The EAHN Newsletter is a publication of the European Architectural History Network. This issue includes a supplement, please see p. 8 for details.

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ISSN 1997-5023
FRONT COVER
Belém (Lisbon), Cloister of the Mosteiro dos Jerónimos, first half of the sixteenth century, detail of a column. Photograph: detail of a photo by Pedro Prats, Creative Commons

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Forte de Sacavém, near Lisbon, late nineteenth century, main portal.

Photograph: © Vitor Oliveira
Five Years of the European Architectural History Network

This autumn, the European Architectural History Network celebrates its fifth birthday. As with any birth, this brainchild was conceived months before its official debut: at the 2004 SAH annual meeting in Providence (aptly), a handful of us came up with the idea of creating a similar organization among scholars dealing with architectural history in Europe, an organization which would give more visibility and self-awareness to our discipline, scattered between schools of architecture, departments of art history and heritage administration.

The idea's gestation continued at the 2005 SAH annual meeting in Vancouver, when we led a meeting open to anyone interested in the project of what was initially envisioned as a European chapter of the SAH. Some thirty colleagues brainstormed about why and how such an organization should be created. Discussion then peaked at the major INHA/SAH conference Changing Boundaries, held in Paris in September 2005. Colleagues welcomed the idea (although not as an SAH chapter), and those willing to participate volunteered. Thus, the European Architectural History Network was born.

One week later, we created a website. One month later, we launched the mailing list, hosted by the INHA. Two months later, a temporary association under French law was officially created, and we could open a bank account. In January 2006, thirteen colleagues from ten countries met in Berlin—at the very crossroads of the two former Europes—to hold the constituent assembly of the EAHN. In the following months, a first draft of the mission statement was outlined, Reto Geiser designed the EAHN logo, and Carmen Popescu organized our first study tour to Ljubljana (July 2006) and then a second to Romania in 2008. While the mailing list steadily grew, a network of national correspondents was recruited. Thanks to the work of a dedicated editorial team led by Susan Klaiber, the first issue of our highly professional electronic newsletter was published in December 2007 and our beautiful new website went online in February 2009. In the meantime, the Technische Universiteit Delft donated the crucial assistance of an office manager eight hours per week. We are especially thankful to our committee members who managed to obtain and preserve this position for the organization, now supplemented by the two Westminster Editorial Assistants at the University of Westminster in London, for whom we are equally thankful.

Our first academic activities followed, with the joint ETH/SAH/EAHN conference Transfer and Metamorphosis in Zurich, June 2008, and the joint SAHGB/EAHN conference British Architecture Seen from Abroad in London, May 2009.
These conferences paved the way for the success of the wonderful EAHN First International Meeting this past June in Guimarães, organized by Jorge Correia, to whom we are exceptionally grateful.

Most of the exchanges and decisions of this entirely bottom-up academic initiative have been made electronically, thanks to the strong mutual trust within a team able to meet only once a year during the business meetings organized by EAHN committee members (Delft 2007, Leuven 2008, Ankara 2009, Bologna 2010). Need we mention that the only money in our bank account was contributed by the committee members?

Space does not permit us to name all of the individuals responsible for these organizational milestones. But since 2007, one committee member has led the major developments of the EAHN, initiating the process of transforming our informal network into a mature, structured organization, and now preparing the transition to the new team of officers. For this sage vision coupled with hard work, we offer our deepest thanks on behalf of the entire network to Nancy Stieber.

New challenges now face the EAHN: retaining flexibility and openness as we become more established, no less than developing a solid financial basis. With the second EAHN conference (Brussels 2012) and other projects such as a peer-reviewed journal or periodical classification, the EAHN has an important role to play in transmitting knowledge about the built environment within the European Research Area and indeed internationally.

As we step down as founding officers of the EAHN, we warmly wish our successors, Adrian Forty and Mari Hvattum, both strength and pleasure in guiding our now-adolescent network forward into its next five years.

Christine Mengin
Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne

Rob Dettingmeijer
Utrecht
Guimarães Conference Wrap-Up

With over 250 registered participants, and even more people attending the three evening keynote events which were open to the general public, the EAHN First International Meeting in Guimarães from 17-20 June was a resounding success. Denise Scott Brown’s keynote discussion with Gülsüm Baydar on Friday evening drew the biggest crowd, approximately 475 people, of which several dozen returned the next day for an impromptu picnic lunch with Scott Brown on the conference center lawn. From the perfect weather through the ideal scale of the Vila Flor Cultural Centre facilities and the charm of Guimarães itself, a congenial atmosphere pervaded the entire conference.

General chair Jorge Correia, with assistant Ana Lopes (Universidade do Minho) and their friendly and efficient team, presented impressively scheduled and organized sequences of scholarly and social events, which allowed conference participants to concentrate on the opportunities to debate, discuss, engage, and enjoy during four days of paper presentations, roundtable sessions, local and regional tours, keynote events, and evening dinners together.

Antoine Picon’s closing keynote address, which summarized five thematic threads winding thorough the paper and roundtable sessions, provided a brilliant and stimulating overview of the conference as a whole, and also proposed a future agenda for the entire discipline. Professor Picon generously consented to share his keynote address with the EAHN in published form, and it is available as a special supplement to this issue of the EAHN Newsletter. The supplement is designed as an A5 booklet, and may be downloaded as a PDF in two formats: booklet or single sheets.

In other conference developments, the EAHN Committee welcomed its new officers Adrian Forty, Mari Hvattum, Maarten Delbeke, and Tom Avermaete at a brief committee meeting Thursday morning before the new team officially took over at the closing ceremony Saturday evening. The EAHN met its modest financial goal for the conference—to cover its costs—and a small surplus will be transferred to the treasury once all accounts are settled.
Old and new organizational officers at the EAHN Plenary Session which opened the conference in Guimarães Thursday noon.
Photograph: EAHN 2010 / Carlos Moreira

The large audience for the Friday evening conference keynote event, “Denise Scott Brown talks with Gülşüm Baydar”; the speakers await their introductions in the right foreground.
Photograph: EAHN 2010 / Carlos Moreira
Conference tours were also well attended, with about sixty people taking part in the lunch hour tours of Guimarães. On Sunday, fifty people visited a small sample of Alvaro Siza Vieira’s work scattered along Portugal’s Atlantic coast, and twenty-three toured nearby Braga from its Roman origins through its rich medieval and early modern monuments up to its new soccer stadium built for the European Football Championship tournament in 2004.

Dozens of conference photos are available on the conference website; visit http://www.eahn2010.org/ and click on “Meeting Photos” in the navigation bar on the left to download photo files from each day of the conference.

**EAHN 2010 in the Portuguese Press**

*The EAHN First International Meeting received coverage in both local and national media in Guimarães and throughout Portugal. Two articles in a leading national daily newspaper, Público, deserve particular mention: an interview with conference keynote speaker Denise Scott Brown in the paper’s 21 June 2010 issue, available (in Portuguese) at http://ipsilon.publico.pt/artes/entrevista.aspx?id=259339. And the following essay by conference keynote speaker Paulo Varela Gomes from the paper’s 19 June 2010 issue, which Professor Gomes has kindly made available to us in his own English translation:*

**EAHN: This improbable and unpronounceable acronym stands for “European Architectural History Network,” and as you read this column the last of the three days of this organization’s first international meeting is taking place in Guimarães. Architectural history is on the grow everywhere. Apart from its intrinsic value as a tool for knowledge, it is essential for economic activities that mobilize huge quantities of money and people: architecture itself, heritage conservation and rehabilitation, urban and territorial planning and, increasingly, cultural tourism.**

The European Architectural History Network was created between 2005 and 2006 by architectural historians who arrived at the conclusion that, in order to meet each other and exchange views in large international fora, European researchers in the field could not limit themselves to the activities of the powerful North American Society of Architectural Historians, whose journal and annual
The Vila Flor Cultural Centre in Guimarães, venue for EAHN 2010.
Photograph: EAHN 2010 | Carlos Moreira
conventions are architectural history’s most stimulating and up-to-date venues. Furthermore (and here we enter the field of politics in its European dimension), a pan-European organization was mandatory to avoid each country creating its own organization, leading to a patchwork solution.

The EAHN was set up thanks to the outstanding stamina and diplomatic skills of literally a handful of researchers. Young Portuguese architectural historians were involved in the process practically from the beginning, and were later associated with the organization’s leading body. This is the proof that a new generation of architects and historians, aged between thirty and forty, has realized that we can no longer live in isolation and provincialism. Jorge Correia, of the University of Minho’s architecture school, is one of these researchers. With the support of his university, he “offered” Guimarães to the EAHN as the location for its first international meeting.

Coming from Europe and its surroundings, over 150 researchers from about thirty countries traveled to Guimarães: Irish and Israelis, Portuguese and Turks, and practically everyone in between. Some Australians and Canadians were also present, together with a large contingent from the United States that demonstrates the still-unchallenged quality of North American research in the field. It is a pity that so few Germans participated in the meeting, because German research can rival that of the Americans.

The meeting was characterized by a vibrant creativity as architects, historians and other researchers and professionals debated many different subjects from the more conventional, like the history of Italian palazzi, to those that are not conventional at all, like the city turned into fiction by the media.

Thus, the European Union of architectural history exists. For years on end I have been repeating a mantra to my students: go away, go study abroad. Here you will learn nothing particularly stimulating. But during these three days, “abroad” came to Portugal. Let’s hope the seed now planted will bear fruit.

Paulo Varela Gomes
Universidade de Coimbra
The founding members of the EAHN Committee toasting the successful completion of the organization’s first major independent conference in front of the Palace of the Dukes of Bragança, Guimarães, on Saturday evening. Photograph: EAHN 2010

Denise Scott Brown with Jorge Correia and the conference’s student assistants from the Universidade do Minho. Photograph: EAHN 2010 / Carlos Moreira
Palais des Académies, Brussels: Venue for EAHN 2012

The EAHN 2012 organizing committee is pleased to announce that the organization’s Second International Meeting will take place in the Palais des Académies, Brussels, from 31 May-3 June 2012. (See the Call for Session and Roundtable Proposals with due date 19 December 2010 at http://www.eahn.org/resources/uploads/494/Call_for_Proposals_2012.pdf.) A leading scholar on the building, Francis Strauven (Universiteit Gent, emeritus), has generously provided us with a brief introduction to this distinguished historic venue:

The Palace of the Academies is the seat of five Belgian royal academies: two academies of science and fine arts (the French-speaking ARB and the Dutch-speaking KVAB), two academies of medicine (the French-speaking ARMB and the Dutch-speaking KAGB) and the Royal Academy of French Language and Literature (ARLLFB).*

Still, the palace was not designed as an *Aedes Academiarum* but as a princely residence. It was built for Prince William of Orange, the crown prince of the then Kingdom of the United Netherlands, a union of the Netherlands and Belgium which lasted from 1815 to 1830. The young prince had been an adjutant of Wellington, had distinguished himself by his heroic deeds in the English campaigns against the Napoleonic troops in Spain, and had played a crucial role in the Battle of Waterloo where Napoleon was finally defeated. With his cheerful character, he proved in many respects to be the opposite of his father, King William I, a rather dour, frugal and calculating ruler unlike the Belgians.

The Belgians hinted that they would prefer to be ruled by the prince rather than his father and this desire found official expression in the proposal of the Belgian States General in 1815 to build a palace for the prince in Brussels, long before considering building a Royal Palace. William I was firmly opposed to this bill, rightly understanding that the initiative was aimed at installing his son as a kind of viceroy in Brussels. But after five years of resistance, the king eventually gave in. The project was entrusted to Charles Vander Straeten, an architect who had already built the Prince’s country house in Tervuren. The palace was designed in 1821-23, and constructed from 1823-28.

*The Dutch-language counterpart of the latter, the Koninklijke Academie voor Nederlandse Taal- en Letterkunde (KANTL), is based in Ghent.
Charles Vander Straeten, Palais des Académies, Brussels, 1821-28, with surrounding gardens.
Photograph: Lin Chang Chih / Wikimedia Commons
Vander Straeten, an outstanding exponent of Belgian neoclassicism, produced one of the purest buildings of the late Empire period. Based on an axial plan, it can be considered a perfect application of J.N.L. Durand’s composition theory, but is by no means marked by Durand’s dry utilitarianism. Vander Straeten accommodated the palace to the extant classical context of the Warande city park and the adjacent Place Royale (both c. 1782), but at the same time he distinguished it in several ways. Unlike the surrounding mansions, uniformly plastered and painted white, the palace was executed entirely in natural stone and its façades articulated with an elegant Ionic order.

The prince and his family lived in the palace only one year before the Belgian revolution took place. The Royal Academy of Sciences, Letters and Fine Arts and the Royal Academy of Medicine moved into the building in 1876, but in the meantime its interior had been thoroughly transformed. The palace was restored and renovated between 1969 and 1976 by the architect Simon Brigode. Currently it is undergoing a new restoration campaign, with completion planned for early 2012 in time for the EAHN conference in spring 2012.

**New Thematic Group on Classical Architecture**

A new EAHN Thematic Group, “Classical Architecture and Planning,” has been organized following discussions held at the conference at Guimarães. The group will focus specifically on classical architecture and planning throughout the ancient world (Greek, Hellenistic, and Roman), paying close attention to the most current innovations in related research. Disciplinary links, for example, between architecture, archaeology and geography will be considered. The thematic group plans to organize sessions, roundtables and discussion groups within EAHN conferences and at other venues. For further information, contact Dr. Daniel M. Millette, School of Architecture, University of British Columbia, millette.daniel [at] yahoo.com.
NEWS
On the Calendar

EAHN Second International Meeting, Brussels, Belgium: 31 May – 3 June 2012
Call for Session and Roundtable Proposals deadline: 19 December 2010
Architecture Heritage Information System (SIPA), Portuguese Institute for Housing and Urban Renewal

Sistema de Informação para o Património Arquitectónico (SIPA), Instituto da Habitação e da Reabilitação Urbana

SIPA stands for Architectural Heritage Information System, an architectural information and documentation program and repository currently run by the Institute for Housing and Urban Renewal (IHRU), a department of the Portuguese Ministry of Environment. Launched in the early 1990s by the former Directorate General for National Buildings and Monuments (DGEMN / Ministry of Public Works), SIPA’s work is based on the premise that documenting architecture*, as well as architectural activities and agents, and keeping the resulting records preserved over time and available for public access constitutes a crucial contribution to the understanding, enhancement and appropriation of that complex and multidimensional cultural legacy by communities and individuals, as well as to supporting its management and protection.

AIMS

SIPA has been created and developed aiming to provide informational and documentary support to land use management, urban planning and cultural heritage policy making and assessment processes. Furthermore, it aims to promote the creation and conservation of and access to accurate information and authentic records on architectural, urban and landscape heritage. Such information raises the collective and individual awareness of the quality of the built environment and the importance of safeguarding this heritage, bearing in mind its possible social values—functional, economic, artistic, cultural, scientific and technological, historical, documentary, symbolic and in forming identities. The information also promotes scientific and technical research in associated fields of study, and encourages the use of these contents as an educational and recreational resource.

Since 2007, SIPA’s projects and activities have been guided by the following strategic objectives:

• To foster the acquisition of relevant private and public archives and collections, as well as the archival processing and digitization of those materials and the preservation of the originals in a state-of-the-art archival facility.
• To promote extensive online and on-site access to all architectural databases and associated archival contents (except for those classified or protected by copyright).
• To develop a SIPA Network through the creation of partnerships which enhance...
EXPLORATIONS
Portuguese Architectural Heritage Information System

View of Forte de Sacavém, the home of SIPA
Photograph: © IHRU/SIPA, Laura Guerreiro, 2007
the quality of contents and the financial sustainability of the program. In particular, SIPA pursues partnerships with other public and private sector architectural agents—from national to local—given their potential value as SIPA content providers and users; and with other creators of geographical information relevant to contextualizing and deepening the SIPA information and documentary contents.

- To create a SIPA Extranet as a tool to enable data and documents interchange between SIPA network partners and to renovate the SIPA website www.monumentos.pt in order to convert it into the system’s dissemination and communication platform.
- To strengthen the scientific component of our projects and activities, by establishing partnerships with research centers in scientific areas relevant to SIPA, such as architecture, art and architectural history, archival and library sciences, and conservation.
- To develop capacity-building projects, such as creating and disseminating standards and best practices, and providing training courses on architectural documentation and inventorying.
- To increase outreach initiatives, such as group visits and public lectures on architecture, architectural documentation, art and architectural history and allied fields; and to develop other educational programs.

RESOURCES

SIPA has its headquarters in the Forte de Sacavém, a small nineteenth-century fortress located twelve kilometers from central Lisbon. This fully restored and expanded building supports all SIPA activities and is also the center for promoting and disseminating SIPA contents in analogue and digital format. Forte de Sacavém complies with the most demanding technical, technological and functional requirements, assuring high standards for the preservation of archival material and conditions for their conservation. This public building has various functional zones: areas for the general public; a consultation room; spaces for archival operations, preservation and conservation; storage rooms; architectural research and inventory offices; a data center; administrative offices; and space for logistics.

SIPA provides a set of specialized and interrelated information and documentation resources on Portuguese architectural, urban and cultural landscape heritage. Its resources include, among others, databases, archives, and a library. In particular, SIPA offers three databases:
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Portuguese Architectural Heritage Information System

Screenshot of the Landscapes and Urban Settlements GIS database
Screenshot: © IHRU/SIPA, 2010

Screenshot of a sector of the web version of an Architectural Heritage Inventory database file
Screenshot: © IHRU/SIPA, 2010
The Architectural Heritage Inventory, which currently includes around thirty thousand database files comprising textual and iconographic information on Portuguese buildings and monuments, urban settlements, sites and cultural landscapes, both in Portugal and in some of the territories of the former Portuguese empire.

The Landscapes and Urban Settlements Database which is developed in a geographic information system (GIS) environment and provides information in the form of thematic maps characterizing the urban fabric and the humanized landscape.

SIPA Thesaurus, an ongoing structured vocabulary on architecture, town planning, landscape, territory, documentation, and associated areas, whose main objective is to control the terminology used in the production, representation, research and exploration of contents within the context of the information system.

SIPA also holds an architectural archive, an analogue and digital repository of original records on architecture and associated arts in Portugal, comprising the archival funds generated by the various governmental services and public bodies preceding the IHRU (namely, the abovementioned DGEMN), as well as private archives and collections created by Portuguese architects, urban planners and designers from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. These archival funds, especially those originating from public organizations, preserve the memory of the Portuguese government’s large- and small-scale public architectural projects from the mid-nineteenth-century onwards, including construction, major repair, renovation, extension, conservation and restoration programs.

The archives include around one million measured drawings (200,000 of which are available in digital form), 600,000 photographs (236,370 in digital form), 6,125 linear meters of textual records (12.5 million pages of which are available in digital form) and a small collection of architectural models. These materials extensively document the following topics: historic and contemporary buildings of diverse architectural typologies; urban settlements; sites and landscapes; sculpture and painting; decorative arts; medieval and modern epigraphy; mechanisms, equipments and special supporting systems; principles, policies and strategies of intervention on architectural heritage; construction techniques and materials; disasters and other physical causes of structural decay; building or restoration projects, both executed and unexecuted; workers and other specialized agents; as well as everyday and special uses of architecture.

**These include office buildings, churches, custom houses, post offices, public banks, military and police facilities, schools and universities, public libraries, archives and museums, scientific laboratories and experimental farms, hospitals, legislative and presidential buildings, courts of law, penitentiaries, and embassies.**
Porfírio Pardal Monteiro, António Pardal Monteiro, and Pedro Pardal Monteiro,
Laboratório Nacional de Engenharia Civil, Lisbon, 1948-52.
Photograph: © IHRU/SIPA, A. Santos, 1953
Finally, SIPA maintains a specialized library covering topics such as housing, urban renewal, architecture and architectural heritage, history of art and architecture, construction and conservation techniques, and related fields. The library currently holds around 20,000 books and 100 journal titles.

ACTIVITIES

SIPA offers a range of architectural research, information and documentation activities and services. Examples of these activities include the identification, documentation, interpretation, study and publicizing of buildings and built structures, urban settlements and cultural landscapes, as well as the acquisition, archival processing, conservation and dissemination of information and authentic records on those architectural objects.

One of SIPA’s specific features derives from the fact that there is a strong functional interdependence and interoperability between Information (structured data files) and Documentation, which is to say, between the inventory’s database and the architectural records. Records are expected to be the inventory’s documentary resources (fontes documentais), as well as its evidential support. On the other hand, as a consistent database on architectural heritage, the inventory is expected to work as a privileged interface in the access to those records. Generally speaking, SIPA is, therefore, an integrated whole that cannot dissociate these two components.

The outcomes of some SIPA research projects are published as books, most recently the results from a three-year project on the architecture of juvenile correctional institutions.† SIPA has electronically published several guides to inventorying architectural heritage, and also plans to publish a collection of books on each architect or architectural firm represented by holdings in its architectural archives. Selected research outcomes authored by SIPA team members are periodically published in Monumentos, a semiannual national journal specialized in areas such as architectural and art history, architectural heritage and urban renewal. Occasionally, SIPA organizes conferences and exhibitions, with plans currently underway for a photographic exhibition entitled The Trees and the City.

Ettore Sottsass, plate design for La bella tavola, 1993. (Archivio Alessi, Crusinallo.) Photograph: Museo Archivio Alessi

Luigi Manini, project for a new royal palace, Bussaco, Portugal, watercolor, 1887. Photograph: © IHRU/SIPA, José Pedro Aboim Borges, 2003

EXPLORATIONS
Portuguese Architectural Heritage Information System
STAFF AND USERS

SIPA has been developed by an experienced and multidisciplinary team of thirty-five collaborators with different backgrounds: architecture, landscape architecture, urban planning, history and art history, geography, archival and library sciences, and conservation. A significant number of GIS information producing entities, research units, and administrators of architectural, urban and landscape heritage also contribute to the development and improvement of the various SIPA products and services. By the end of 2010, the new SIPA website and extranet (currently under construction) will facilitate logged-in institutional and individual contributors to upload new or updated contents to SIPA.

Different kinds of corporate and individual users' groups intensively search and access SIPA information and documentary contents, namely professionals in architectural, urban and landscape heritage; public and private sector managers; students and educators; researchers; and the general public. Access to SIPA's information and documentary contents occurs mainly via the website www.monumentos.pt. Nevertheless, a significant group of users - mostly scholars and graduate students who need to carry out sophisticated queries or access classified materials - often request our on-site reference, consultation and reproduction services, which are based at the Forte de Sacavém, Monday to Thursday, from 13:00 to 18:30.

João Santos Vieira
Sistema de Informação para o Património Arquitectónico (SIPA)
EXPLORATIONS
Portuguese Architectural Heritage Information System

Forte de Sacavém, photographic documents laboratory
Photograph: © IHRU/SIPA, Laura Guerreiro, 2007
Lisbon: Ancient and Modern

This Virtual Tour is based on portions of the EAHN tour of Lisbon and environs held from 21-25 June 2010. The authors, Maria Helena Barreiros and Margarida Tavares da Conceição, organized and led the tour, which immediately followed the EAHN conference in Guimarães. For more tour photos and the full itinerary, please visit: http://www.eahn.org/site/en/tours.php

THE SITE AND THE CASTLE

Any approach to the architecture in Lisbon must always begin with the city at its most basic, most primal: the site itself. The system of hills and their relationship with the River Tagus Estuary, highlighting the seemingly insurmountable distance between the riverbanks, is a powerful image. It is the geographic structure that served as the support for the port activity over centuries (or millennia, if we go back to the pre-Roman settlements).

Old Lisbon was very much as it is represented in the iconography of the sixteenth century*: a valley by a river between two hills, the hill of São Jorge (St. George) to the east and that of São Francisco (St. Francis), now the Chiado area to the west, with its steeper slope.

The hill topped by the Castelo de São Jorge (Castle of St. George) is the physical and symbolic center of urban genesis, from the first embryonic Iron Age settlement (sixth century BC), when the lower-lying areas were still run through by navigable streams, to the establishment of the Roman port town (Olisipona) and the fortified structure of the Moorish city (Al-Ushbuna). The castle is an unavoidable reference, be it in terms of its built structures or for its position as a privileged viewing point, allowing for a visual reading of the growth of the city up to the nineteenth century.

The castle enclosure is complex, the result of the juxtaposition, alteration and elimination of various constructions—from the outer walls, rectangular in configuration, erected in the eleventh century to the rebuilding of the medieval fortification in the 1930s. In the Praça Nova (New Square) within the castle, a standout feature is the recent museum project (by architect João Luís Carrilho da Graça) to house, among other things, archaeological structures from what is now known as the Islamic Quarter, which was located on the first walled perimeter. The Christian reconquista in 1147, led by the first Portuguese monarch Afonso

* See for example the plan in Georg Braun and Frans Hogenberg, Civitates orbis terrarum, vol. 1, Cologne: Brachel, 1572; or Simon de Miranda, Ulisiponae Pars, 1575. (Archivo di Stato, Turin)
VIRTUAL TOUR
Lisbon’s Urban Development

The castle of São Jorge in Lisbon and Praça Martim Moniz.
Photograph: Gonçalo Valverde, Creative Commons
Henriques, made the events and the site emblems of national celebration. The Christian renewal in the Middle Ages resulted in the alcáçova (a Portuguese word equivalent to the Arabic quasabah), which housed the royal palace up until the early sixteenth century.

The pre-existing Roman structures dissolved in the Islamic city—which is still partially reflected today in the central urban fabric and place names such as Alfama and Mouraria. The ruins of the Roman theater were discovered on the slope not far from the Romanesque-Gothic cathedral (twelfth-fourteenth centuries), which itself was built on the site of a former mosque marking the profile of the eastern part of the city. The layout of the medieval city was maintained more or less in this part of the slope. It was delimited by the walls built by King Fernando (1373-1375), still visible in parts today. At the time, they surrounded the whole city: the hills of São Jorge and São Francisco and the lower-lying city between them.

In 1500 King Manuel decided to move down to the lower city next to the river, the shipbuilding yards and the quays. The construction of the new royal residence there gave rise to a huge platform on the banks of the Tagus—the Terreiro do Paço (now Praça do Comércio) square**, which was formalized from 1755 onwards.

** Paço is an archaic form of the Portuguese word for palace, palácio.

BAIRRO ALTO AND SÃO ROQUE

Extending along the top of the São Francisco hill is the Bairro Alto district, a zone of urban expansion in the sixteenth century related to the dynamics of a city in rapid growth, a city that was the head of a worldwide commercial empire in the making. Located outside the city walls, it reveals an almost orthogonal layout (in a hierarchized system of criss-crossing streets, the more important ones running perpendicular to the river and lesser ones parallel to it) and also bears marks of two distinct phases in the urbanization process, which began around 1502. Despite the fact that it was a private initiative, the land parcelling process, still based on a medieval land registration system, was subject to several royal decrees. It is still easily identifiable today in the urban layout and in the architecture, which reveals a noteworthy degree of homogeneity.

Associated with the second urbanization phase in 1553, the Society of Jesus installed itself in the district and built the Igreja de São Roque (Church of St. Roch), the first church to be designed and built by the Jesuits in Portugal. It was to serve as a national model for single nave churches with intercommunicating side chapels (Afonso Álvares, 1568), and was an exact contemporary of Il Gesù in Rome.
VIRTUAL TOUR
Lisbon’s Urban Development

View of the Tejo estuary and Lisbon’s Terreiro do Paço (Praça do Comércio) taken from São Jorge Castle.
Photograph: Teresa Stoppani

São Roque Church, Lisbon, view of the interior.
Photograph: APHA (Portuguese Association of Art Historians)
It features a homogeneous spatiality, with two pulpits facing each other midway down the sides of the nave, virtually forming a transverse axis of symmetry. The shallow space housing the high altar is framed by a triumphal arch flanked by colossal Tuscan pilasters, while the very prominent interior cornice supported by corbels reinforces the perceived unity of the space, and simulates the public feeling of an outdoor square.

**Pombaline Center and Praça do Comércio**
The Baixa Pombalina or Pombaline city center is the celebrated result of the reconstruction process carried out after what was one of the most violent earthquakes in Europe (1755). Eternally associated with the political will of Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo, better known by his title Marquis of Pombal, the center derived from a very rigorous and well-documented planning process technically overseen by the Portuguese military engineering specialists (under Manuel da Maia). A paradigm of urban planning of the Enlightenment period—both in terms of method and realization—the Baixa is an internationally unique case on account of, among other things, its previously defined architectural typology and the proportional graduation of the grid it superimposed upon the pre-existing city. It combines blocks and streets of differing dimensions, creating a strongly hierarchized urban grid negotiating the difficult topographical restrictions imposed by the two adjacent slopes, and emphasizing the three main streets perpendicular to the river (Rua Augusta, Rua do Ouro and Rua da Prata). The three streets and, on a lower level, their narrower axial duplications, also resolve the connection of the Baixa “platform” to the two main squares in the city: Rossio square to the north and Praça do Comércio that opens onto the river to the south. The latter square constitutes the planned and ideologically charged transfiguration of the former Terreiro do Paço, where the palace of the king is reduced to the symbolic (and residual) presence of his equestrian statue.

**Belém and Expansion Westwards Along the River**
A strong presence in the urban imagery as the location of the Hieronymites Monastery and the Tower of Belém (both World Heritage Monuments), Belém marks a trend begun in the sixteenth century, and continued through the centuries, for “spontaneous” urban growth along the riverbank without giving rise to structured articulation with the consolidated city center.
Eugénio dos Santos and Carlos Mardel, Baixa rebuilding plan after 1755, [1756/1758]. Photograph: Gabinete de Estudos Oeisponenses/ Câmara Municipal de Lisboa

Dirk Stoop, Terreiro do Paço, 1662. Photograph: Museu da Cidade/Câmara Municipal de Lisboa
The Mosteiro dos Jerónimos (Monastery of the Hieronymites) – begun in 1501 (Diogo Boitaca) and much altered by successive restoration and conversion campaigns beginning in the nineteenth century – with its location next to the riverbank where the Tagus enters the sea, is the physical representation of King Manuel I’s desire to transform the monastery into the headquarters of the order in Portugal and a royal pantheon. With its noteworthy dimensions for the scale of Portuguese architecture, the church and cloisters were completed following the campaign commenced in 1517 by João de Castilho, one of the most illustrious names in the history of Portuguese architecture. Although it is a model of Manueline (Portuguese late Gothic) architecture, it also reveals, in addition to its amplitude and spatial unity, the introduction of Italianate ornamentation in the “Roman style” (the expression used at the time), marking a phase in Portuguese architecture as specifically Portuguese since it was influenced by the most convoluted travels of forms.

The Torre de Belém (Tower of Belém, Francisco de Arruda, 1515), one of Lisbon’s main tourist attractions and a paradigm of the Manueline style, is an example of military architecture in transition from the over-ornamented keep tower to the platform prefiguring the bulwark. It recalls some Italian designs such as those by Francesco di Giorgio Martini. Together with the Tower of São Sebastião da Caparica (1488-1494) on the other bank of the river, it completed the defense system for the Tagus estuary.

Continuing along the coast westwards, along the railway line to Estoril and Cascais, one can witness architectural styles reflecting both towns’ status as prestigious summer resorts during almost the whole of the twentieth century. The town of Sintra (a World Heritage Landscape) marks the end of the journey—an exceptional landscape and architectural scenario (Lord Byron’s “glorious Eden”†) and the preferred summer residence (along with Évora in the sixteenth century) of the Portuguese court from the fifteenth century to the end of the monarchy in 1910.

† "Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage,” Canto I, stanza 18.

THE CITY OF THE AVENIDAS NOVAS

In the nineteenth century Lisbon underwent the normal transformations of an industrialized European capital. In an initial phase, the result of the economic and political climate (Napoleonic invasions, liberal revolution, civil war), the bourgeois and romantic city limited itself to instances of urban “improvement”
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Mosteiro dos Jerónimos
Photograph: Estúdio Mário Novais (1933-1983) / Biblioteca de Arte-Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Creative Commons

Claustros do Mosteiro dos Jerónimos
Photograph: Pedro Prats, Creative Commons
and “embellishment.” Agreeable green spaces emerged in peripheral or interstitial zones left undeveloped by the Pombaline urbanistic revolution. Gardens and belvederes became the pretext for building residences of high standing. Of these spaces, the garden and belvedere of São Pedro de Alcântara, on the eastern edge of Bairro Alto, and the Príncipe Real garden are the most interesting examples.

The “industrial city” was born in 1879 with the laying out of Avenida da Liberdade northwards from Rossio square and away from the river. This marked the beginning of Lisbon’s true conquest of its hinterland and was followed up by the plan for the Avenidas Novas (New Avenues, 1888) by Frederico Ressano Garcia, who had graduated in 1869 from the École des Ponts et Chaussées in Paris at the height of the Haussmannian renewal.

The new road matrix, on the scale of urban facilities and infrastructures provided by industrialization, followed the model of the Parisian boulevard. It imposed the extensive Rossio-Campo Grande axis on the territory, which was interrupted by an intermediate roundabout where the axis makes an inflection to the northeast—the roundabout that was later to be given the name Praça do Marquês de Pombal. This generating axis—which took into account topographic conditions and some extant urban structures—determined an orthogonal grid that was to be filled by bourgeois apartment buildings interspersed with the palatial residences of the new social elites. The medieval core and its sixteenth-century extensions (Bairro Alto), the Baixa Pombalina and the Avenidas Novas, and the privileged expansions to the west (Belém) and industrial zones in the east – are the descriptors of reference for the city up to the 1950s. Into this, a number of works paradigmatic of the Modern Movement in Portugal were implanted at a time when the movement had already entered a self-questioning phase: the Igreja do Sagrado Coração de Jesus (Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Nuno Portas and Nuno Teotónio Pereira, 1961-1970), adeptly grafted into the grid of the Avenidas Novas, and the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and Museum (Alberto Pessoa, Pedro Cid and Ruy d’Athouguia, 1961-1969), on the site of an old and prestigious urban property located on the immediate periphery of the Ressano Garcia Plan.

The Church of the Sacred Heart is noteworthy for the subtlety with which a religious complex program (church, residence and parish center) adapts to the variations in land elevation and the surrounding urban fabric, proposing a solution of interpenetration of public space and built space hitherto unseen in Portugal. In addition to the chronological coincidence, it shares with the Gulbenkian
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Avenida da Liberdade and surroundings on a plan of Lisbon, 1911.
Photograph: Gabinete de Estudos Olisiponenses / Câmara Municipal de Lisboa

Avenida da Liberdade
Photograph: Estúdio Mário Novais (1933-1983) / Biblioteca de Arte-Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Creative Commons
Foundation complex levels of sophistication and refinement of design and construction that are rarely reached in contemporary Portuguese architecture. The Gulbenkian Foundation, representative of the Modernist monumental cultural program, was the result of a competition launched in 1959 for which Leslie Martin was a member of the jury. The apparent simplicity of the winning proposal, based on horizontal planes that articulate three perpendicular modules (headquarters, auditoriums/concert halls and museum/library) dialogues in exemplary fashion with the noteworthy landscaping project for the foundation’s park (António Viana Barreto and Gonçalo Ribeiro Telles, 1961).

CONTEMPORANEITY: GOING EAST
The Alvalade (Faria da Costa, 1948) and Olivais Sul and Olivais Norte (Lisbon City Council, 1955 and 1959) neighborhoods represent the occupation of Lisbon’s hinterland and its eastward expansion from the late 1940s through the 1960s. Almost half a century later, the Expo ’98 / Parque das Nações operation brought this process to a close on the riverfront, in line with the late twentieth-century leitmotif of urban regeneration and redevelopment.

The first phase in the Olivais plan (Olivais Sul) marked the official recognition in Portugal of the urban planning principles in the Athens Charter, after decades of ideological and political resistance. The social housing project (40 hectares, 8,500 residents) allowed a number of young designers to test innovative typological solutions in the context of collective residential architecture. Phase two (Olivais Norte) represented an intervention on a different scale (180 hectares, 40,000 inhabitants) and within a different disciplinary context. It offered a unique opportunity for intensive study and debate among the design teams, reflecting the influence of British new towns and Catalan and Italian experiments (INA-CASA), among others. The degree of design freedom achieved, within the boundaries inherent in social housing programs, resulted in a laboratory for solutions of high quality that paid attention to the routine life in the interiors, the transition spaces and the ample exterior spaces that complemented the housing.

In a diverse political, economic and urban context—the establishment of democracy (1974), joining the European Community (1985) and the restructuring of the road and transport networks in the Lisbon metropolitan area—the eastern zone of the city experienced a new large-scale intervention. Occupied at the time by obsolete industrial installations already being deactivated, the zone...

Housing in the Olivais Norte development. Photograph: Ricardo Agarez.
was transformed into a new city for the purpose of hosting the International Exposition in 1998. High quality collective housing, public parks and recreational, cultural, hospital and educational facilities recycled old industrial land, which is now dotted with examples of monumental designs by renowned architects: Siza Vieira, Santiago Calatrava, João Luís Carrilho da Graça and Manuel Graça Dias.

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The authors are deeply thankful to all of those who contributed to the success of the Lisbon Tour:

The group of travellers and Carmen Popescu; the tour specialized guides António Nunes Pereira, Bernardo Miranda, João Cunha Leal, Nuno Senos, Pedro Barreto, Ricardo Agarez, Ricardo Carvalho, Rui Lobo and Walter Rossa; Inês Ferro e Teresa Antunes (Palácio Nacional de Sintra); João Vieira (IHRU/Forte de Sacavém); José Martins Carneiro, José Mª Lobo de Carvalho, Luísa Cortesão and Nuno Gaspar (Parques de Sintra-Monte da Lua).

Gonçalo Byrne and António Carvalho; Miguel Honrado and Lourenço Egreja; Miguel Faria and Madalena Mira; Cláudia Morgado, João Paulo Martins, Joaquim Caetano, Marta Macedo, Nuno Grande and Pedro Ravara.

Carpe Diem, EGEAC-CM1/Castelo de São Jorge and Palácio Pombal, Igespar/Mosteiro dos Jerónimos, IHRU/Forte de Sacavém, IMC/Palácio Nacional de Sintra, Museu de São Roque, Parques de Sintra-Monte da Lua/Palácio da Pena and Palácio de Monserrate, Universidade Autónoma de Lisboa.
VIRTUAL TOUR
Lisbon’s Urban Development

Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian.
Photograph: Estúdio Mário Novais, after 1969 / Biblioteca de Arte-Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian,
Creative Commons
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Instituto Camões
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BOOK REVIEW

Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani, Katia Frey, Eliana Perotti, editors

**Anthologie zum Städtebau**

Berlin: Gebrüder Mann Verlag, 2005-

Volumes 1,1 and 1,2: *Von der Stadt der Aufklärung zur Metropole des industriellen Zeitalters*

Berlin: Gebrüder Mann Verlag, 2008, xii + 1259 pp., € 128

ISBN 978-3-7861-2522-8

The *Anthologie zum Städtebau* (Anthology of Urbanism) is the first of its kind. The three-volume publication is a “comprehensive, critical and annotated collection of primary texts on the theory of urbanism in Europe and the United States from the eighteenth century to the present”* (p.3). The third volume, published in 2005, collects texts from the 1940s to the present. The first volume (in two parts), under review here, traces urban theories from the city of the Enlightenment to the industrial metropolis, and spans from the beginning of the eighteenth to the end of the nineteenth century. The second volume, to be published next year, will examine the texts underlying the emergence of urbanism as a discipline in the second half of the nineteenth century up to the modern city. Together, these volumes provide for the first time a comprehensive collection of texts that furnish the theoretical basis for the history of urbanism.

The overall aim of the anthology is pragmatic. The introduction outlines four criteria for the selection of texts: an innovative position; a coherent and reasoned argument; an acknowledgment of the city’s complexity through dealing with several of its facets; and the proposition of a recognizable formal idea of the city. The criteria suggest that while there are multiple ways of reflecting on the city, an instrumental urban theory always ought to include the questions of how the city is to be built. As such, the anthology addresses itself primarily to architectural and urban theorists, but the breadth and diversity of its texts also makes it indispensable reading for a broader audience.**

In the introduction, Lampugnani argues that it is only in the eighteenth century that reflections on the city consolidate to theories instrumental for diagnosis and treatment of the city.

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* The book focuses exclusively on texts and contains no illustrations. All translations in this review are by the author.

** Lampugnani states in the introduction that the anthology includes “texts from literature, philosophy, politics and science of the state, architecture, art history, journalism, pedagogy, law, science, works of reference, daily press, written by social reformers, medical professions, writers, entrepreneurs, civil servants, police commissioners, philanthropists, scholars, urban planners, university professors, lawyers, members of the military, national economics, clergymen and even inventors and amateurs.” (p.1).

† In the introduction, Lampugnani argues that it is only in the eighteenth century that reflections on the city consolidate to theories instrumental for diagnosis and
Photograph: Courtesy of Gebr. Mann Verlag, Berlin
intervention in the existing city. The textual trajectory from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century shows an evolution in the conceptualization of the city from a static entity, representative of its socio-political context, to a complex and dynamic phenomenon with its own patterns and regularities. The texts collected here not only provide a historical survey of eighteenth and nineteenth century urban theory, but also trace the emergence of urbanism as a broad but immanent discursive field.

The texts are ordered thematically and chronologically. The introduction to each chapter thoroughly outlines the context for its theme, and situates the selected texts in relation to key primary and secondary readings. Each text is preceded by a short introduction that provides biographical information on the author as well as publication details and a reception history.

The first chapter collects primarily literary and philosophical reflections on utopian cities, while the second chapter describes alternative utopias, rejecting the city in favor of bucolic, agrarian and greener settlements. Despite their antithetical solutions, both chapters describe a static correlation between a well-ordered city and an ideal society. More pragmatic approaches to intervening in the existing city are presented in the next two chapters. Architectural and landscape theory provided principles of intervention and new ways of perceiving the city. Theories on the improvement of cities increasingly considered not only aesthetic and representational aspects, but also include the city’s functional and practical requirements, such as security, hygiene or transport infrastructure. The urban utopias described in the fifth chapter no longer have the status of a philosophical treatise, but suggest alternatives responding to the perceived chaos of the contemporary city and its societal problems.

At the turn of the nineteenth century, the growth and densification of the city begins to be observed and registered. Critiques on the quality of buildings and urban spaces, unhygienic conditions and overcrowding are recorded, and topographies mapped patterns of health and the distribution of population onto urban space. Concerns about housing and the condition and perceived threat of the working class contributed to the accumulation of knowledge about the city, and drew politics into the discourse of urbanism. European cities responded to these new urban challenges with extensions and improvement of its infrastructure. Chapter 8 collects texts that suggest the extension of individual quarters, the significance of the old centers or the infiltration of the city with
green spaces. In the last two chapters, literary texts are again predominant. The city comes to be seen as a network of flows of movement, of air, people and goods, and the texts explore how transportation networks can serve as tools for urban restructuring. Utopias of technological progress dominate the last chapter. Both affirming as well as criticizing the dependency of the city on technological innovations, the new utopian societies projected in the texts are a response to the dramatic reorganization of the nineteenth-century city.

The overrepresentation of literary utopian urban visions seems surprising in this trajectory of themes leading up to the emergence of urbanism as a discourse and discipline. Readers interested in the genealogy of the modern city ought to read the first and the forthcoming second volume together; in the latter we can expect those texts that propose frameworks of intervention responding to and activating the new conceptualization of the city as a complex and dynamic organism whose lines of emergence are traced in the present volume.††

The key contribution of this anthology is its breadth and diversity, which is impossible to capture in this summary. It provides a foundation for the study of the city from multiple perspectives, and reminds us that the urban is too complex a phenomenon to ever be captured or described through a single perspective. It is precisely the scope and quality of the selection of texts, as well as the academic rigor of its accompanying introductions that makes the Anthologie zum Städtebau a canonical reference for any scholar interested in the city.

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†† For example Ildefonso Cerdá’s Teoría general de la urbanización y aplicación de sus principios y doctrinas a la reforma y ensanche de Barcelona (1867), or Reinhard Baumeister’s Stadt-Erweiterungen in technischer, baupolizeilicher und wirtschaftlicher Beziehung (1876).
BOOK REVIEW

Ernst Scheidegger, photographs
Stanislaus von Moos, editor
Zurich: Verlag Scheidegger & Spiess, 2010, 272 pp., 145 color and 132 b/w illus., CHF 79 / € 55
ISBN: 978-3-85881-222-3

Prior to the publication of this book, the texture of photographic reportage surrounding Le Corbusier’s project for Chandigarh had been predominantly preoccupied with the finished product. It excluded the representation of a critical agency, the migrant construction laborer—the mazdoor—who was unequivocally involved with the modernizing project of the newly created “Indian nation,” but whose presence, as well as history, had not been acknowledged. This position of the mazdoor—of being intrinsically central to a grand modernizing narrative, yet simultaneously being outside it—can be seen, through a postcolonial imperative, to inscribe the nation far more accurately than nationalistic ambitions of the time desirous of the “progress” and “modernity” of the west. A situation that is also ominously reflected in contemporary ideology surrounding the architectural canon in India, and indeed in other parts of the world, the mazdoor’s gaze has a destabilizing effect on the sense of stability and closure of the dominant discourses that collaborate in the making of the canon.

In the context of this exclusion of the laborer, it is of phenomenal significance that the book Chandigarh 1956: Le Corbusier, Pierre Jeanneret, Jane B. Drew, E Maxwell Fry has been published, documenting the construction of Nehru’s visionary city predominantly through black & white and recently discovered color images shot by the Swiss photographer Ernst Scheidegger. The publication, which has a parallel German/English text throughout, comes half a century after the telling images were rejected by Girsberger, the Zurich-based publisher of Le Corbusier’s complete works. It includes a facsimile of the original mock-up of the book that Scheidegger had proposed in 1956. The fundamental ontological significance of the images lies in viewing “building” not as an inert finished product, but as a
Workmen on bamboo scaffolding on the site of the Government Press Building in sector 18, Chandigarh (Architect: E. Maxwell Fry)

Photograph: © Copyright Ernst Scheidegger, Neue Zürcher Zeitung
cultural process subject to uneven, unequal, violent and exploitative forces, and in doing so, reminding us that the visual is as significant as the textual in the writing of history.

The book documents the laborer in the act of construction of one of the twentieth century’s most iconic projects, but transcends the orientalist impulse to record “how they hand-built the machine aesthetic” by including laborers’ dwellings, their actions when not at work, as well as a negotiated habitation of the city in its ordinary working life. The workers’ realities are so devastatingly different from what the modernizing project hoped to achieve that the images open up fundamental questions about the participants and beneficiaries of this process and about the frames of references deployed to represent this ideology. What would be the history of Chandigarh, written by and for the mazdoor who built it? What would be the tone of this voice? How would it be recorded and understood? Like the works of Indian socialist poet Sahir Ludhianvi (1921-1980), the images form a critique of domination. In his poem “Taj Mahal,” Ludhianvi speaks for the voiceless laborer “whose blood and bone fattens the powerful, engaged in the construction of ‘supreme’ relics.”

Four essays by Scheidegger, Stanislaus Von Moos, Maristella Casciato and Verena Nievergelt accompany the photographs exploring the personal and political contexts within which Scheidegger operated, catalyzed by a European postwar mood to celebrate industrial production methods. While Nievergelt places his practice of photography, focused on the everyday, between the motivations of photojournalism and architectural documentation, Casciato situates them historically, detailing how Chandigarh came to be through the interactions of Nehru, Le Corbusier, Jeanneret, Drew and Fry.

Of these essays Stanislaus von Moos’s “Ruins in Reverse – Notes on Photography and the Architectural ‘Non-Finito’” best interrogates the relationship between labor, the efforts of media and the architect. While construction remains a marginal preoccupation in Le Corbusier’s publications on his own work, it is an explicit political issue that inspired the masses during the erection of the city of Brasilia—contemporary with Chandigarh—through the publication of Brasilia, the state-funded magazine. Why didn’t the construction of Nehru’s “new temple
Photograph © Copyright Ernst Scheidegger, Neue Zürcher Zeitung
of India” inspire a zeitgeist on a nationwide scale in the same spirit or scope as Brasilia? The design of Chandigarh expressed one aspect of Nehru’s idea of a modern India: the sense that India must free itself from both the contradictory modernity of the Raj and nostalgia for its indigenous past.* Yet it is ironic that the modes of production used in terms of labor were the very same ones set up by the British government for the expansion of the imperial economy. This was primarily through the Public Works Department (PWD)—the colonial construction agency, which realized the modernist concept using the economically displaced semi-rural migrant laborer. The setting up of the PWD involved the production of traditionalist pattern books, which in turn involved a systematic de-skilling of craftspersons to “laborers.” This crisis in production, of being unable to recognize and transform a violent colonial constructional practice into a more appropriate one is what renders the modernizing project hollow in Chandigarh, quite unlike the case in Brasilia, where construction itself embodied the hopes of modernity.

This is a stimulating and provocative book that engages the reader through the immediacy and power of Scheidegger’s images. Its importance lies in invoking the idea of a messy contested modernity through the interactions of the pre-colonial, the colonial, and the postcolonial, which also makes it significant for a readership outside the domain of architecture. The continual “hyper-exploitation,” displacement and suppression of the skilled and unskilled migrant laborer in the Indian metropolis have been the focus of many international and national agencies and grassroots activists, yet on a daily basis we are presented with atrocities against them to make way for “modern iconic developments.” The professional agencies that collaborate with this particular ideology are complicit in the acts of violence, in their tacit omission of the laborer from representations of “their” work. Scheidegger’s photographs urge these agencies, including the architect, to engage with this pressing reality by acknowledging the workers’ mere presence.

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High Court Building, Chandigarh, view of the rear wing with brise-soleils. (Architect: Le Corbusier)
Photograph: © Copyright Ernst Scheidegger, Neue Zürcher Zeitung

Photograph: Courtesy of Verlag Scheidegger & Spiess, Zurich
EXHIBITION REVIEW

Modernizacje 1918-1939. Czas przyszły dokonany
Curator: Andrzej Szczerski

ms’, Muzeum Sztuki, Łódź
11 March–30 May 2010

Like a number of other exhibitions on modernist art and architecture, 
Modernizacje 1918-1939. Czas przyszły dokonany (Modernizations 1918-1939: Future 
Perfect) at the Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź opened with images of a society in 
revolutionary turmoil. In this case it was not Soviet Russia but Hungary which 
marked the year zero. The gallery’s walls were filled with Mihály Biró and Béla 
Uitz’s posters of billowing red flags and worker-heroes announcing Béla Kun’s 
Hungarian Soviet Republic in 1919. Revolutionary Hungary was the exception 
rather than the rule in an exhibition which set out to demonstrate that Modernism 
gained a fast hold in the societies of the “New Europe” which formed after the 
First World War. After all, the Hungarian Soviet failed after 133 days, sending 
many figures in the artistic avant-garde—who had been among Kun’s most ardent 
supporters—into exile. The modernization promised by Kun—represented in 
Łódź by a particularly spectacular painting by Uitz depicting a cadre of muscular 
workers building a red city—was over before it had a chance to have any effect. 
In other parts of the “New Europe” after 1918, “modernization” had very real 
and, in some cases, long-lasting results. The capitals of the new Baltic republics, 
Tallinn and Kaunas (a “temporary” capital while Vilnius was occupied), were home 
to sophisticated private villas and public buildings. Buildings like Anton Soans 
and Edgar Kuusik’s Art Hall (1933-4) in the Estonian capital typically combined 
functionalist unfussiness with strong lines of symmetry and classical proportions. 
In Czechoslovakia, the elegant shoes produced by in Tomas Bat’a’s factories and 
sold in an international chain of stores like Vladimir Karfík’s elegant glazed “box” 
in the Brno were evidence of the kind of complete world of utility and functional 
beauty being championed as l’esprit nouveau. Moreover, as one exhibition panel 
reproducing Bat’a’s publicity reveals, the patrician shoe manufacturer was keen to 
demonstrate how communist politics (“the evil of the past”) had been eliminated
Political posters from the collections of the Hungarian National Gallery and Hungarian National Museum.

Photograph: Muzeum Sztuki Łódźi.
from its factory towns. Here Le Corbusier’s question “Architecture or Revolution?” was answered in unequivocal terms. At both the heart of Europe in Bohemia and on its Baltic shores, a bourgeois “revolution” was underway in settings which have hitherto been overlooked by most attempts to reassemble European modernism. Curator Andrzej Szczerski set out to demonstrate the attraction of modernist architecture and design in the new and revived states of Central/Eastern Europe formed at the round tables and in the couloirs of the peace conferences at the end of the First World War. In their strong desire to demonstrate their right to statehood, the leaders of these new and restored nations—whether on the left or on the right—often welcomed the images of progress and technology offered by the Modern Movement. Modernism was proposed as a harbinger of deeper patterns of political, economic and even social modernization. A crude national Darwinianism lay behind some of the most vivid examples on display in Modernizations 1918-1939. The ambition of Poland’s Sea and Colonial League for imperial possessions in Africa was mapped in posters featuring compelling photomontages and graceful Art Deco liner imagery. In this, the League hoped to match Italian actions in East Africa. The bridgehead for this imperial “adventure” was to be Gdynia, the new port city built to guarantee access to the sea. This national project drew on the vision and creativity of many of Poland’s modernist architects, photographers and artists—as the Łódź exhibition demonstrated with great effect.

In the Sea and Colonial League, modernism and imperialism were aligned: command of the former providing “evidence” of Poland’s “right” to the latter. This order of arrogance is evident in other key works in the Łódź show. Sixteen extraordinary panels from Jiří Kroha’s “Sociological Element of Living” cycle of didactic montages (1933-34) were on display. Designed to prepare householders for the task of living in new social housing schemes, Kroha pronounced on the “correct” ways to dress, to enjoy leisure time and even to procreate. Formally, the work, fashioned from material cut from the popular press and hand-stencilled lettering, has the visual élan of the surrealists and yet intellectually it represents the disturbing certainty of the modernist vanguard. It is perhaps unsurprising to know that Kroha thrived in the intimidating political setting of Stalinist Czechoslovakia.
A pioneering show and the product of considerable research, *Modernizations 1918-1939* brought to Łódź the work of mostly little-known figures whose careers were stimulated by the settlements at Versailles, Trianon and Tartu after the fighting stopped. One cannot help but note that their achievements were then obscured by the Cold War politics which divided Europe after another world war.

David Crowley
Royal College of Art, London

Publication related to the exhibition:

Advertising posters from the collection of the Hungarian National Gallery. Photograph: Muzeum Sztuki Łódź.
EXHIBITION REVIEW

Compass and Rule: Architecture as Mathematical Practice in England, 1500-1750
Curators: Anthony Gerbino and Stephen Johnston

Yale Center for British Art, New Haven
18 February – 30 May 2010

The exhibition Compass and Rule: Architecture as Mathematical Practice in England, 1500-1750, at the Yale Center for British Art was the second incarnation of this show after having been exhibited at the Museum of the History of Science at the University of Oxford in 2009. The idea supporting the exhibition originates from a double interdisciplinary partnership: one between the two Oxford-based curators, architectural historian Anthony Gerbino (Worcester College) and historian of science Stephen Johnston (Museum of the History of Science), and another collaboration between the University of Oxford and the Yale Center for British Art.

The interdisciplinary history presented in the exhibition reflects the changing perception of architecture itself as it has been increasingly viewed through mathematics: a passage from the old world to the modern one, which in England lasted over 250 years. This well-documented show recounts a gradual yet radical revolution in the discipline of architecture. Architecture before 1500 in England was still considered a “craft”; it became an intellectual and scientific practice slowly, over a long period of time.

The first section reviewed the Gothic tradition of medieval England: in a world without architects, master masons were in charge of all aspects of the building process. Plans and architectural details were made at the moment of construction to answer specific problems that arose on site. Instead of paper drawings, sketches of architectural details were incised on stone.

Moving through the exhibition, the life of John Symonds was presented as a characteristic example of the next generation of builders during the Elizabethan
Robert Smythson, Plan and elevation of “a rounde window standinge in a rounde walle,” 1599, pen and ink.
Photograph: RIBA Library Drawings Collection / Yale Center for British Art
era. Symonds was one of the first successful craftsmen to use scaled drawings to design before construction began, however he was never called an architect, despite the fact that his method was already distant from medieval craft traditions. Several contemporary objects, including a set of drawing instruments in gilt brass, scissors, knives, and a compass used for the realization of the drawings helped the visitor comprehend how these new techniques needed ever more precise instruments.

The major shift in the practice of architecture is presented in the following section, “The Vitruvian Model: Inigo Jones and the Culture of the Book.” The title reveals the importance of Italian Renaissance culture, brought to England by the first Englishman who studied architecture in Italy. In his two long visits to Italy, Jones studied the classical design of the Renaissance, especially Palladio’s architecture, and became familiar with numerous Italian treatises. He learned that design was a source of the work of art; he studied Vitruvian theory, and understood the importance of architectural theory for practice. Oxford’s Worcester College
Samuel Saunders, Shagreen case with silver, ivory, and steel instruments, 1730s.
Photograph: Private Collection / Yale Center for British Art
has forty-six books once owned by Jones, reminders of his incessant work in disseminating these new theories in England. The result of these efforts is synthesized in the “Architectural and Mathematical Model” on display here: an exquisite alabaster sculpture of a pentagonal pillar with each side representing a different architectural order, surrounded with Platonic solids at the base and topped with a dodecahedron.

The following part of the exhibition is dedicated to Christopher Wren, the brilliant astronomer, mathematician and natural philosopher who was England’s first truly modern architect. The visitor can admire three of Wren’s early architectural designs: the plan of the Sheldonian Theatre in Oxford (1663), the pre-fire design for St Paul’s Cathedral (1666), and the project for rebuilding London after the Great Fire (1666). Two videos help the audience understand Wren’s scientific skills: one shows how he was able to trace the astronomical diagram of the 1664 comet; the second displays how a two-dimensional drawing describes part of the St. Paul’s transept. Both videos serve as fine companions to the original drawings, making them completely understandable to the viewer.

The last section of the exhibition corroborates the show’s initial thesis, the passage of architecture from craft to art. The increasing numbers of publications in the late seventeenth-century show how architecture, through the theoretical influence of the Italian Renaissance, had by now become a profession, entirely detached from the medieval tradition.

George III was educated in the new discipline of architecture before he came to the throne as a king of England in 1760. In order to understand his architectural training, several of the king’s drawings are displayed, from elementary exercises in the architectural orders to more complicated elevations or perspectives. Although their quality is quite ordinary, they are useful for understanding the different steps of a gentleman’s architectural apprenticeship, as well as for comprehending the practice of architecture through the use of mathematical instruments. George III, who was passionate about art, collected a large number of such instruments, again underscoring the relationship between mathematics and architecture. Part of his collection is exhibited here, including maps, compasses, rulers, medals, and scientific instruments, such as the elaborate silver
microscope made explicitly for the king by the instrument maker George Adams.

By the middle of the eighteenth century, having reached the court of the king and entered the public domain, architecture could hardly avoid being involved in political and satirical conflicts. Here the viewer could admire pertinent drawings by artists like Paul Sandby, George Townshend, and William Hogarth.

Although *Compass and Rule* was a compact exhibition directed at an audience interested in the history of art and architecture, many of its features were also of interest to a larger public, especially the extravagant instruments, the videos, and some unusual drawings. Overall the presentation of the material emphasized the chronological and intellectual passages that characterized the exhibition’s thesis. Occasionally, however, some steps were unfortunately taken for granted, or connections were not completely explained, for instance the relationship between the two great masters, Inigo Jones and Christopher Wren. In following the historical path, we can easily deduce an intellectual (and, of course, temporal) correlation between them, yet the intellectual link between them was not clearly expressed.

Visitors seeking an understanding of a historical transition in England, however, were not disappointed as they followed the trajectory from the massive compass displayed at the entrance to the delicate and precise instruments of King George III. Thus, architecture in England was transformed from a craft to an art form.

Lorenzo Vigotti and Federica Soletta  
[Columbia University]

Media related to the exhibition


Online exhibition (Oxford venue): [http://www.mhs.ox.ac.uk/compassandrule/](http://www.mhs.ox.ac.uk/compassandrule/)

The *Compass and Rule* online exhibition site includes an illustrated overview of the exhibition sections, the exhibition videos, and other supporting information.
“Ongoing and Upcoming” events listings are now available in an online database on the EAHN website. The database contains events listings from the current issue of the EAHN Newsletter, as well as those from all previous issues. Events may be searched by country, type of event, date, keyword, or combinations of these parameters at the section “Ongoing and Upcoming” at www.eahn.org.

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