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# Beyond postcolonialism: New directions for the history of nonwestern architecture



Kathleen James-Chakraborty\*

*UCD College of Art History and Cultural Policy Belfield, University College Dublin, Dublin 4, Ireland*

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## Abstract

Overturing assumptions that nonwestern architecture has been static over time, new scholarship focused on colonial and postcolonial architecture and urbanism and on nonwestern modernism has made a significant contribution to our understanding of the history of architecture. Much more, however, remains to be done. Comparative studies of colonialism, especially between empires, attention to innovation outside Europe and the English-speaking world and more consideration of memory and migration are among the most exciting possible new directions.

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## 1. Introduction

The notorious frontispiece of the 1905 edition of *A History of Architecture on the Comparative Method*, written by the two Banister Fletchers, father and son, and entitled “The Tree of Architecture,” illustrated various style of European architecture emerging out of a trunk labeled “Greek” and “Roman”, while Peruvian, Mexican, Egyptian, Assyrian, Indian, Chinese, and Japanese architecture were shown as stunted branches (Fletcher 1905). Sub-Saharan

Africa did not even merit inclusion. Although until the 1980s survey books continued to follow this line of thought, grouping such nonwestern examples as were included early in the text, today few remain convinced of the appropriateness of this approach (Janson, 1962). Not only has scholarship on the rest of the world mushroomed, but the key issue is no longer defining the essential core of a particular pre-modern corpus. Instead the dynamism it has exhibited over time, acquired not least through outside influence, is now increasingly widely recognized and equally valued (James-Chakraborty, 2014; McKean, 2007). This shift has opened up an entirely new field of inquiry, that of the emphatically non-traditional architecture of the places that the Fletchers presumed incapable of change. Two generations of scholarship have made clear the importance of colonial and postcolonial buildings, as well modern ones erected in areas outside Europe that were never colonized, to the history of nineteenth and twentieth century architecture in particular. While assessing the portion of that

\*Tel.: +353 1 716 8148; fax: +353 1 716 8453.

E-mail address: [Kathleen.jameschakraborty@ucd.ie](mailto:Kathleen.jameschakraborty@ucd.ie)

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considerable achievement published in English, this study also suggests new directions for such scholarship. In particular it advocates a comparative study of imperialism that would stretch beyond chronicling European colonization of the sixteenth through the twentieth centuries to encompass earlier and also nonwestern empires. More comprehensive challenges to the presumption that innovation moves from the core to the periphery rather than emerging at the edges of political and economic systems are also needed, as are explorations of the contribution that the study of memory might make to an understanding of nonwestern modernism. Finally, we should also be considering the way in which migrants are transforming the metropolitan centers of the so-called “west.”

## 2. Historiography

For more than a generation, the history of colonial and postcolonial architecture and urbanism has been one of the most dynamic sub-disciplines of architectural history. The literature on the rest of the history of Latin American, African, and Asian architecture has also been growing, albeit at a slower pace. For many years the proportion of papers given on these subjects at the Society of Architectural Historians (SAH) annual conferences held in North America has been impressively high; papers on it are so frequent as to be routinely scheduled to conflict with one another. Despite its name, the International Association for the Study of Traditional Environments (IASTE) has in fact focused most of its attention on the topic since shortly after its founding in 1988; by the time its second conference, held in Brussels in 2012, the situation was little different at the European Architectural History Network (EAHN) than at SAH, although more papers were on Africa than on Asia. Moreover this body of scholarship has been unusually distinguished; the SAH, for instance, has since the 1980s bestowed an increasingly high proportion of its awards for books and articles to work on these topics.

Nor has the field been static. Like all historical writing, no matter how great its claim to objectivity, architectural history responds to present conditions, in its case above all to shifts in contemporary architectural style and taste as well as in the composition of the community of architectural historians. Furthermore, as a relatively new subset of that community, those who address the history of colonial and postcolonial environments as well as other nonwestern modernisms, have been quick to engage new scholarly approaches. Thus the books published in the 1980s on India's colonial architecture (Evenson, 1989; King, 1984; Metcalf, 1989) saw it through the lens of postmodern classicism, renewed interest in local traditions, and the writings of Edward Said, Michel Foucault, and Eric Hobsbawm (Foucault, 1977; Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983; Said, 1977). More recently, an updated focus on style has accompanied explorations of the relationship between modern architecture, once understood to be emancipatory and international, with both colonialism and nationalism. Outstanding examples of this approach have focused on Turkey and Brazil (Bozdogan, 2001; Deckker, 2001). The mainstream is no longer devoted, however, exclusively to questions of style and symbolism. Instead landmark studies published in the

first decade of the twentieth-century explored space, more often at the scale of the city than individual buildings. Scholars influenced by Stuart Hall and Henri Lefebvre described the way in which struggles over the control and use of specific places within the city captured larger truths about the way in which power was deployed within colonial societies (Hall, 1980; Lefebvre, 1991). And contemporary political events, above all 9/11 and the subsequent invasion of Iraq, brought to the fore the Middle East's considerable modernist heritage, especially when written by scholars prone to challenge the new respectability of empire.

There was an explicit tension at the heart of much of the literature written in the 1980s, which was when colonial architecture in Africa and Asia first became the subject of sustained inquiry. On the one hand, these buildings beguiled because they retained an impressive amount of handcrafted detail. That they were also more obviously exotic in both setting and style than metropolitan examples of similar styles only enhanced their appeal. At the height of postmodernism's challenge to modernism, it looked as if a return to historicist architecture enriched with ornament was inevitable, and yet there was something slightly dull about simply repeating Georgian certainties à la Quinlan Terry. Thus Lutyens's work in New Delhi awakened more admiration than did the details of his only slightly more conventionally classical country houses, while his overtly imperial contributions to the center of London were largely ignored (Irving, 1981). Yet the work of Said and Foucault in particular, suggested that the romantic engagement with style suffused with the haze of nostalgia that characterized the first popular surveys of the subject obscured the often very ugly realities of colonialism and its legacy (Morris, 1983). The attention Said and Foucault focused on the relationship between architecture and power made it difficult to continue to hide power relations, especially when they were expressed spatially, behind the discussion of pretty surfaces. Recent work on Europe pointed as well toward the conclusion that architecture was inherently political (Lane, 1968; Vidler, 1990). The earliest scholarship analyzing the relationship between colonial authority and built form, such as Thomas Metcalf's *An Imperial Vision: Indian Architecture and Britain's Raj*, focused on stylistic labels and the exterior surfaces of buildings. It made clear that the substitution of the Indo-Saracenic style, in many ways a transposition of the Gothic Revival into Indian conditions, for the classical styles the British had heretofore employed in India was not a sign of respect for indigenous tradition but a shrewd if unsuccessful effort to solidify political power (Metcalf, 1989). More specifically rooted in the particularities of architecture was Mark Crinson's perceptive *Empire Building: Orientalism and Victorian Architecture* (Crinson, 1996). Crinson's discussion of the interface between indigenous and imported ways of building set the stage for the emergence of technology transfer as a key theme in the discussion of nonwestern modernism, although much remains to be done (Cody, 2003).

As the enthusiasm for postmodernism gradually faded at the end of the last century, historians turned their attention from the sixteenth through nineteenth century colonial architecture that served as potential sources for new postmodern buildings to the history of nonwestern modernism. What postmodernists had condemned as homogenous

postcolonial modernity is now cherished mid-twentieth century modernism that may signal international *savoir faire*, attentiveness to indigenous precedent, or both. Published in English but often written by natives of the countries under discussion, new studies of this subject have turned the spotlight on the local context of both iconic examples of mid-century modernism and their lesser known, and often far more humble counterparts. In many cases the motive has been to emphasize the modernity of the places that had nurtured modernism in the 1930s and forties when it was under threat in Europe (Nitzan-Shiftan, 2009). The most exciting of these works, however, focused on the indigenous taste for a style that had generally been considered the handiwork of imported European talent. Sibel Bozdogan, for example, demonstrated that an architecture that was often termed the International Style could equally easily serve nationalist goals, as it did in Turkey in the 1930s (Bozdogan, 2001). Meanwhile Crinson showed that, although modern architecture was widely equated with independence, it had also been the architecture of choice for colonial officials in the 1950s (Crinson, 2003). Indeed the same architects, Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew, nearly simultaneously built housing in Chandigarh, the showcase of post-independence India, and in Nigeria, which became independent only in 1960 (Prakash, 2002). Tom Avermaete has further challenged the assumption that modernism was inherently politically and socially progressive. His perceptive study of ATBAT Afrique directly contradicted the rosier interpretation of the International Style in North African advanced by Jean-Louis Cohen and Monique Eleb (Avermaete, 2005; Avermaete et al., 2012; Cohen and Eleb, 2002). Even the recent return of modernism to fashion in the 1990s has received sustained scholarly attention in the case of China (Zhu, 2009).

The scholarship described above had multiple sources. Crinson had participated in what was probably the first graduate seminar on colonial architecture, taught by Renata Holod at the University of Pennsylvania in 1984, and Bozdogan taught from 1991 to 1999 at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where she proved an effective and stimulating mentor. Anthony King at SUNY Binghamton was another important voice and teacher (Kusno, 2000). Others, like Zhu, were trained entirely at home and in Europe. Most of the ground-breaking literature on the colonial city emanated out of a single campus, however: the University of California Berkeley. Norma Evenson, who wrote pioneering books on urban planning in Brazil and in colonial and post-colonial India, taught there from 1963 to 1993 (Evenson, 1966, 1973, 1989). Her example, eventually supplemented by that of her colleague Spiro Kostof, established Berkeley as a place where the issue of modern nonwestern urbanism occupied center stage (James-Chakraborty, 2009). The second key step in the emergence of what became a Berkeley school were the pair of books on French colonial urbanism written by Paul Rabinow, and Gwendolyn Wright (Rabinow, 1989; Wright, 1991). By the early 1990s, a constellation of Berkeley faculty committed to the study of nonwestern modernism that included Nezar AlSayyad, Paul Groth, Thomas Metcalf, Dell Upton, and myself was working with students who would publish a string of important monographs on nineteenth and twentieth century urbanism in China, South Asia, and Turkey as well as

elsewhere (AlSayyad, 1992; Broudehoux, 2004; Celik, 1986; Chattopadhyay, 2005; Chopra, 2011; Fuller, 2006; Gillem, 2007; Ginsburg, 2011; Glover, 2007; Göktürk et al., 2010; Hosagrahar, 2005; Lai, 2007; Lu, 2006; Pieris, 2009; Rajagopalan and Desai, 2012; Sen and Silverman, 2014; Zandi-Sayek, 2012).

The work of those trained at Berkeley was distinctive for the degree to which it focused not on issues of architectural style or its relation to identity but instead on space and the social processes through which it was constituted. Although cognizant of the way in which colonial authorities had deployed their considerable authority, they were equally interested in mapping out the quite important roles also played by indigenous elites. Natives in many cases of the cities they studied, they eagerly refuted the idea, widespread in the 1980s, that there was something inauthentic about the use their ancestors had made of imported styles (Tillotson, 1989; Sachdev and Tillotson, 2002). Moreover, having grown up in twentieth-century buildings, they were acutely aware of the degree to which their interior organization often differed from western precedent in ways that scholars with easier access to facades than plans had often missed. Informed by geography and cultural studies as much as by architectural history, their work was often alert to the distinctions between competing local actors.

More recently, the political events of the early twenty-first century have drawn renewed attention to the Arab Middle East and to the consequences of war more generally. Architectural historians have pushed back against the prominent apologists for empire in American and British policy and academic circles in two distinct ways. The first has involved detailing the degree to which in the middle of the twentieth century the Arab Middle East embraced modern architecture and thus modernism (Isenstadt and Rizvi, 2008). Designed to demonstrate that Islam was never monolithic and that fundamentalist terrorism has specific and often shallow roots, this point of view restores the equation of modernism and progress challenged by scholars like Crinson and Avermaete. The second, as detailed below, examines the damage wrought by warfare and the way in which the ruins are or are not repaired or left on display. Most of this work, however, has focused on European examples.

Postmodern architecture has long since lost its respectability in architectural circles. Postmodern intellectual theories, above all Said's formulation of Orientalism, have, however, for well over three decades provided architectural historians with a sophisticated toolkit. They have used it to analyze environments that previously stood outside the borders of a discipline that had long opposed the progression of styles in Europe and the English-speaking world with the relatively static "traditions" of the rest of the world. Until Said, books on Chinese, Islamic, and Japanese architecture generally ended before the architecture that was their subject was "tainted" by industrialization and contact with the west. While the relationship between modernism and modernity remains a matter of considerable debate, as does that between modernism and social progress, that modern architecture was widely distributed around the world and that both ordinary as well as iconic examples of it merit study is now beyond dispute (Lara, 2008; Lim and Chang, 2012; Lu, 2010; Nasr and Volait, 2003).

### 3. New directions

The question is where to go from here. Obviously there is a great deal still to be surveyed. Organizations like Docomomo, which is dedicated to the preservation of modern architecture and has chapters all over the world, play a crucial role here. Serious scholarship on nineteenth and twentieth-century sub-Saharan Africa has lagged far behind that on South and Southeast Asia and the Middle East. The same can still be said for the architecture of the last two centuries in China and the rest of East Asia versus Japan or most of Latin America versus Brazil and Mexico, although all of this is thankfully beginning to change (Fraser, 1990, Fuller, 2006, Ginsburg, 2011, Nelson, 2007, Osayimwese, 2013a, 2013b, Zhu, 2009). But the issue is also how to cover new intellectual as well as geographical ground. Four topics that appear particularly promising are the comparative study of the architecture of empire, the recognition of the periphery as the location of innovation, the analysis of architecture as the locus of cultural memory, and the study of the way in which the fabric of European and English-speaking cities is changing in response to the arrival of immigrants from the rest of the world. Although a considerable literature already exists on each of these topics, none has as yet achieved the prominence it deserves.

The beginning student addressing the topic of empire and architecture might conclude that empires had been built at only two stages in human history. Ancient Rome on the one hand and the Asian and African colonies accumulated by the major European powers across the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth century on the other still dominate the story. Few connections are drawn even between these examples. Nor, although many of the scholars who have written about British and French colonialism are based in the United States, Canada, and Australia, has there been much work addressing the similarities or the differences between the ways in which empire worked in the colonies where indigenous peoples were usually pushed aside by white settlers and those where they were not.

Empires have occurred throughout human history, and architecture has often been key to their construction. Did the colonies that Venice and the other Italian city states, especially Genoa, accumulate in the late middle ages along the Mediterranean and Black Sea have any bearing upon European settlement strategies in Africa and the Americas (Georgopoulou, 2001)? If, as Nicholas Canny has argued, there were important continuities between British activities in sixteenth and seventeenth century Ireland and the American colonies, what was the relationship between both of these and empire-building in India (Canny, 1988; Smyth, 2006)? Maya Jasanoff has linked British and French colonial enterprises in the nineteenth and twentieth century, but to date Alex Bremner's *Imperial Gothic* is one of the few works that ties together the architecture of the far-flung British empire (Bremner, 2013; Jasanoff, 2005, 2011). Even the way in which British colonization of India informed its approach to the architecture and urbanism of Africa remains under-examined, although Mia Fuller has written a comparative study of Italian colonial architecture to stand beside Wright's work on French

colonial urbanism across Africa and Asia (Fuller, 2006). And empire was never an exclusively European phenomenon, as Zeynep Celik's study of the modernizing ambitions of the French and Ottoman empires in the Middle East makes clear (Celik, 2008).

Much remains to be done not only on empire, but also on its dissolution. The slow breakup of the Ottoman Empire spawned independent states in Europe, as well as the establishment of European colonies in North Africa and the Middle East. How did the shared heritage of Ottoman administration affect the development of the built environment in its former provinces? And what is the relationship, if any, between the architectural strategies adopted by the new European countries created in the first three decades of the twentieth century, such as Norway, Ireland, and the countries carved out of the former Austro-Hungarian and Russian empires on the one hand and the territories in Asia and Africa that achieved independence following World War II on the other? How, in other words does one go about creating the architectural infrastructure of a modern nation state and how does it differ from the administrative armature of a colony (Sonne, 2003)? Answers to these questions will cast important light on the relationship between architecture and politics and particularly the construction of collective identities. The challenge of establishing nationhood in ways that would be legible abroad spurred many of these new governments, for example, to eschew local precedent and experiment with styles with global reach, first neoclassicism and later modernism.

Empire is only part of this story, however. Post-independence buildings around the world as well as the architecture and urbanism of countries, such as Thailand, much of China, and Japan, that largely escaped colonization all need to be better integrated into a global history of modern architecture in which it not presumed that all new ideas come from Europe or from architects of European descent (Junhua et al., 2001; Denison and Ren, 2006, Zhu, 2009). The story of the dissemination of modernism cannot be reduced to the story of European émigrés; equally important were the local clients, builders, and in many cases architects, although professional architectural education and practice as we know it today was certainly imported, and in many cases the requisite training became available locally only in the second half of the last century (Oshima, 2009; Reynolds, 2001; Sand, 2005). Nor are the origins of particular forms and materials always as important as the reasons for which they have been used. These do not necessarily accord, as Bozdogan in particular has shown, with the emphasis scholars of European modernism have put upon its supposedly socialist roots. Who wanted the modern, when, and why?

That the Brazilian, Indian, and Japanese governments sponsored some of the most important examples of mid-century modern architecture is known to anyone with a cursory command of architectural history. And yet too often the credit for modern architecture outside of Europe is divided only between Le Corbusier and German émigrés. Too often even writers who champion engagement with the local overlook the degree to it shaped and encouraged the new architecture, especially when they are writing main-

stream histories of modernism (Cohen, 2012; Frampton, 1980). It increasingly clear, however, that imported talent was only effective when local demand already existed for what it offered (Bacon, 2001, James-Chakraborty, 2006). Arguably modernism only survived the aggressive challenges posed to it first in the 1930s, when it went out of fashion in its original European strongholds, and again at the end of the 1970s because clients from the fringes of Europe to the shores of distant continents found it useful (James-Chakraborty, 2008, 2014). Indeed, modernism was often accepted in inverse proportion to the technological modernity of the society that sponsored it, especially when the resources existed to invest in more expensive alternatives (Forty, 1986). Nowhere was it more popular than among the urban middle class in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, who were looking for inexpensive ways to signal economic progress as well as to distance themselves politically from wealthier elites.

This is hardly surprising if one considers the degree to which innovation has long flourished at the periphery (O'Kane, 2005, 2013). Whether one maps the spread of technology or style, new ideas about architecture and urbanism were often adopted more quickly beyond Europe and the English-speaking world than within it. The collection of highrises clustered already by 1940 along the Bund and Nanjing Road in Shanghai, for instance, or in the center of the Brazilian cities of Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo had no rival in Europe, except perhaps for Stalin's Moscow, until well into the 1960s. Nor were these isolated examples. Rabinow and Wright explored the degree to which the French colonies in particular served as "laboratories of modernity," places where administrators could impose the latest urban planning ideas outside of the checks upon them imposed in France itself by representative government and strong property rights. More recently Arindam Dutta has explored the way in which the English Arts and Crafts esthetic emerged out of contact with the exotic other and was used, under the guise of stewardship of indigenous handicraft, to inhibit colonial access to new manufacturing techniques (Dutta, 2006; Scriver and Prakash, 2007). The resultant poverty was as modern as the textile mills or the railroad. Moreover the rupture with the past was arguably greater in places that were stripped by industrialization of the international markets for their finished products than in the manufacturing heart of Europe or even the United States. In the west it was often masked by recourse to invented tradition, whether the castellated homes of rich manufacturers or the Italian Renaissance palazzo from which their businesses were run. And how does knowing that the development of prefabrication in Germany was closely intertwined with its short-lived empire in Africa change our understanding of method more often associated with improving the standard of working class housing (Osayimwese, 2013a)?

Precisely because the rupture with "tradition" was so great in many nonwestern settings, the insistence often voiced during the 1980s that to deviate from it was somehow inauthentic rings hollow. Nuanced histories demonstrate that the architecture of high profile buildings, if not always of vernacular dwellings, has almost always been in flux. The mastery many European colonial regimes eventually acquired over the architectural pasts of those they

colonized, quoting secular and sacred precedent alike on the surfaces of infrastructures devoted to administration, education, and health, further called into question the extent to which it was possible after independence to link the present to either the pre-colonial or indeed the pre-industrial past. Inexpensive, easy to construct concrete that bore the imprimatur of Le Corbusier was more often the preferred alternative in Beijing or Bombay than in Baltimore or Bruges. Yet we still know too little about what technologies were imported where and when, about how they were disseminated to builders who may never have heard of Le Corbusier, and why they were and remain so popular with clients.

More attention has been paid to the issue of memory than to vernacular modernism. Nonetheless there could be greater engagement with what has become one of the most rapidly expanding areas of inquiry in the humanities. What role do buildings and cities play in shaping the shifting ways in which we understand the past? How do their own histories, including changes in how they are used and even how they appear, affect our understanding of the environments we inhabit? The willingness of scholars of colonial space to consider how existing structures have been used and transformed, often long after they were originally created, has helped upend architectural history's longstanding focus upon design intentions rather. Systematic use of the vast literature on memory, beyond chronicling the history of monuments and memorials, remains unusual, however, among architectural historians. Instead this is territory too often ceded to scholars based in departments of literature or, less often, history (Huysen, 2003; Jordan, 2006; Ladd, 1998; Rosenfeld, 2000; Till, 2006; Young, 2002). Indeed the very idea that the city might function as the repository of collective memory, while rightly challenged from within architectural history by Adrian Forty, is the legacy of an architect, Aldo Rossi (Forty, 2004; Rossi, 1982). More recent work on cultural memory by Aleida and Jan Assmann has largely rendered Rossi and his own source, Maurice Halbwachs, obsolete, but historians of nonwestern modernism have not yet addressed the consequences of their analysis (Assmann, 2008; Assman, 2011; Halbwachs, 1992).

The potential of this work on cultural memory has been highlighted by recent scholarship prompted by the destruction of cultural monuments in recent years in Afghanistan and Iraq and, more recently, Syria (Bevan, 2006; Cohen, 2011; Crane, 2011; Hell and Schönle, 2010). Focusing on the place of ruins in the cityscape and the cultural imagination, much of this work references European conflicts. It supplements a large literature on memory in Germany, focused on events both before and after the fall of the Berlin Wall, that includes arguments for and against literal reconstruction (Nerdinger, 2010; von Buttlar et al., 2011). This attention to the consequences of war is far more wide-ranging in its scope than the focus on memorial and monuments that characterized earlier work on architecture and memory. In particular it highlights the way in which structures acquire the associations that make them meaningful targets and the way in which the violence done to them in turn makes them symbols of conflict itself. These approaches are equally promising for the study of colonial architecture.

Colonial architecture and post-independence modernism are both increasingly appreciated as are nineteenth and

twentieth-century buildings erected in countries that were never colonized yet what these buildings mean to those who live amidst them deserves far more attention than it has as yet received. Highlighting the paradox of the fond preservation of buildings that were meant to be shockingly new and the meticulous conservation of what was often planned obsolescence is insufficient, as is the presumption that the careful conservation of buildings erected by an imperial power represents affection for colonialism. The explosion of literature on how a united Germany, for instance, inhabits the architecture bequeathed it by the Second Empire, the Weimar Republic, the Third Reich, and cold war divisions has no match, as of yet, in scholarship focused on Latin America, Africa, or Asia. And yet the issues raised by the adaptive reuse of Lutyens's New Delhi for an independent India are equally profound. Memory may be socially constructed but it remains individual. The full range of associations particularly buildings acquire remains beyond the reach of any scholar, but it behooves architectural historians to trawl more than the usual suspects (most often film) for evidence of what they have meant and continue to mean. Taste plays a role here, but there are always other factors at play as well (Thomas, 2002). This also represents a new opportunity to build an architectural history that addresses the public for architecture, rather than speaking only to the profession, even as distinctions should remain between attempts to construct official public memories and the recording and analysis of more private individual experiences.

Finally, the issue of migration deserves sustained attention. Because architecture is one of the most peripatetic of professions, and the history of the architecture of almost any locale features migrant design talent and labor as well as imported ideas, a good deal of attention has justifiably been paid to the travels of architects and artisans (Akcan, 2012; James-Chakraborty, 2006; Nicolai, 2003). Most of this focuses, however, on either the transfer of ideas from Europe to the United States or from these two to the rest of the world. The architecture of world's fairs, where orientalist architecture often formed an exotic and entertaining counterpoint to displays of technological progress, has also received well-deserved attention (Celik, 1992; Mitchell, 1991; Morton, 2000). Left unacknowledged, however, is the degree to which even the most celebrated western architects, such as Le Corbusier and Louis Kahn, served as conduits bringing new ideas and fresh perspectives back with them (James, 1995). Le Corbusier's adaptation of the Mughal palace pavilion as developed during the reign of Shah Jahan and Kahn's philosophizing about brick are only two examples. Even less examined are the contributions that professionals from outside Europe and the English-speaking world have made to architecture there. An important exception is the Bengali-born engineer Fazlur Khan, who worked as an engineer for Skidmore Owings and Merrill in Chicago (Ali, 2001). Even the African girlhood and early training of Denise Scott-Brown or Zaha Hadid's Iraqi heritage are typically overlooked in appraisals of these key figures.

Designers and builders are not the only people who move. So do clients and users (Akcan, 2010). Architectural historians, too, remain wedded to a model in which innovation is disseminated largely by architects and particularly by male

political exiles. The literature on the impact of immigrant communities on the American cultural landscape is small but promising (Chow, 2002; Sen and Johung, 2013; Upton, 1987). There is almost nothing of this kind, however, available in English on the impact that immigrants have had on the European cityscape that goes beyond decrying the impoverishment and social problems of the neighborhoods where the poorest among them dwell in the largest numbers. Middle and upper class migrants are invisible, except when they are pushing up real estate prices in New York and London (Lyall, 2013). The scholarship on European mosques is slim; that on immigrant grocery shops and restaurants almost nonexistent (Baus, 2009; Erkocu and Bucdaci, 2009; James-Chakraborty, 2011). Left entirely unsaid is that many immigrants arrive from cities where modernism is more deeply entrenched in the communities and their mass culture than it is in their new homes. Most of their European and American neighbors are entirely unaware of any but the most traditional environments associated with the countries from which these migrants come, whose newspapers they still often read and whose television and film they almost always still watch. Also left unexplored is the impact that migrants have upon the places they left behind. Many of India's largest cities, for instance, have been transformed by the taste of "Persons of Indian Origin," whose expensive new apartments, kitted out with infrastructure admired abroad, often sit empty much of the year. Not all of this is yet history, of course, and some of it remains the purview of geographers and sociologists rather than architectural historians. Nonetheless discussions of globalization will become much richer if we move beyond the simplistic assumption that a homogenizing global capitalism is alone responsible for the appearance of cityscapes around the world.

#### 4. Conclusion

Architectural history is important for its own sake but it is also significant because of the centrality of buildings to human experience. Buildings shelter and shape daily lives; people in turn attempt to craft their environments to tell stories about the way in which they would like to be perceived and understood. Members of an academic discipline with firmly European origins, architectural historians initially devoted most of their attention to the built heritage of that continent. Those who focused on buildings of the last two centuries long assumed that the topography of technological and esthetic innovation closely correlated and that buildings that did not aspire to change the way the world looked were peripheral to the story. None of these generalizations still hold true. Instead historians of the architecture of Africa, Asia, and Latin America have shown that dynamism of the built environments of those places changes the way in which we understand buildings everywhere.

Much remains, however, to be done. Not only are there many avenues that merit a great deal more exploration, but the boldest findings also deserve much larger audiences than they have yet received. New knowledge about the people who commissioned, designed, constructed, inhabited and viewed colonial and postcolonial buildings has

implications for the humanities and the social sciences as a whole, as it overturns preconceptions by no means unique to architectural historians. What does it mean if some of the most potent symbols of modernization created during the twentieth century sunk deeper roots in Calcutta and Cairo than in the suburbs of Chicago and even possibly Copenhagen? Who was the modern movement really for and why? Did it more effectively express the aspirations of working class Europeans for political empowerment or middle class Indians and Egyptians for economic progress? Was it above all the purview of a small cluster of immensely talented designers intensely aware of what each other were doing or is it the property as well of relatively unskilled labor and of housewives? And is it a living tradition, or is it time for it to be consigned to history as the tree of architecture gains a new crown in response to different concerns, such as sustainability. The answers to these questions remain to be written, but there is no doubt that they will contribute to the continued vitality of the history of the architecture of the last two centuries and the resonance of its conclusions among all those who chart human experience in the past and present.

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