressure, a commodity squeezed by the interests of real-estate speculation and the construction industry.

An architecture curriculum actively searching for other economic models, together with economists, lawyers, policy makers, activists, social housing movements, developers, future users, and others important to the process of housing production would critically address the divide between architecture education and the economy that characterizes present-day curricula, and would have significant potential for helping to develop a non-capitalist economy. Sustaining life entails not only having housing needs met but means that the way in which these housing needs are met

history of architecture as
history of power/capital

refusing architectural
business-as-usual

architecture as an
active agent vs. an object

problems of habitat

new architectural curriculum

collaborative forms of
knowledge production

sustainable living

need for a different
architecture of values

need for a different
economy of desire

repairing the future

should be conducive to climate care, earth care, planet care, future care. This is not the same as the Global North's standards for sustainability, with these standards largely dovetailing with green business interests. Caring for an infected planet through architecture that does not separate economic, ecological, and social concerns will support the planet's future healing and repair.¹⁶

Starting in the Middle of Things

new architecture curriculum

architecture as an
active agent vs. an object

repairing the future

imaginaries and change

A new architecture curriculum built on care must start from the given, must start from living with an infected planet in need of healing and repairing. There is no tabula rasa. There is no «Hour Zero». These concepts are dangerous and toxic ideological fictions. Conceiving architecture as a care activity necessitates leaving behind the idea of architecture as an object or a thing. Architecture is an active agent, taking care and providing care. Architecture contributes to care justice through enabling the freedom to be cared for and to care. Architectural responsibility is consequently not just for the object conventionally referred to as architecture or as building but for the kind of care provided through it. Joan Tronto writes that architecture «starts instead from responsibilities to care, not only for this <thing>, or its creator, builder, or patron, but for all who are engaged in contact through this thing».¹⁷ It is not easy to think of all those with whom architecture as an active agent engages in care-taking and care-providing activities. One must start conceiving and building architecture in terms of providing care, providing a living environment for humans and non-humans alike, for animals, plants, materials, resources etc. Such care-driven thinking in imagining and building architecture brings to the fore the way in which the object called architecture is fully entangled with building the environment, forming part of the habitat that we call our planet. Echoing Tronto, care starts «in the middle of things». Starting in the middle of things, in the mess we find ourselves in on this infected planet, is the point of departure for a new architecture curriculum.

Notes

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Bauhaus-Méditerranée. The Art of Dwelling Differently in the World

Thierry Fabre

- [I] What can we learn from the history of the Bauhaus and Modernism when facing current issues? And how can this enable us to gain new insights into the past?
- [N] How do our own cultural, social, and political beliefs and stances affect our understanding of the Bauhaus, Modernism, and modernity?

«The highest form of hope is
despair overcome». ¹
Georges Bernanos, *La liberté,
pour quoi faire?*

bauhaus centenary

What does the Bauhaus still have to say and pass on to us? A century after its foundation, after so many events, exhibitions, publications, a television series on Arte, the inauguration of the new museums in Weimar and Dessau, or *bauhaus imaginista*, presented at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt (HKW) in Berlin for the centenary in 2019, it seems that the subject has been well and truly addressed. Why not move on rather than dwelling on history?

bauhaus legacies

bauhaus as a source
of inspiration

The time for celebration has passed; another era is dawning, more uncertain, more improbable: an era of metamorphosis. How can this Bauhaus legacy still continue changing our viewpoint and inspiring new forms?

learning to dwell differently
in the world

new everyday environment

- [I] It is not about «heading back upstream» to inflate the importance of this history from a century ago, but rather about a «salvo for the future», seeking to give another countenance to the world to come. How can we establish a basis, lay the foundations and open up new prospects in order to learn to dwell differently in the world? There are genuine lessons to be learned from the Bauhaus experience. Attempting to duplicate or even transplant it would be futile. What remains is an experience, a spirit, a collective creative adventure, linked to the invention of everyday life, which can serve as an extremely fertile inspiration for us today.

climate change

need for lifestyle changes

Given the state of the world, with continuing climate disruption, we now realize deep down that we need to change how we live. Yet nothing really changes, transitions are still tentative, and adaptations remain uncertain, due to a lack of desire or imagination that would urge us to profoundly transform our lifestyles.

bauhaus as a creative force

- [N] How should we live? In the Bauhaus spirit, artists have something to tell us and to teach us as we attempt to answer this question. Not uprooted and out of context, but as an ensemble in a specific situation, anchored perhaps in the Mediterranean world, this world made of in-between worlds. A setting where a world-class contemporary art scene on a grand scale is asserting its presence. The Mediterranean is no longer part of the past but has become a creative force again.

This is where a possible intersection with the Bauhaus legacy emerges, heralding a potential metamorphosis, for inventing new ways of living tomorrow, based on new forms. A new art of

- [O] What is the significance and relevance of the Bauhaus and Modernism today—a historical phenomenon or a resource for the present? And what, if anything, constitutes their current relevance?

bauhaus as a concrete utopia

dwelling in the world is taking shape here, for which the Mediterranean world can perhaps serve as a source and an inspiration. Is it a concrete utopia, a hope-driven principle? It is at least the promise not to give up, not to consent to the looming collapse, in this world that has become so fragile.

Lessons from the Bauhaus

lessons from the bauhaus

- [O] Why does the Bauhaus still mean something to us today? Over and above specialist scholarship, or indeed the need for excellent preservation of the archival material and works produced by the school's masters and students, the Bauhaus makes its mark. It opens an unprecedented trajectory that we can pursue. «What is good is form as movement, as action. [...] What is bad is form as immobility, as an end. [...] Form-giving is movement, action. Form-giving is life.»² That was how Paul Klee addressed his Bauhaus students. A place that creates forms that are not isolated like so many individual machines. They are in motion and alive, never fixed in place. This cross-over of forms, in multiple workshops, is much more than a simple interdisciplinary approach. It is about opening an original creative space that builds bridges between architecture, photography, drawing, dance, design, weaving and glasswork, painting, and graphics. As never before has such a conjunction of approaches occurred, in one single place, in this new type of school.

interdisciplinary approach
collaborative forms of
knowledge production

«Inventions from the unknown demand new forms», Rimbaud wrote in one of his famous «Letters of the Seer».³ It is this invention from the unknown, this visionary impulse that once gave birth to the Bauhaus, between Weimar, Dessau and Berlin.

Such a cross-over of forms establishes a foundational force whose effects we continue to feel today. It is a source of possibilities and a masterful lesson that never ceases to inspire us to invent the world of tomorrow.

dismantling arts'
hierarchical order

new unity of art and
technology

Another lesson to be learned comes from the link between the fine arts and the «arts of doing» for reinventing the everyday environment. «Art and technology, a new unity» was the motto that Walter Gropius proclaimed in 1922. This attachment to everyday life, this attention to the objects and gestures that make up our daily lives transforms our gaze. Art is no longer a celestial or sacred domain that concerns only princes or great patrons and

bauhaus school acting
as a precedent

new forms
of collective practice

heterogeneity of
the bauhaus

different bauhaus versions

new building of the future

bauhaus' power of
resistance

bauhaus as nazi germany's
antithesis

collectors; it is a form of life. It is a way of giving life a style, in the aftermath of the First World War.

Another lesson from the Bauhaus is the art of creating a school and acting as a precedent throughout the world, knowing how to build a collective project, giving birth to a «movement that shifts boundaries». This sense of a collective adventure is exemplary, even if we should not underestimate the divisions, oppositions and conflicts that have characterized the Bauhaus throughout its history. Nevertheless, it remains a school that has invented a new art of transmitting, teaching and shared creation. What was born there has «pollinated» the whole world, enabling it to make honey from this legacy. Being together, of course, but not simply to meet one another and teach what already existed. The Bauhaus had a quite different aspiration: It was about «building the future», creating and constructing the world differently. This «new building of the future» that Gropius advocated from the inception of the Bauhaus is a foundational principle. It is not a mere declaration of intent or an inconsequential theoretical manifesto. It is a way of challenging the future that has had an impact, has made its mark on the history of design, has profoundly shaped its era, in particular by drawing together, around the Bauhaus, figures such as Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, László Moholy-Nagy, Anni and Josef Albers, Marcel Breuer, Marianne Brandt and so many others. The aspiration to challenge the future bore fruit. This is the yardstick against which we must measure ourselves, seeking to take this everyday imperative as a foundation stone and use it as an example. This is a fine legacy for tomorrow, a way of confronting the dark times. A beacon that shows us the way and urges us never give up, for nothing is lost.

The Bauhaus was born amidst adversity. The Bauhaus managed to resist, in the face of myriad forms of conservatism, an established order that dictated the rules to be followed and repeated. However, it encountered considerable difficulty in handling the upsurge of identitarian, nationalist and populist *völkisch* movements, which reject everything that is different, in particular a school that attracted, in their view, far too many «Jews, foreigners or Communists». Identitarian zeal would lead Germany to its downfall in the 1930s, while the Bauhaus embodies its exact opposite: a desire to be open to the world and in particular to welcome people who come from elsewhere. This self-proclaimed taste for openness, for what «comes from across the seas», is not a weakness or a flaw in the Bauhaus. It is what gives the Bauhaus

- [1] What can we learn from the history of the Bauhaus and Modernism when facing current issues? And how can this enable us to gain new insights into the past?

its lifeblood, its *raison d'être* and, in a way, is the basis for its universality. The National Socialists were vehemently opposed to such openness and under their pressure the school was closed down.

- [1] These few lessons, drawn from the Bauhaus' experience, trace out lines of meaning, what architects like to call «regulating lines», which can be taken as a basis for re-building. They do not constitute all the Bauhaus legacy and are by no means exhaustive. But they exist and persist. Time has not stood still; on the contrary, we have entered the «Great Acceleration» over the past 50 years, to an even greater extent since the advent of economic and financial globalization. What is happening before our very eyes invites us to move on to another chapter, to invent other ways of living.

Changing Our Lifestyles—An Imperative of Our Age

need for lifestyle changes

The American way of life or the Chinese way of life are simply not viable on a global scale. Every day, we become a little more aware of the devastating effects of global warming, omnipresent pollution, unbreathable air, the extinction of half of all living species, vanishing glaciers and the inexorable rise in water levels, as exemplified in *acqua alta*, which threatens gems like Venice.

We know that we can no longer continue living like this, in the Anthropocene age. Our lives can no longer be governed by productivism and consumerism, which became central points of reference in the 19th century, initially in Europe, later in the United States and now in large parts of the world. Admonitions from the Club of Rome as early as the 1970s concerning the «limits to growth» were not heeded. On the contrary: Productivism and consumerism boomed globally after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and China's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO). «*L'Empire du Milieu*» [i.e. The Middle Kingdom, China] has been replaced by «*l'Empire des Choses*», the realm of things. Consumer society has risen to dominance as the pace of economic globalization has accelerated.

As the writer Georges Perec so aptly observed already in the 1960s: «It was almost a regulation always to wish for more than you could have. It was not they who had decreed it, it was a social law». ⁴ This purported social law lies at the heart of the value system in our consumerist and productivist world. Such a law persists today, even though some cracks are beginning to appear. The time has come to ask: What do we really need?

need for a different
architecture of values

need for a different
economy of desire

need for lifestyle changes

imaginaries and change

new everyday environment

new living—a new lifestyle

bauhaus spirit

«There is no excess in true needs», Jean Jacques Rousseau observed. It is a question of rediscovering a sense of limits in our lifestyles. This stems from a different philosophy of existence, a different architecture of values, a completely different economy of desire, where having no longer takes precedence over being, where «always more» is no longer considered a «social law». In our open, plural and democratic societies, a «social law» is not altered by decree, from above, in an authoritarian or dictatorial manner. Only emergency public health and lockdown measures, such as those adopted in the face of the COVID-19 disaster, can be imposed on us from above, for a very brief period.

Changing our lifestyles happens from the grassroots up, through a horizontal or lateral approach, right at the heart of our societies. This awakening springs from another imaginary vision, a new «imaginary institution of society», as Cornelius Castoriadis once advocated.⁵ Artists, thinkers and writers are the great purveyors of imaginary realms. They are the ones who dream of tomorrow's world and escape the empire of established, repeated, outdated standards and rules. They sketch out in advance what may happen in future and capture the ineffable. As Victor Hugo rightly observes in «Le Promontoire du songe»:⁶ «A low sky to a low soul. As one makes one's dream, one makes one's life. Our conscience is the architect of our dream. The great dream is called duty. It is also the great truth», adding: «The visionaries of life are mocked by the visionaries of negation»,⁷ those artisans of the void for whom nothing is ever possible, nothing must change, for everything must follow its course, its pre-established order. But remember that «the dreadful sense of groping one's way in a dream is intermingled with the beginning of all things».⁸ That held true for the founders of the Bauhaus, who tamed their dream and gave new form to the world. It was not a hollow dream, but a vision embodied, from a school with many faces that sought out and gave a new architecture to the order of things. A school that created a different aesthetic of the everyday.

Art does indeed make it possible to give life a style, as the Bauhaus creators most certainly did. A «style», this «mark of the human being on everything», as Paul Valéry so aptly defines it.⁹ It is an expression of its time and the spirit of that time, of a singular moment in history. This time is unique, it cannot be reproduced or imitated. It may perhaps be extended, as was attempted in Chicago with «The New Bauhaus» (1937) founded by László Moholy-Nagy, later IIT Institute of Design (ID), or at Black Mountain College,

- [1] What can we learn from the history of the Bauhaus and Modernism when facing current issues? And how can this enable us to gain new insights into the past?

North Carolina. But it is more than a school—it is a spirit that we must bring to life, a foundational experience for an adventure of engaging with forms that we can draw inspiration from today to create a different aesthetic of the everyday.

need for lifestyle changes
bauhaus as a creative force

- [1] Changing our lifestyles, this imperative of our times, can find a vibrant wellspring in the Bauhaus legacy, a rare experience and creative energy that shows us that something of this order is possible. It has happened at least once in history, despite all the obstacles. This is what I see as the significance of this link between the Bauhaus and the Mediterranean.

It is not in any way about the Bauhaus in the Mediterranean, the way these architectural or other forms have been disseminated, transplanted to Istanbul, Tel Aviv or Casablanca. That is not the issue being raised here. The link between the Bauhaus and the Mediterranean operates in a different register and bears witness to a completely different perspective. It is an invitation to change the way we live, by giving it style, taking as our point of departure the contemporary Mediterranean world. A context where new forms are being invented, moving beyond the disasters currently unfolding, beyond violence and war, forced migrations and essential exile, murderous theocracies and military dictatorships, while also moving beyond all the forms of immobility approved by the Western powers in the name of security and stability, a true European and Western obsession that prevents us from seeing what drives the younger generations, who can no longer stand this straitjacket. There is another face of the contemporary Mediterranean world and it is high time we stopped concealing it and learned instead to look it in the eye—the world of the creative Mediterranean.

bauhaus as
a call for change

new living—a new lifestyle

The Creative Mediterranean

need for a different
architecture of values

need for a different
economy of desire

Changing the way that we live is only possible with a different economy of desire. These changes, while certainly globalized, can only be effective if they happen locally. Our ways of life respond to symbolic territories, anthropological anchors, value systems, forms of belonging, gestures and practices that make sense within the history and genealogy of the place in which we live.

That also holds true too for the Mediterranean world, this world composed of in-between worlds where many alloys between cultures and ways of life have been forged, moving

beyond divisions and oppositions, reflecting profound interactions throughout history. What some are beginning to call «bio-regions» took shape in the Mediterranean world. It is a natural ecosystem that has come into being in this form over the lengthy course of history but it is also a type of cultural ecosystem that has emerged, particularly over the last thirty years. I call it «the creative Mediterranean».

La Méditerranée créatrice is the title of the first book I edited and published in 1994.¹⁰ I argued then for an artistic and cultural «renaissance of the Mediterranean». Far from being fixated on the past, celebrating wreckage and ruins, being obsessed with cultural heritage, I put forward the idea back then that «we are entering a new process of cultural creation in the Mediterranean». A Mediterranean modernity was beginning to emerge, a contemporary art scene, once paralyzed, imprisoned by dominant Western forms, was asserting itself. How would it find its place? Through creation, specifically by inventing its own forms in the world. Despite all the burdens, archaisms and immobility of dictatorial powers, conjoined with religious obscurantism, this élan has managed to burst through this immense stratum of inertia, this perpetual reproduction of the same thing. The flipside of the disaster is exactly there, in this bubbling up of artistic and cultural lifeblood, driven on particularly by a whole new generation of artists who craft an imaginary for the 21st century.

How can this scattered, fragmented whole, which to this day is not yet clearly perceived, be made easier to see and understand? Perhaps we should start by drawing one or more constellations that allow us to connect various figures, stars that light up the sky of our imagination. That could be the storyline for a major exhibition that has not yet been realized ... «Constellation: group of stars forming a figure, a group of shining objects, remarkable individuals». The dictionary definition points us in the right direction.

Constellations-Méditerranée: Therein lies a vision of what a 21st-century Bauhaus could be, not as a school, nor even as a movement, but as a vibrant fount of creation. Where «inventions from the unknown demand new forms». Where a new «imaginary museum» is being built.

Constellations-Méditerranée: Like the 1923 Bauhaus exhibition in Weimar, a sort of opening scene presenting the school's various productions, showcasing new art, an emerging style and the creative fertility of a place where forms are invented, today it

- [B] What do we understand by taking a stand regarding architecture and design, and particularly of the Bauhaus and Modernism?

is possible to connect contemporary artists, steeped in the Mediterranean world, in an innovative constellation or in several such constellations.

Constellations-Méditerranée: There are numerous potential configurations to link together remarkable figures and to join up dots that come together as an armful of stars. Unique artists, with no desire to be part of a movement, carve out their own pathway but they are not separate from their context, nor can they escape the pace of the world. They are nurtured and inspired by the Mediterranean world, its fragments and its heritage, its colours and its shapes, its repertoires and its rhythms, its faces and its gestures, its flavours and its images as well as its narratives.

Joining together artists and works, those stars that shine in the heavens of contemporary creation, is one way to start imagining a Bauhaus-Méditerranée of the 21st century. A major exhibition that would showcase the interactions and myriad connections between these different *Constellations-Méditerranée* could offer one possible meeting place. A form of concrete utopia, of metamorphosis of the Bauhaus spirit into action could thus perhaps emerge. Remaining faithful to this link between contemporary artistic forms and everyday objects for attempting to transform our lifestyles, it is now a matter of inventing the forms of the future. Or how can we dwell differently in the world?

bauhaus as
a concrete utopia

bauhaus signifying
art's power to
transform society

Dwelling Differently in the World

learning to dwell differently
in the world

- [B] The question we face today, as Bruno Latour suggests, is: «*Où atterrir?*»—to cite the original title of his book *Down To Earth*—, which translates literally as «Where to land?»¹¹ He proposes that we should come down to earth at the conjunction between a terrain and the world. It is not just about one particular terrain in isolation, for that would hint at identitarian self-absorption and would be a dangerous dead-end, nor is it just about the world seen in isolation, for that would be a sign that something had been lost in the vast empire of globalization. It is the conjunction of the two that we must create, building our dwelling for learning to live differently in the world. Far from the ever-faster pace, pillaging and devastation of our planet.

Dwelling differently in the world is not a simple transition, illusory or cosmetic, an adaptation to global warming or an ephemeral or temporary accommodation. It is a much broader

need for lifestyle changes

perspective that we are talking about here, a form of inner revolution that invites us to genuinely change our lifestyles.

Inspiration may come from certain aspects of Martin Heidegger's important text «Building Dwelling Thinking».¹² One is ill-advised nowadays, certainly, to quote Martin Heidegger, given his proven complicity with the National Socialist regime. Many of his texts, statements, diaries and deeds bear witness to this. Nonetheless Martin Heidegger's philosophy and thought, as demonstrated by Georges Steiner, Hannah Arendt or his exchanges with René Char, cannot be reduced to this dimension alone.

«Building Dwelling Thinking» leads us to reflect, particularly when he observes that «the real meaning of the verb *bauen*, to dwell, has been lost to us. [...] To be a human being means to be on the earth as a mortal. It means to dwell.»¹³ He invites us to reconsider the meaning of limits in the art of dwelling in the world and it is in this sense that his ideas may be fruitful today: «A boundary is not that at which something stops, but, as the Greeks recognized, the boundary is that from which something begins its presencing.»¹⁴

learning to dwell differently
in the world

That from which something begins its presencing ... could indeed be a *21st-century Bauhaus-Méditerranée*. A way of inventing a new art of dwelling in the world, based on limits, on a sense of proportion, in the face of the disproportionate excess of our contemporary world. This ardent desire to draw limits, to «keep a sense of proportion and respect limits», according to an age-old saying of ancient philosophy, this philosophizing as a way of life is what Albert Camus called «*la pensée de midi*» (thought at the meridian), and not «*du midi*», that is, not a way of thinking from the south of France, because it is in no way a question of regionalism, but of a new form of universalism.

imaginaries and change

Thinking that addresses limits for building in the 21st century, learning to live and dwell differently in the world. There is a compass here that can guide our steps, a horizon that opens up, a remarkable imaginary that takes shape in the artists' gaze. As visionaries, they help to unravel reality, such as it is, to metamorphose our heritages and our visions of the world, to inspire «*ce qui commence à être*»—«what begins its presencing»—, the opening scene of another art of dwelling in the world, coming from the Mediterranean world. Where it is possible to invent a world after the disaster.

Notes

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At present her research focuses on the impact of unbuilt architecture on realized projects, and the relationship between painting and architectural practice. Fields of interest are History and Theory of Modernism, 20th century Architectural Criticism, 20th century German Art and Architecture. She has published widely, inter alia on Bruno Taut, his different vision of Modernism, his works in Ankara, Neues Bauen, space conception and architectural Turkish tradition, on design and resistance, the design protest of Hans Scharoun during Nazism, on the importance of history (*History will teach us everything. Bruno Zevi and the innovative methodology for future design*, 2018), on architecture education, aesthetics of the memento.

Andrea Bärnreuther, research associate bauhaus100 at the Bauhaus-Archiv / Museum für Gestaltung, Berlin. After studying art history, theater studies and modern history in Erlangen/Nuremberg and Vienna, she received her doctorate with a dissertation on Nazi architecture and urban planning: «Revision of Modernism under the Swastika. Planning for a New Munich». Shortly before the fall of the Berlin Wall, she began her professional career at the Deutsches Historisches Museum, Berlin, and worked in the National Gallery of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (SMB), at the first joint exhibition of both National Galleries in East and West Berlin before their reunification, as well as in the SMB Art Library's architecture collection. She worked as an exhibition curator at the National Gallery (e.g. Centennial Exhibition) and as Head of Communications, Media, Publications at the Art and Exhibition Hall of the Federal Republic of Germany, Bonn. She conceived and organized academic, discursive and cultural programs in the Directorate General of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (e.g. InselPerspektiven on UNESCO World Heritage Museum Island; public discussions on issues of cultural diversity in (im)migration societies) and at the University of Rostock. The focus of her research interest is on 20th century art, culture and architecture in a socio-political context and on a transnational and transcultural concept of cultural heritage as a network of relationships, understood with regard to museums as an impetus for change.

Florentine Baumann (*1974) studied art at the Berlin University of the Arts and German language and literature at the Berlin Technical University. For about twenty years, she has worked as an art teacher at the Nelson Mandela School, a public international school in Berlin. Florentine Baumann teaches high-school students in German and English and prepares them to sit the International Abitur or Baccalaureate. In addition, she heads the school's art department, works as a school consultant for art and cultural education in Berlin Region 3 and trains future teachers in her specialized seminar.

For the past four years, she has coordinated project work with the Bauhaus-Archiv / Museum für Gestaltung, Berlin as an integral part of the school's internal curriculum, for which an optional course «School Goes Bauhaus» was established. For the past 15 years, all students from grades 1 to 13 have engaged continuously in aesthetic research on art, design, and architectural concepts through the «Visual Journal» that she introduced at the school.

Chin-Wei Chang, PhD Candidate in Architectural History & Theory, The Bartlett School of Architecture, University College London. He was trained as an architect and obtained a master's degree in urban design in Taiwan. His previous research addressed social production of spatial forms within non architecture consequences, everyday landscapes, and their conflicts with modernity in the contemporary built environment. Nowadays, as PhD Candidate in Architectural History & Theory, he focuses on architectural profession and academy, with special attention on histories and dissemination of design education amid China, Europe, and the US.

Hila Cohen-Schneiderman is an Israeli curator. Since 2018 she has been Chief Curator of MoBY: Museums of Bat Yam. She specializes in site-specific projects based on artistic research and explores how artists and art relate to the public and the urban realm. Between 2016–17 she curated the Liebling Project—a multi-disciplinary artists' residency in collaboration with the Tel Aviv Municipality Conservation Department, rethinking the concept of urban conservation. From 2012–2016, she worked as a curator at the Petach Tikva Museum of Art and between 2010–2011 she acted as curator and director of the Spaceship Gallery at Hayarkon 70 social complex, Tel-Aviv.

She teaches at the Bezalel Academy of Art and Design, Jerusalem and Shenkar College, Ramat Gan. She is a graduate of the «Revivim: Honors Program» and holds an MA in Hebrew Literature from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Some of her recent exhibitions include Eliyahu Fatal's solo show: *Since Then, Measurements Have Begun*, Bat Yam Museum of Art 2020; the trilogy *Plenty—New Age—The Believers*, Bat Yam Museum of Art, 2018–2019; *Transferumbau: Liebling-Dessau*, at Bauhaus Dessau & Liebling Haus 2019; *The Crystal Palace & the Temple of Doom*, Petach Tikva Museum of Art, 2016, and many more.

Thierry Fabre, essayist, scholar and exhibition curator. He lives and works in Marseille and is currently the Director of the Mediterranean programme at the Institut méditerranéen de Recherches Avancées (IMéRA). He is the founder of Rencontres d'Avérores, an event held annually on the coast since 1994, and was editor-in-chief of the journal *La pensée de midi*. His books *Traversées* and *Eloge de la pensée de midi* are published by Actes Sud. He was Director of Actes Sud's Collection Bleu and Director of Cultural Development and International Relations at Mucem in Marseille.

Helen Ferguson is a Berlin-based conference interpreter (aiic) and translator from German, French and Italian into English. Born in Edinburgh, Master of Arts in French and German (with Art History and Logic and Metaphysics) from St. Andrews University (UK). She has worked on a freelance basis for many years, specializing in the arts, architecture, film, intellectual property law and international politics. She is also a copy editor and consultant for funding applications.

Raquel Franklin, Head of the Theory of Architecture Department at Universidad Anáhuac México. She also teaches on the History and Theory of Modern and Contemporary Architecture at Universidad Anáhuac México. She obtained her Doctor of Science degree in Architecture from the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology in 1997 with her dissertation «Hannes Meyer in Mexico (1939–1949)». She holds a Master of Architecture degree from the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México and a Master of Arts in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies from Brandeis University.

She is a founding member of the Mexican Chapter of DOCOMOMO. From June 2013 to December 2014 she was a fellow of Germany's Kulturstiftung des Bundes at Stiftung Bauhaus Dessau, working as co-curator, together with Werner Möller, on the exhibition *The Coop Principle: Hannes Meyer and the Idea of Collective Design* presented at the Stiftung Bauhaus Dessau, Germany, from May to September 2015, in the Gallery Archizoom of the Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne and Forum d'Architectures in Lausanne, Switzerland, from September to October 2016 and the Franz Mayer Museum in Mexico City from March to May 2017. She is a member of the editorial board of the journal *DeArq* of the Universidad de los Andes, Colombia.

Lilian-Astrid Geese, conference interpreter (aiic) and translator for English, French and Spanish in Berlin. Born in Bonn/Germany, studied and passed her MA at FASK GERMERSHEIM, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz. She has worked for many years as freelancer for the art and culture scene, theaters, centers of literature, museums, galleries and publishing houses in Germany and abroad. Selected references: Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin, Bauhaus-Archiv / Museum für Gestaltung,

Berlin, Berliner Festspiele, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin, Berlinale, Schaubühne, Berlin, and HAU Hebbel am Ufer, Berlin. Consultant interpreter for festivals and competitions, including IFFF International Women's Film Festival, ilb international literature festival, LoA Hamburg, Berlin biennale, documenta, European. Book reviewer and film critic. More info and pics at www.comunicada.de.

Simone Hain, Architectural and planning historian. Her research focuses are the history of modern planning and building, GDR architectural history. From 2006 to 2016 she was professor at the Institute for Urban and Building History at Graz University of Technology. She has held numerous lectureships, including at Humboldt University Berlin, Kunsthochschule Berlin-Weißensee, Bauhaus University Weimar, Hochschule für bildende Künste Hamburg, University of California, Berkeley, and in 2000 a Visiting Professorship for Architectural History at Hochschule für bildende Künste Hamburg. In 2005/2006 she taught at the Bauhaus University in Weimar (Gropius Professor for the History of Modern Architecture). In 1990 she became Departmental Head of the Theory and History Department at Institute for Urban Development and Architecture of the GDR Bauakademie. She played a significant role in developing the scholarly collections at the Institute for Regional Development and Structural Planning in Erkner (IRS), where she headed the research area «Modern Architectural and Planning History». In conjunction with Hartmut Frank, she initiated the first all-German architectural-historical retrospective Two German Architectures 1949–1989, an Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen travelling exhibition (2004–2017) which returned to Germany in 2020.

She is the author of numerous publications, addressing inter alia Karel Teige, Mart Stam, Hannes Meyer, Bruno Taut, modern urban planning, East Berlin's planning history, the avant-garde and Socialism, the architectural doctrine of «national traditions», and industrialization in the GDR.

Ulrich Hartung, Architectural historian, Berlin. He studied art history and classical archaeology at Humboldt University of Berlin (1986–1991), where he received his doctorate in 1996 with a dissertation on the theme of GDR Houses of Culture in the 1950s, which was published in 1997 as *Arbeiter- und Bauertempel*. His research focuses on GDR Traditionalist and Modernist architecture as well as on the functionality and aesthetics of National Socialist architecture.

In 2001–2002 he worked as a research assistant in the Brandenburg Gedenkstätten Stiftung, Stiftung und Museum Oranienburg-Sachsenhausen. Together with Andrea Riedle, he designed the permanent exhibition *Die Stadt und das Lager* (The City and the Camp) (since 2004). In 2004, together with Andreas Butter, he realized the exhibition (and accompanying publication) *Ostmoderne. Architektur in Berlin 1945–1965* about GDR post-war Modernism architecture, which was

shown in nine different locations until 2007. In 2011 he presented his theses on the specificity of Modernism in GDR architecture at the «Denkmal Ost-Moderne» international symposium at the Bauhaus University Weimar; these were published in 2012. In 2019/2020 he worked on the exhibition and publication project of the Hermann Henselmann Foundation *Bauhaus—Shanghai—Stalinallee—Ha-Neu. Der Lebensweg des Architekten Richard Paulick 1903–1979* at Café Sibylle on Karl-Marx-Allee, Berlin, and at the Stiftung Bauhaus Dessau (2020). His activities also include expert opinions on heritage conservation for 20th-century buildings in Berlin.

Titia Rixt Hoekstra, Lecturer, Creative Technology, University of Twente, Enschede. She is an architectural historian. She teaches history and theory of creativity at the University of Twente. In the past she worked as a research associate at the Leopold Franzens University of Innsbruck, where she taught theory and history of architecture, and also as a research associate at the Bauhaus University of Weimar.

Hoekstra studied architectural history in Groningen, the Netherlands, and received her PhD in architectural history in 2005. Her publications include: *Building versus Bildung. Manfredo Tafuri and the construction of a historical discipline* (2005) and *Lost in Translation? Tafuri on Germany, Tafuri in Germany, a history of reception* (2008) and *Thinking about the Bauhaus from the Other Side: the history of the Bauhaus Colloquium in Communist Germany* (2013).

Her research interests focus on the status of criticality in architecture in relationship to the legacy of the Venice School, on gender-studies and on the historiography of modern architecture.

Annemarie Jaeggi (*1956 in Washington, D.C., USA), Director of the Bauhaus-Archiv / Museum für Gestaltung in Berlin since 2003. After studying art history in Zurich and Freiburg/Br. and subsequently completing a doctorate, she was an assistant at the Institute of Art History at the University of Karlsruhe. Following her habilitation, she held various professorships. She teaches at Berlin Technical University and is a lecturer at the Accademia di Architettura in Lugano / Mendrisio. She is a founding member of the German Society for Design History and a German Design Council Board Member. She has published extensively, including articles on Adolf Meyer, Egon Eiermann, and the Fagus factory.

Carina Kitzenmaier (*1990), freelance architect. She studied architecture at the Berlin University of the Arts and at the École d'Architecture Paris Val de Seine (BA 2015, MA 2018) and works for Seckler Schick Architects, and for the Bauhaus-Archiv / Museum für Gestaltung, Berlin, where she coordinated the interface between students and researchers for the symposium «taking a stand. debating the bauhaus and modernism». Since 2015, she has written articles for «Tollabea» (www.tollabea.de),

a blog on education and family. As an MA student, she contributed to the development of the SpielRaumStadt concept (Turit Fröbe/Kirsten Winderlich (eds.): *SpielRaumStadt. Baukulturvermittlung für Kinder*, Athena Verlag 2017). In 2016, she joined the *Stadt-denker* team, in this context also organizing events around Flensburg harbour in 2016. In the summer of 2020, in cooperation with the Haus der Kulturen der Welt (HKW) exhibition *Bildungsschock (Education Shock)*, she hosted a project week at the Hannah Höch Campus at Märkisches Viertel, Berlin, where she developed and implemented a design concept for the schoolyard together with the students.

Eduard Kögel (*1960), researcher specialized on the exchange between Europe and Asia. He studied architecture, urban and landscape planning at the Gesamthochschule Kassel. He has been a research associate at the Chair of Planning and Building in Non-European Regions at the Technical University of Darmstadt (1999–2004), and wrote his doctoral thesis at the Bauhaus University in Weimar (2007) on Rudolf Hamburger and Richard Paulick in China. From 2009 to 2011 he worked on a research project on Ernst Boerschmann at the Technical University of Berlin. Kögel is a member of the Advisory Board of *ABE Journal*, an online, open-access peer-reviewed magazine for European architecture, also beyond Europe (2013–2019). He has held lectureships at the Technical University of Darmstadt, Technical University of Berlin and Bauhaus University Weimar. His publications include *The Grand Documentation. Ernst Boerschmann and Chinese Religious Architecture*, Berlin/Boston 2015, and *Architekt im Widerstand. Rudolf Hamburger im Netzwerk der Geheimdienste*, Berlin 2020. Kögel's exhibitions and research focus on contemporary and historical architecture in China and post-independence architecture in South-east Asia. He has been conducting research on the exchange between Europe and Asia for 25 years. www.eduardkoegel.de www.seam-encounters.net.

Elke Krasny, PhD, Professor for Art and Education and Head of the Department of Education in the Arts at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Krasny's interdisciplinary scholarship, academic writings, curatorial work, and international lectures address questions of care at the present historical juncture with a focus on emancipatory and transformative practices in art, curating, architecture and urbanism. Her interdisciplinary approach connects feminist theory, care ethics, cultural history, environmental humanities, and memory studies.

The 2019 exhibition and edited volume *Critical Care. Architecture and Urbanism for a Broken Planet*, curated and edited with Angelika Fitz, was published by MIT Press and introduces a care perspective into architecture addressing the Anthropocene conditions of the global present. Her 2020 essays «In-Sorge-Bleiben. Care-Feminismus für einen infizierten Planeten», published as

a transcript in Michael Volkmer's and Karin Werner's volume *Die Corona-Gesellschaft*, and «Care Feminism for Living with an Infected Planet» (https://www.akbild.ac.at/Portal/universitaet/uber-uns/corona_essays/care-feminism-for-living-with-an-infected-planet) develop a care-ethical perspective for pandemic times.

Ryan Fred Long, Associate Professor of Spanish at the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, University of Maryland. He is Associate Dean for Academic Standards and Policies, the Graduate School at the University of Maryland, Member of the Core Faculty, Comparative Literature, at the University of Maryland. From 2008–2013 he was Assistant and then Associate Professor of Spanish at the University of Oklahoma, 2001–2002 Lecturer of Spanish at the Texas A & M University.

He holds a PhD in Spanish from the Duke University (2002) with the thesis *Challenging the Foundations of History: The State, 1968 and the Mexican Novel*. Among his numerous publications are *Fictions of Totality: The Mexican Novel, 1968, and the National-Popular State* (2008) and *The People's Print Shop: Art, Politics, and the Taller de Gráfica Popular* (2017). He delivered several presentations about Hannes Meyer, e.g. «Hannes Meyer's Directorship of the Taller de Gráfica Popular, a Case of Cultural Transnationalism», 2009; «Visualizing Public Education in 1940s Mexico: Hannes Meyer's Photographic Archive», 2012; «Hannes Meyer in Europe and Mexico», 2017. *Hannes Meyer in Europe and Mexico: The Politics and Aesthetics of Place and Displacement*, a book project and an interactive digital platform, is in progress.

David Maulen de los Reyes, researcher in the interface between art, science, technology and society, specializing in Chile and South America.

He holds a degree in art from Universidad de Chile, 1998, a master's degree in Communication from Universidad Austral de Chile, 2014, and a Diploma in Critical Culture. One research topic is Bauhaus and Bauhaus pedagogy in Latin America, especially in Chile, one of his research projects «The reform of «Integral Architecture» at the Universidad de Chile, 1945–1948», published in Magazine *Bauhaus*, N° 7 (2015): «The Integral Architecture. Co-op in Chile». Bauhaus as well as Chilean contemporary art is also the focus of his curatorial activity: He participated in *Migrant Bauhaus* (later *bauhaus imaginista*), a joint research and exhibition project of the bauhaus cooperation Berlin Dessau Weimar, Goethe-Institut, and Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin (2017–2019). He was Regional Curator of the exhibition project *The whole world is a Bauhaus*, organized by the Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen and staged by the ZKM, Karlsruhe (2019). He has a wide range of teaching experience, especially in the field of contemporary Chilean art, theoretical foundations of modernity, theory and methodology of design, history of design, visual perception, architecture and vanguard.

Joaquín Medina Warmburg, Professor of History of Building and Architecture at the KIT Faculty of Architecture, Karlsruhe. He studied architecture at ETSA Sevilla and RWTH Aachen, where he received his doctorate. He has taught and researched at various European and American universities, most recently at the Universidad de Navarra and Princeton University. From 2011 to 2015 he headed the Walter Gropius Chair of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) at the Universidad Torcuato Di Tella in Buenos Aires.

His teaching and research activities focus on the history of architecture and urban planning in the 19th and 20th centuries. He is particularly interested in the processes of cultural internationalization that have led to contemporary globalization discourse in architecture and urban planning. The approach he pursues is rooted in the notion of comparative and unifying history. This encompasses a particular focus on questions of technology and the environment in the sense of an «environmental history of architecture». His books include *Proclamas de Modernidad: Walter Gropius, escritos y conferencias 1908–1934* (Barcelona 2018), *The Construction of Climate in Modern Architectural Culture, 1920–1980* (with Claudia Schmidt, Madrid 2015) and *Projizierte Moderne: deutschsprachige Architekten und Städtebauer in Spanien, 1918–1936* (Frankfurt 2005).

Doreen Mende, curator, researcher and theorist, Associate Professor and Director of the CCC Research Masters and PhD Forum at the Geneva School of Art and Design HEAD, Geneva, co-founder (together with Tom Holert and Volker Pantenburg) of the Harun Farocki Institut, Berlin. Her research projects draw on transgenerational and multi-perspective readings to address the metabolism of the archive, politics of representation, the decolonization of Socialism, and the economy and geopolitics of exhibition processes after 1989. Her curatorial projects include «Hamhungs Zwei Waisen (Für Konrad Püschel)» (2018/19) within the context of *bauhaus imaginista* in Moscow, Berlin, Bern und Istanbul; «Navigation Beyond Vision» (2019) together with the Farocki Institut and e-flux journal at HKW, Berlin; «The Undutiful Daughter's Concept of Archival Metabolism» (2018) for e-flux journal; «The Navigation Principle» (2017) at Dutch Art Institute; furthermore publications, e. g. for Sternberg Press and Oxford Handbook for Communist Visual Cultures (2019). Mende initiated the research project «Decolonizing Socialism—Entangled Internationalism», funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (2019–2023). She is Co-founder of the collaborative European Forum for Advanced Practices (EFAP). Mende holds a PhD from the Goldsmiths College, University of London. She lives in Berlin and works in Geneva.

Luise Metzger studied art history in Gießen, Frankfurt a. M. and Munich and graduated in 1977 with a dissertation on art criticism on the *documenta*, Kassel.

Since 1996, she has been owner of edition metzel [founded as Verlag Silke Schreiber in 1982]. edition metzel publishes books on art history of the 20th and 21st centuries. The program includes monographic titles and artists' writings as well as studies on aesthetics, style, genre, and visual culture from Modernism to Postmodern and Contemporary art as well as discourses on topical issues.

Winfried Nerdinger, President of the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts, Munich, Professor Emeritus of Excellency for the History of Architecture and Building Construction, Technical University, Munich. He has made seminal contributions to research into the history of art and architecture, as well as raising public awareness of architecture's importance. His research focuses include history and theory of architecture in the 18th to 21st centuries, the city of Munich's architectural and art history, and the history of National Socialism. He attained particular recognition in the Chair of Architectural History at Technical University, Munich. In setting up the Architekturmuseum, he created the largest specialized and research archive for architecture in Germany. In 2012 he was appointed founding director of the NS Documentation Centre in Munich, a project he had initiated; he oversaw its inauguration in a new building in 2015 and directed the centre until April 2018.

He is the author and editor of numerous ground-breaking publications on the Bauhaus. One focus is his engagement with Walter Gropius. 1993 saw the publication of *Bauhaus-Moderne im Nationalsozialismus: zwischen Anbiederung und Verfolgung* (1993), which he developed in conjunction with Bauhaus-Archiv / Museum für Gestaltung, Berlin, based on the 1991 conference; it is the first systematic examination of the role of Bauhaus modernism in National Socialism. His most recent publications are *Das Bauhaus. Werkstatt der Moderne* (2018) and the intellectual biography *Walter Gropius. Architekt der Moderne* (2019) that is balancing the Bauhaus founder's role as the creator of a myth that still holds sway today with his role as the creator of world-class architecture and of an epoch-making school.

Susanne Neubauer, art historian and guest researcher at Universidade de Brasília (together with Co-Author Marcelo Mari, Adjunct Professor, Instituto de Artes Visuais, Universidade de Brasília). She studied art history, economics and film studies at the University of Zurich and completed her doctorate with a thesis on the installation work of the American artist Paul Thek in 2011. She was curator at the Kunstmuseum Luzern (2002–2009) and has since worked as an independent curator and scholar for art academies and museums (Moderna Museet Stockholm, Lehmbrock Museum Duisburg, Vorarlberger Kunstverein). She was lecturer, fellow and visiting professor at Kingston University London (2009–2014), University of the Arts London (2012), HKB Braunschweig (2014) and Universidade de Brasília (2017)

and was research assistant to the director of HGK Basel (2013–2014). In her last position at Freie Universität Berlin, she researched projects of postwar modernity in Brazil and Germany. In 2018, she was a scholarship holder for cultural criticism at the Landis & Gyr Foundation in London.

Co-Author Marcelo Mari, Adjunct professor, Art theory and history, Universidade de Brasília. His current research focuses on the heritage of art and modern architecture and their relationship to Brazilian politics.

Anh-Linh Ngo, Architect, author and co-editor of ARCH+. He is co-founder of the international initiative *projekt bauhaus*, which from 2015–19 critically examined the ideas of the Bauhaus with symposia, workshops, pop-up exhibitions and a performance. He was a member of the Artistic Advisory Board of ifa (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen) (2010–16), for which he developed the touring exhibition *Post-Oil City* in 2009. 2018 saw the premiere in Berlin of the ifa exhibition *An Atlas of Commoning: Places of Collective Production* that he co-initiated and co-curated, which subsequently went on a ten-year worldwide tour. It was on show in Pittsburgh, USA, in 2019 and at the MUCA, Mexico City, in 2020. Since 2018, he is a member of the Board of Trustees of the IBA 2027 StadtRegion Stuttgart. On the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Fall of the Berlin Wall, Anh-Linh Ngo was invited by the Neue Berliner Kunstverein to conceive the exhibition *1989–2019: Politik des Raums im Neuen Berlin*—an investigation into the politics of space after the Fall of the Berlin Wall.

Philipp Oswalt, architect, writer, Professor of Architecture Theory and Design at the University of Kassel. He was director of the Bauhaus Dessau Foundation from 2009 to 2014. In 2015 he co-founded the international initiative *projekt bauhaus*. He was the leading curator of the project *Schrumpfende Städte (Shrinking Cities)* for the German Federal Cultural Foundation and co-initiator of the research project *Urban Catalyst* and the project *Volkspalast* in 2004. He is a member of the Advisory Board of ARCH+.

He has written or edited numerous publications on the Bauhaus, including *Bauhaus Streit 1919–2009. Kontroversen und Kontrahenten* (2009/English edition 2010: *Bauhaus Conflict 1919–2009. Controversies and Counterparts*); (with Thomas Flierl) *Hannes Meyer und das Bauhaus. Im Streit der Deutungen* (2018), *Hannes Meyers neue Bauhaulehre: Von Dessau bis Mexiko* (2019). He is project manager and co-curator of the exhibition *bauhaus / documenta. Vision und Marke*, at Neue Galerie, Kassel, and co-editor (with Birgit Jooss and Daniel Tyradellis) of the publication (2019). His book (with Julia Meer) *Marke Bauhaus 1919–2019: Der Sieg der ikonischen Form über den Gebrauch* was published at the beginning of 2020.

Fernando Pérez-Oyarzun (*1950), intellectual, researcher and academic. He has been Director of the Museo Nacional de Bellas

Artes (MNBA) since 2019. Trained as an architect, he graduated from the Universidad Católica de Chile (PUC) in 1977 and obtained his doctorate in architecture at the Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura de Barcelona, UPC in 1981. From 1990 to 2000 he was Dean of the Faculty of Architecture and Fine Arts at the PUC, where he has worked since 1974. He is currently a lecturer there. From 1987 to 1990 he led the Escuela de Arquitectura at the PUC where he later was Director of the Centro del Patrimonio Cultural. In 1990 he was Visiting Design Critic at Harvard University and Visiting Fellow at the Centre for Latin American Studies, University of Cambridge, in 1996. In 2000 he was appointed Simón Bolívar Professor at the latter university. In 2007 he was a Research Fellow of the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study.

Olaf Scholz is German Federal Minister of Finance and Vice Chancellor (since March 2018) and SPD candidate for chancellor (2021). After studying law, he began a career as a lawyer in 1985. A member of the German Bundestag since 1998, the politician has held numerous offices at the federal state and national levels, as well as in the SPD: Senator of the Interior of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg (May 2001–October 2001), First Parliamentary Secretary of the SPD parliamentary group (2005–2007), Federal Minister of Labour and Social Affairs (2007–2009), Deputy Chairman of the SPD parliamentary group (2009–2011), Deputy Chairman of the SPD (November 2009–December 2019), First Mayor of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg (2011–2018), Acting Chairman of the SPD (February 2018–April 2018).

Ronny Schüler, Research assistant at the Chair of Theory and History of Modern Architecture, Bauhaus-University Weimar, and PhD Candidate. His dissertation topic is «Der Stildiskurs im Britischen Mandatsgebiet Palästina und die erste hebräische Architekturzeitschrift *Habinjan Bamsirah Hakarov*». In research and teaching he deals with architecture in Israel between tradition and modernity. His numerous presentations and publications on the Bauhaus and modern architecture in Palestine include the recently published article «Forms, Ideals, and Methods. Bauhaus-Transfers to Mandatory Palestine» (2019), *The Transfer of Modernity—Architectural Modernism in Palestine* (1923–1948), Conference Proceedings, ed. with Jörg Stabenow, Berlin 2019; furthermore «The Architectural Revolution and its Framework—The Establishment of a Modern Building and Planning Culture in Eretz Israel» (2018); «The Urban Planning of Tel Aviv 1908–1938—The Transfer of Western Urban Planning Concepts» (2017); «Sharon+Wingler. Zur Etablierung einer deutsch-israelischen Bauhausrezeption» (2016).

Atli Magnus Seelow, architect and architectural historian. He is currently teaching and researching at the Institute for Art History at Friedrich Alexander University Erlangen-Nürnberg; he was previously an

Associate Professor at Chalmers University of Technology, Gothenburg.

After studying architecture at Technical University, Munich (1994–2001), he completed a doctorate there in architectural history (2009). His dissertation was published in 2011 as *Die moderne Architektur in Island in der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts. Transferprozesse zwischen Adaption und Eigenständigkeit* by Verlag für moderne Kunst. He subsequently worked as a lecturer on architectural history at the Institute of Art History, Friedrich Alexander University Erlangen-Nürnberg (2012–2013), as Assistant Professor (2015–2017) and Associate Professor (2017–) for Theory and History of Architecture at Chalmers University of Technology, Gothenburg. One focus of his research is the Bauhaus and Modernism in the Nordic Countries: This includes the exhibition and accompanying publication for *Reconstructing the Stockholm Exhibition 1930. Stockholmsutställningen 1930 rekonstruerad*, Royal Swedish Academy of Fine Arts, Stockholm 2016 as well as the publications *Akzeptiere. Das Buch und seine Geschichte* (2019); *The Construction Kit and the Assembly Line—Walter Gropius' Concepts for Rationalizing Architecture* (2018), and *From the Continent to the North. German Influence on Modern Architecture in Sweden* (2016).

Simon Steinberger, designer. His work concentrates on book design, printed matter, communication, and display systems within the cultural and contemporary art context. His work is based on research, experimentation, and dialogue, leading to a varied visual vocabulary, informed by the content and character of each project.

Martin Wecke is a Berlin-based designer and web developer. His work is focused on creating online and offline publication formats that are informed by both an experimental and user-centered design approach.

Kirsten Zenns studied aesthetic art education at the Berlin University of the Arts and obtained a doctorate on Erwin Blumenfeld and fashion photography: <https://opus4.kobv.de/opus4-udk/solrsearch/index/search/searchtype/authorsearch/author/Kirsten+Zenns/rows/10> (Consulted October 2020). For twenty years she has taught various subjects in all class levels, her main focus being art lessons in SEK II [second-stage secondary education] in Berlin, Wildenbruch, and Qatar. Since 2016 she has been the Bauhaus Agents Program Manager and Coordinator for the Paula Fürst Gemeinschaftsschule, Berlin, where she is also responsible for teaching and an advisor for final-year students specialized in art. Film, photography and fashion are her main areas of interest and the focus of her research.

Zoe Zhang (Chunyan) has been Assistant Director of China Design Museum (CDM) since 2017, and Head of Research Department of the Art Museum Group of the China Academy of Art (CAA) since 2015.

She has been a guest lecturer at the Architecture School of CAA since 2015. She holds a PhD in History and Theory of Design at the CAA.

Her own research interest is the dissemination and translation of modern discourses including «Bauhaus» in China from the beginning of the 20th century. She has been Curator and Research Fellow at the Bauhaus Institute, CAA since 2012. She co-curated the China section of the *bauhaus imaginista* exhibition at China Design Museum, Hangzhou (2018); she was co-director of the theatre project *Xiang Peng—Figural Space Cabinet*. She curated the permanent exhibition *Life World: The Collection of Western Modern Design* at China Design Museum, Hangzhou (2018), the exhibition *Design as Enlightenment* at the National Museum of China, Beijing (2014) etc. She was Junior Chair of Session 4 «Appreciation & Utility» at Comité International d'Histoire de l'Art (CIHA) 2016.

She has published widely, especially on the Bauhaus: *Daiward Iron Works and the Anonymous Bauhaus*; *Bauhaus and the Design of Public Residence and Daily life in China (1950–1980)*; *The paths and periods of Bauhaus spreading in China (1920–1990)*; *Bauhaus: Design as Enlightenment*; *Art Utopia of Situationism International, City Space From Situationism International*; *Between Myths: Bauhaus as Multi-versions*.

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