

### Tallinn Architecture 1900–2010 Architecture Guide

By AA.VV.

Publisher: The Museum of Estonian  
Architecture

ISBN: 9789985982884

Language: English

Year: 2010



Tallinn is well-known for its rich medieval heritage but it also hosts a display of impressive modernist architecture. Unlike ordinary tourist guide-books, this book focuses on Tallinn architecture of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. Architectural quality, as well as being a representative example of a decade or era was the criteria for inclusion in the guide.

The book opens with a short historical overview of Estonian architecture. This is followed by a guide to the city divided into sections where the buildings are grouped and listed according to their location. The numbered entries start in the Old Town and continue in various directions along the main roads – Pärnu Road, Tartu Road and Narva Road leading up to Merivälja, Kalamaja, Kopli, Kakumäe, Mustamäe and Nõmme.

The text is illustrated with mostly new but also some historical photographs. There is an index for architects and for streets so that it is easy to find buildings and establish connections between them.

**Karin Hallas-Murula**

*Director of the Museum of Estonian  
Architecture*

### The Rhetoric of Modernism: Le Corbusier as a Lecturer

By Tim Benton

Publisher: Birkhäuser, Basel

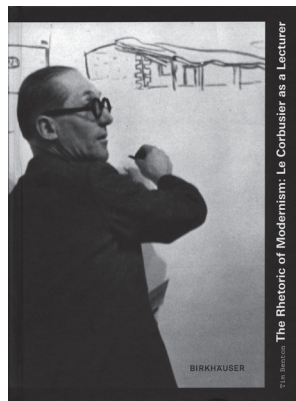
ISBN: 978-3-7643-8944-4

Language: English

Year: 2009

The opening paragraph of Tim Benton's most recent book on Le Corbusier shows indisputably that the scholar research on the multifaceted contributions of the Swiss-French master to twentieth-century architectural discourse is far from being accomplished, no matter what his innumerable readers would think of this publication.

Benton states that: "It goes without saying that Charles-Edouard Jeanneret (1887-1965) was one of the most persuasive architects of the twentieth century, both in theory and practice. The influence he was able to exert on architects and public alike was in part due to his lectures, which he delivered continuously from 1924 until his death 41 years later". Therefore, next to the architect, the urbanist and the artist, next to the polemist and the books' writer, Le Corbusier's public persona enriches himself via another extraordinary medium of communication: the art of lecturing.



1924 doesn't mark the very beginning of Corbu's activity as lecturer, yet the lecture on architecture he delivered in Geneva on February 17 of that year, which he repeated in Lausanne on the next day, became a model he would often return to. The years around that first quarter of the twentieth century identified the future achievements of Le Corbusier's intellectual engagement: in 1923 he published *Vers une Architecture* and in 1925 he put out *Urbanisme*. Together with the books the lectures became a powerful tool indeed for expanding Le Corbusier's appreciative public.

Tim Benton has examined the architect's activity as lecturer under a double perspective, fully clari-

fied by the organization of the book's table of contents. Chapter 1, titled "Le Corbusier's logic" aims to familiarize the readers with the argumentations of the classical rhetoric and relate them to Le Corbusier's exercises as orator. Instead, the other three chapters address systematically two parallel topics – the development of lectures on architecture and lectures on urbanism – before ending with a long chapter that deals exclusively with the lectures Le Corbusier delivered in Buenos Aires, in October 1929.

Chapter 1, being the *sine qua non* for making the case of "Le Corbusier the orator", shows the vast knowledge and the sophisticated culture of Tim Benton, who masters the classical sources and a wide range of Corbusian quotations with the aim to portray the man in front of his audience. "Was Le Corbusier a good orator?" The answer is that he was capable through the years to develop all kind of means and tools to strength his art of lecturing. In this chapter Benton analyzes several situations, different in time and locations, to show how Le Corbusier improved the use of the three classical argumentations of rhetoric: the logical proof, the ethical proof and the proof of pathos. Take as an example of the first, the feature of syllogism Le Corbusier introduced diffusely in his dialectical reasoning and the use of 'empirical' arguments ('the primary forms are the most beautiful forms because they can easily be read', p. 31) and inductive rhetoric. Another point is how the architect gained authority (*auctoritas*), dominating the stage via the creative act of drawing during lecturing on the blackboard or better on large sheets of papers. As Benton remarks "He lacked a loud voice or an imposing presence" (p. 35), this means that in front of his audience he was feeling more sure of himself with a piece of charcoal in his hands.

In chapters 2 and 3 Benton analyses in detail the preparatory work for a lecture, looking at the diverse steps of writing and phases of collecting graphic and visual materials. The Lausanne lecture on architecture of 1924 is taken as an example, also because of its critical reception. Needless to say that Le Corbusier, for instance, selected, organized and juxtaposed images with clear intention to shock the public and to stir its emotions.

The lectures about urbanism played an important role in Corbu's battle for the city. His first attempt happened as early as 1923, in Strasbourg. Many of his visionary projects, such as the Voisin Plan, found major echo in his lectures. This is the case of the Brussels lecture in 1926 on "The Urbanism of a big city (Metropolis)" (pp. 105ff).

Finally, the ten lectures Le Corbusier delivered in Buenos Aires between October 3 and 19, 1929 were published the following year under the title

Précisions sur un état présent de l'architecture et de l'urbanisme. This book is one of the most seminal publications among the vast Le Corbusier's written production because here the architect was able to reach a brilliant synthesis of his ideas, systematically expressed in drawings that he later reproduced and reinterpreted in different contexts. This is not a surprise. Le Corbusier stays side by side with other artists, such as the musicians, in his practice of borrowing from his own work.

This set of ten professional lectures delivered in Buenos Aires have been already discussed at length, yet what makes this chapter in Benton's book so interesting is that he goes behind the scene, and for each single lecture he looks after the preparatory notes, the meaning of the titles, the orator's visual aesthetic.

Some final remarks. The book is profusely illustrated, images are well printed, and the clear layout of the pages helps the readers to immerge themselves into the depth of this universe of words, voices, audience, public, halls and almost participate in the events. Tim Benton gives the readers all tools to understand the texts of the lectures and their visual corollaries. He analyzes the preparatory notes, the transcriptions, and the changes, adding very useful appendices too, with skill and comprehensible methodology that never become abstract erudition.

I'm an avid reader; therefore I missed a coda where Tim Benton would have discussed architects' art of lecturing, as a genre, from a wider angle. Le Corbusier was not alone in this practice. It is a wish and a request alike.

**Maristella Casciato**

*Professor of History of Architecture at the University of Bologna.*

**docomomo** *International*  
Chair 2002 – 2009

**Conserving Architecture  
Planned Conservation of 20<sup>th</sup>  
Century Architectural Heritage**  
Edited by Andrea Canziani

Publisher: Electa, Milano  
ISBN 978-88-370-7384-8  
Language: Italian  
Year: 2009

This book collects important essays on the preventive conservation of the architectural heritage of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as a challenge for the implementation of an innovative cultural heritage strategy. It brings together the most important

researchers and practitioners of the 20<sup>th</sup> century heritage conservation, from different parts of the world, dealing with the concept of building upon theoretical reflections and on good practices. As quoted by professor Koen van Balen: "There is an increasing interest for preventive conservation in the field of the built heritage. While the concept has been mentioned in earlier times, those dealing with the conservation of objects have gained more experience with it. It is obvious, as in museums and in storage places it is easier to control the conditions in which those objects are conserved than is the case of controlling the environmental conditions of preservation of historic buildings, archaeological sites, not to speak about historic ensembles as cities. But maybe if we understand "environment" in case of the built fabric in a different way – including the society that lives with and in it, often on a daily basis – we may find the tools to develop preventive conservation also in this field.



The preventive conservation concept and its implementation for architectural conservation is going through a fast evolution, building upon theoretical reflections and on good practices that can be seen in different regions in the world. (...) As holder of the UNESCO chair and initiator with many others of the PRECOMOS network, I am very pleased with this thematic meeting on preventive conservation addressing 20<sup>th</sup> Century Architectural Heritage. The contributions help to create the body of knowledge to develop proper conservation strategies for those buildings and sites from a preventive conservation perspective. I am confident that the organizers will use the PRECOMOS network to transfer those valuable contributions worldwide."

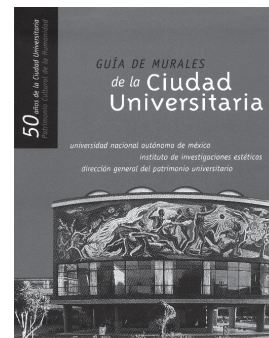
**Koen van Balen**

*Professor Department of Civil Engineering, Leuven*

**Guía de Murales de la Ciudad Universitaria**

By Departamento de Publicaciones de la UNAM

Publisher: UNAM,  
Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas/  
Dirección General del Patrimonio Universitario  
ISBN: 9789703215409  
Language: Spanish  
Year: 2008



This guide to the murals of the Ciudad Universitaria was published to orient visitors in their visit to the Mexican University complex, pointing out the murals which are part of the Artistic University Heritage of Mexico. The publication was presented to commemorate the 50 years of the construction of this enclosure which was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2007.

The guide includes forty-seven murals which were carried out between 1954 and 1999, a witness of the different artistic tendencies and of the cultural context in which they were created. Diverse materials and themes appear both in buildings built at the initial construction of the Ciudad Universitaria and in other spaces around the University area such as the University Cultural Centre.

We can find murals by artists like Diego Rivera, Juan O'Gorman, David Alfaro Siqueiros, José Chávez Morado, Rosendo Soto, Francisco Eppens, Arnold Belkin, Carlos Mérida, Manuel Felguérez, Federico Silva, Guillermo Cenicerros, Mauricio Gómez Morín, Patricia Quijano and Lucille Wong among many others.

Every project is described and located in a map which helps the visitor to find his way through the university complex. Special attention is made to the original sketches and drawings which were done to further build the mosaics, reliefs, sculptures and paintings that identify this unique place.

**Ivan Blasi**

*Architect, docomomo International*

## Il degrado del calcestruzzo nell'architettura del novecento

Edited by Carolina Di Biase

Publisher: Maggioli Editore S.p.A.

ISBN: 978 88 287 5145 5

Language: Italian and English

Year: 2009



Concrete – reinforced or non-reinforced – is, unequivocally, the material of the 20th century, architectural modernity and contemporary construction. As if in celebration of concrete, a large number of works on the subject were published in its last decade. They reveal the invention modern concrete, showing how, through a multitude of patents and systems, through corporate strategies and innovations led by figures such as Nervi, it became so widespread, and how research and testing (Hennebique) and specialist engineering (Freyssinet) came on the scene. The Perret brothers, who loom large in the emergence of a poetic language of concrete, have been reassessed through a fine exhibition and a number of publications, especially the re-edition of Peter Collins' "Concrete". A vector of twentieth-century building, concrete continues to hold great promise in the twenty-first, as the recent exhibition "Liquid Stone: New Architecture in Concrete" at the National Building Museum, Washington (2006) amply showed (to the delight of architects, for whom it is still the material of choice).

But there is a darker side, and several remarkable buildings or entire new towns have demonstrated for us the increasing problems of ageing, decay and vulnerability after just a few years in service – an all the more disagreeable realization in that we had assumed (in spite of evidence to the contrary) concrete to be indestructible.

It is through the disciplines of conservation-restoration that we bridge the gulf between celebrating concrete and despairing at its decline. "Decay of concrete in twentieth century architecture", edited by Carolina di Biase, Professor of Restauro Architettonico at the Facoltà di Architettura e Società, Politecnico di Milano, closes the gap still further, and

for all those involved in conservation of modern and contemporary architecture it provides an essential contribution to the interpretation and diagnosis of concrete, particularly exposed concrete surfaces.

At the core of the book is a lexicon, a specialist glossary based on the solid definitions produced by the American Concrete Institute and the Concrete Society, re-published in the Concrete Repair Manual 2008 and illustrated with examples from Europe, South America and Asia, many of them designed by leading architects like Auguste Perret, Le Corbusier and Santiago Calatrava, to name but a few. This central feature is accompanied by an overview of analytical and diagnostic techniques, both in situ and in laboratorio which enables detailed knowledge on types of decay to be acquired while minimizing destructive testing on the buildings themselves.

An early chapter considers the specific character of and differences between hydraulic binders, production methods and use of cements, from the late nineteenth into the twentieth centuries, with a through study on the physico-chemical properties of concretes and an essay by Francesca Albani on the successes and failures of experimental concrete buildings in the QT8 district of Milan, just after the war and the difficulties they pose for surveyors today.

The third and fourth chapters are centred on case studies. The first of these is Genova's Palazzo dello Sport, built to a design by Franco Sironi, Lorenzo Martinoia, Leo Finzi, and Remo Pagani in the early 1960s, and which serves to illustrate how the knowledge needed to make an intervention is acquired, from bibliographical and archival research through to in situ and laboratory analyses and interpretation of findings. The second is the church of San Borromeo in Milano, by Gio Ponti (1964/67), studied and restored by Daniela Lattanzi of the Direzione Regionale per i Beni Culturali e Paesaggistici della Lombardia, and Politecnico di Milano Professor Luca Bertolini, an expert on decayed concrete, who together have written the essay.

In conclusion, I would like to underline the originality of Prof. Di Biase's important introduction, which sketches out the basis of a history of concrete through its decay, underlining the seriousness of today's problem of dynamiting entire urban areas and showing how the weaknesses of this astonishing artificial stone material have always been studied at close quarters, both by its detractors and by those who praise its undeniable qualities.

**Franz Graf**

*Professor Federal Polytechnic School of Lausanne*

*Architect, **docomomo** Switzerland*

## L'Istituto Marchiondi Spagliardi di Vittoriano Viganò

By Franz Graf and Letizia Tedeschi

Publisher: Mendrisio Academy Press

Accademia di architettura Università

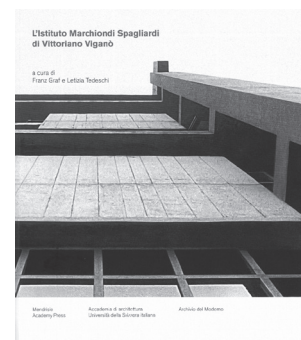
della Svizzera italiana

Archivio del Moderno

ISBN: 9788887624434

Language: Italian

Year: 2010



Built in Milan between 1954 and 1958 to provide a home for children in difficulty, the Marchiondi Spagliardi Institute by Vittoriano Viganò represents, through its innovative educational program, its "neo-Brutalist" vocabulary and its material nature, a phase of outstanding interest in European architectural research. This volume presents a critical reading of the work by many voices, conducted through the interpretation of previously unpublished materials from the Viganò family, the architect's professional archives, and the archives of the client, of the contractor and other professionals.

With texts by Bruno Reichlin, Letizia Tedeschi, Alberto Grimoldi, Franz Graf, Francesca Albani, Gianni Ottolini, Valeria Farinati, the marvelous sketches and drawings by Vittoriano Viganò and photographs by Ugo La Pietra and Enrico Cano of today's conservation conditions of the building; from competition to project, the book contains all the essential information to deeply connect with the Italian's best work, the Istituto Marchiondi Spagliardi.

As Mario Botta says in his presentation of the book, this publication initiates a new series directed by Bruno Reichlin, and is the final outcome of a long journey started with the arrival, in 1998, of the Vittoriano Viganò fund at the Archivio del Moderno where its study and appreciation was initiated immediately. This was the first step to develop, together with the Accademia di Architettura, a joint program of studies and initiatives to implement the history of modern and contemporary architecture through restitutions and insights, and to stimulate the debate on the restoration and reuse of modern

architecture, through these documents.

"Vittoriano Viganò, brutalist without knowing it?" The title of Bruno Reichlin's essay is tempting enough to start with.

Ivan Blasi

Architect, **docomomo** International

### **When Modern was Green Life and Work of Landscape Architect Leberecht Migge**

By David H. Haney

Publisher: Routledge, London and  
New York  
ISBN: 978-0415561396  
Language: English  
Year: 2010



Increasingly vital to contemporary design, "green" or ecological thinking was already anticipated by German modernists in the early twentieth century. At the center of this drive towards an ecological modernism was landscape architect Leberecht Migge (1881-1935).

Migge brilliantly synthesized ideas from across fields such as organic gardening, architecture, and biological theory to create pioneering projects throughout central Europe. He applied "biotechnic" principles to integrally link dwelling and garden, recycling household waste to grow foodstuffs through the use of innovative infrastructure and open space planning.

In collaboration with prominent modernist architects, including Martin Elsaesser, Ernst May, Bruno Taut, and Martin Wagner, he produced some of the most notable works of the period, the mass housing settlements, or *Grossiedlungen*, of Frankfurt Main and Berlin. Migge was also a talented garden and park designer, combining green and architectural elements through his "garden-architectonic."

Haney's study fully documents Migge's life and work for the first time, challenging conventional assumptions about modernism and ecological design history.

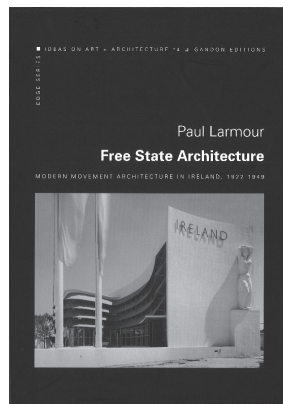
Ivan Blasi

Architect, **docomomo** International

### **Free State Architecture. Modern Movement Architecture in Ireland, 1922-1949**

By Paul Larmour

Publisher: Gandon Editions, Edge  
Series  
ISBN: 978 0948037726  
Language: English  
Year: 2009



This new book recounts in detail the formative period of modern architecture in Ireland during the years of the Irish Free State, from its founding in 1922 until the declaration of a republic in 1949. During this period, the various modernization programmes of the fledging state, from electrification to transportation and health provision, as well as a wide range of other functions, found a ready expression in the architectural forms of the Modern Movement.

The Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland is particularly proud to support this first book to focus entirely on the modernist strand of Irish architecture. This new book features work produced in the early years of the Irish Free State as it engaged in the process of nation-building, from electrification to transportation and health provision. Although a time of great socio-economic crisis, the early nation-builders, while conservative in many ways, put their faith in the Modern Movement's architectural expression and values for national, social and infrastructural projects. The various modernization

programmes of the fledging state found a ready expression in the architectural forms of the Modern Movement, and succeeded in breaking with the architectural language of our former colonial masters.

The book's publication, which happens to coincide with that of the Government Policy on Architecture 2009-2015, is hopefully a beacon of hope in a time when the ongoing process of national development has become increasingly confused and lacking in focus, priority and clarity. By revealing a rich seam of buildings of unsuspected quality and depth from the Free State period, many of which attracted international acclaim in their time, this book is a salutary reminder of the importance of vision (even in economically straitened times), and the critical role good architecture plays in the creation of an egalitarian, healthy and intelligent society.

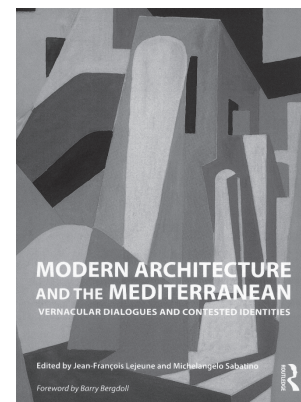
Seán Ó Laoire

President, Royal Institute of the  
Architects of Ireland

### **Modern Architecture and the Mediterranean: Vernacular Dialogues and Contested Identities**

Edited by Jean-François Lejeune and  
Michelangelo Sabatino

Publisher: Routledge, London and  
New York  
ISBN: 978 0415776332978  
0415776349  
Language: English  
Year: 2010



Waves of Mediterraneanism have lapped at the development of modern architecture since the Enlightenment, reshaping its contours often as self-conscious initiatives to redefine or redirect prevailing styles, discourses, or practices.



Like tides, the pull has been in at least two directions – towards radical change and towards a sense of atemporal fullness. Influence has ebbed and flowed. Following Fernand Braudel, the great historian of the Mediterranean between the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, one might speak of different time frames of modern Mediterraneanism from the practices of interwar and immediate post-war modernism in the twentieth century studied in the vibrant array of case-studies assembled here by editors and essayists Jean-François Lejeune and Michelangelo Sabatino, to the longer and more complex development of the theme over the two and half centuries of modern architecture's longer durée from the Enlightenment celebration of the historical primacy of the classical replete with the primitive Doric encountered at Paestum to the embrace of a more particularized vernacular in the critical regionalism of the late twentieth century from Hassan Fathy in Egypt in the 1970s to Alvaro Siza in Portugal of the 1990s. The modern movement's polemical and instrumental engagement with the warming waters of the Mediterranean, and with the everyday vernacular on its shores, was, at once, the symptom and the agent of one of the movement's leitmotifs: the attack on inherited academicism, on the hold of Greco-Roman canons for architectural expressionism, and on the inherent historicism that prevailed in so much of the architectural culture of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. One wave of Mediterraneanism thus set out to wipe away traces of preceding ones. (...)

Barry Bergdoll,

*The Philip Johnson Chief Curator of Architecture & Design. The Museum of Modern Art*

### **Le Corbusier. Elements of a Synthesis**

Revised and expanded by Stanislaus von Moos

Publisher: O10 Publishers, Rotterdam  
ISBN: 978 9064506420  
Language: English  
Year: 2009

The first German edition of this book was written in 1968, just three years after Le Corbusier's death. It was arguably the first and last time that a serious attempt could be made to encompass Le Corbusier's whole career in one volume. The death of the architect allowed a measure of detachment, and the belief in modernism was not yet quite dead. Thus von Moos' title *Elements of a Synthesis* could

be read in terms of both the subject and the book. Furthermore, the distracting documentary riches of the Fondation Le Corbusier had yet to become available. By 1971, when the French edition was published, 'Synthesis', lacking the necessary irony, was replaced by 'myth', complete with citation from Roland Barthes' *Mythologies*. By 1979, and the first English language edition, the original title was allowed back, given the greater respect for Le Corbusier's work in the USA. In each edition, the basic structure of the book remained the same – six essays dealing with Le Corbusier's Swiss period, Purism and *Esprit Nouveau*, the development of Le Corbusier's architectural language, urbanism, monumental architecture and the concluding *Elements of a Synthesis*. A new chapter, 'Variations on a utopian theme, focusing on the *Unité d'Habitation*, was inserted before the urbanism chapter in the American edition of 1979. In each edition, the chapters are titled differently in response to the *Zeitgeist*. 'Eine architektonische Formensprache entsteht' (the origins of an architectural language of form 1968) becomes 'Typology and design method' (1979), 'Die strahlende Stadt' (the radiant city 1968) becomes 'Naissance d'un langage architectural' (1971) and 'Elemente einer Synthese' (1968) became 'le mythe de la ville radieuse' (1971). Despite these flexions to intellectual fashion, the structure and most of the content of the book remained constant for a good reason: it reflects clearly the priorities and intellectual structure of Le Corbusier's own thought and work. It is for this reason that it remains the best introduction to Le Corbusier's work as architect, urbanist, painter and thinker. In the revised edition of 2009, von Moos has added some additional endnotes and a thoughtful postscript to each chapter, which bring the reader up to date. He adds a wry commentary on his 'relative philosophical agnosticism' (p. 9), which I consider to be the secret of the book's longevity.

Von Moos asks 'Why does Max Risselada's *Raumplan* versus *plan libre* Adolf Loos *Le Corbusier*... represent the key issues in a nutshell? The

reason is that a view of architecture as a system of forms, themes and patterns highlights the fiber by means of which it is bound into the artistic and cultural context of its time ...' (p.132). [...]

As von Moos says in his preface to the 2009 edition of *Elements of a Synthesis*, the most convenient ways to say something new about Le Corbusier are the critical essay, the catalogue entry or the exhibition. [...]

This is not the Le Corbusier of synthesis, utopia, social emancipation or rationalism but an altogether more vulnerable and approachable universe.

Tim Benton

*Professor of Art History  
Abstract from Journal of Design History  
Vol. 22 No. 3, 1999*

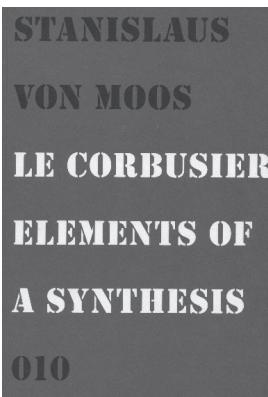
### **Chandigarh 1956 Le Corbusier and the Promotion of Architectural Modernity**

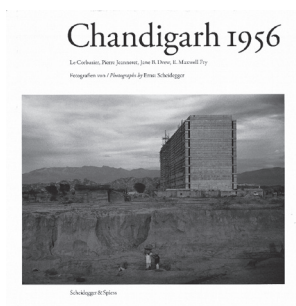
Edited by Stanislaus von Moos  
Photographs by Ernst Scheidegger  
Texts by Maristella Casciato, Verena Huber Nievergelt, Stanislaus von Moos and Ernst Scheidegger

Publisher: Scheidegger and Spiess  
ISBN: 9783858812223  
Language: English  
Year: 2010

Le Corbusier's master plan and buildings for Chandigarh, capital of the Indian state of Punjab, are landmarks of 20<sup>th</sup> century architecture and urban planning. In the late 1950s, Swiss photographer Ernst Scheidegger conceived a book, *Chandigarh 1956*, illustrated not only with photographs of the growing city he had taken on three trips to Chandigarh, but also with sketches and drawings by Le Corbusier. It was meant to be the initial volume of a series of books but it remained unpublished.

This book is the first to present Scheidegger's images of Chandigarh, including some in colour, together with the facsimile of the mock-up of the proposed book. The essays, from Maristella Casciato and Stanislaus von Moos who is also the book editor, explore the history and importance of Chandigarh, and in particular the contributions made to the project by Le Corbusier's collaborators Pierre Jeanneret, Jane B. Drew and E. Maxwell Fry. An additional essay looks at Scheidegger's specific view of Chandigarh and how the city has been represented in photography in general.





As Arthur Ruegg said in the book *vernissage*, “Maristella Casciato analyses the city, literally, from ‘A to Z’, and the Jeanneret, Fry and Drew work, as well as the Indian one”. She neither forgets to emphasize the importance of women’s work; furthermore, almost half of the city builders were women. Stanislaus von Moos compares the construction site to cities in ruin. He named “ruins in reverse” his essay on these unfinished buildings suggesting past and future.

Scheidegger and his interpreters reveal us the Babylonian construction images and the poetry of the everyday life. The step’s bright light reveals the Capitol ceremonial architecture and sharpens the Super-blocks’ purified buildings.”

It’s a superb book which collects the magic that emanates from the heroic landscape and from its architecture. To quote once again Arthur Ruegg “who can resist visiting the Capitol after the rough poetry of this city should wander to enjoy the magical evening atmosphere at the *Sukhna* Lake, in the enchanted rock garden, and will then be fully convinced: Chandigarh has awakened, lives it, and it works!”

*Excerpt from Arthur Rüegg’s book presentation in Zurich, 19th March 2010*

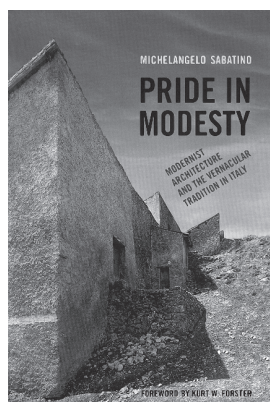
### **Pride in Modesty: Modernist Architecture and the Vernacular Tradition in Italy**

By Michelangelo Sabatino

Publisher: University of Toronto Press  
ISBN: 9780802097057

Language: English  
Year: 2009

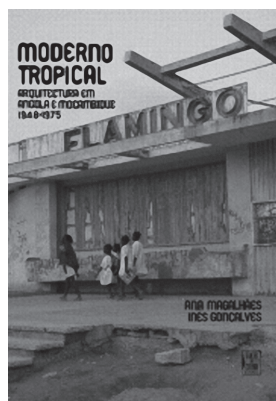
**T**he Extraordinary Role of Ordinary Things  
If our ears still ring with the claims of modern art and architecture—claims to rationality, realism, and the public good—it is their peremptory demand to discard time-honored things and ideas that gave



them the lie. Brand-new will make it better, the precision of the machine replace the rule of thumb and the judgment of the eye, but the new all too often makes a poor substitute for the old whose simplicity may recommend it before and after the present moment. The story Sabatino tells with persuasive evidence, brings home what has threatened for a century to slip into the quaint residue of holidays in the countryside or linger in nostalgic recollection. More than an antidote to schematic modernization, the legacy of the primitive proved essential for the very emergence of the modern, which, in its early stages, often sought to “restore building to what it has always been. It may come as a surprise that these are the words of Mies van der Rohe, the man who coldly dispatched anything superfluous until, with the Farnsworth House, he had pared building down to a version of the “hut.” The essentially modern reassumed the guise of its primitive origins. Imbued with “the simplicity of the earliest times,” but made of the stuff of its own industrial age, such a building exposes into nature what Semper discovered at a great remove from it under the glass canopy of the Crystal Palace.

Kurt W. Forster

*The Vincent Scully Visiting Professorship of Architectural History. Yale School of Architecture*



### **Moderno Tropical Arquitetura em Angola e Moçambique 1948-1975**

By Ana Magalhães/Inês Gonçalves

Publisher: Tinta da China  
ISBN: 9789896710170  
Language: Portuguese  
Year: 2009

“**M**oderno Tropical” is a lovely book where the nostalgic beauty of African Lusophone cities is expressed with affection and wisdom.

Ana Arez Magalhães undertook this work driven by the desire to research and publicize the magnificent modern heritage of four cities: Luanda and Lobito in Angola; Maputo and Beira in Mozambique. In order to accomplish her aims, the author sought and studied the existing known relationship between the architecture of the “Green Years of the 50s” and the crucial thrust led by the discovery of Brazilian architecture in Portugal. In addition, she tried to understand why many Portuguese architects that belonged to the generation that started to work after the 1st Architecture National Congress (1948) and graduated in Oporto – the only open-minded school at the time – went to work in a new world, where architectural expression could be implemented more freely than ever before. Although most of the work was commissioned by official entities in African colonies, there was a more open, tolerant, broad-minded atmosphere. Architects were willing to innovate, therefore making these countries more prone to accept modern ideals, so often restrained by the regime, generally in big cities. As an example, between 1947 and 1949, the City Palace project design by Francisco Keil do Amaral, which was meant to be erected in Eduardo VII Park, was successively rejected by the Ministry of Public Works. It was never built, although Lisbon’s Mayor, lieutenant colonel Salvação Barreto, supported its construction with energy and conviction. This was one of the many paradoxes of the regime.

Following the widely disseminated works of José Manuel Fernandes and research conducted by António Albuquerque, André Ferreira or even Maria Margarida Quintã, this book offers a historical and nostalgic view of that extraordinary production.

Ana Tostões

*Architect and Architecture Historian, Professor at IST, Technical University of Lisbon.*

**docomomo** International Chair