

INTRODUCTION

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Introduction

Central Europe Defined

This thesis investigates the development of architectural modernism and the Modern Movement in Central Europe from 1895-1939. It examines the ideas of modernism through the lens of town planning and building, primarily in the towns and cities of the multinational Habsburg Empire. Also considered is the later evolution of the Modern Movement through the independent nations that arose from the Empire.

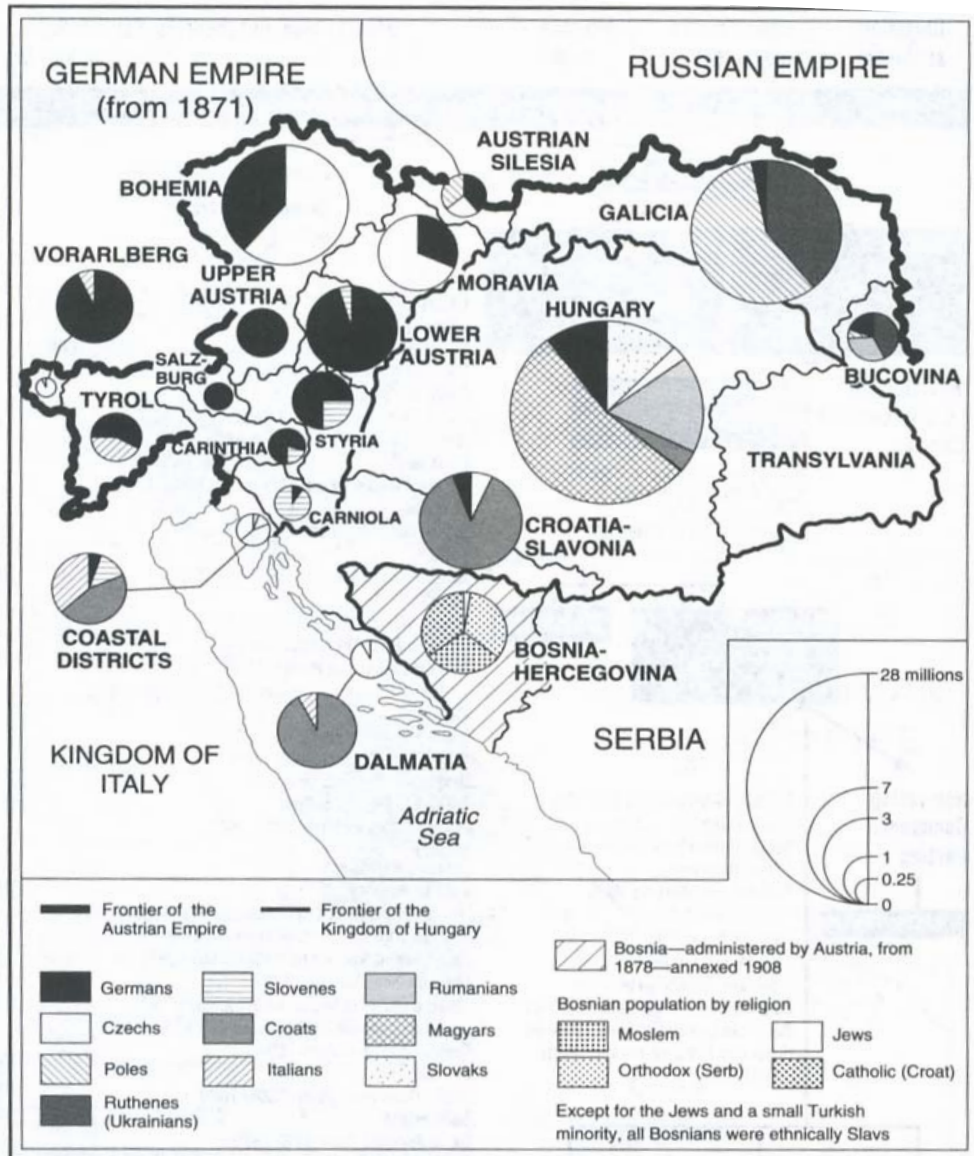
Given the geographical and chronological extent of this period, it is impossible to generalise consistently about developments. Prague, Ljubljana, Wroclaw and Vienna (for example) differed greatly as to the geopolitical, economic and social conditions that existed locally. Each of these cities generated their own particular local responses to urbanisation and architectural modernism. However, it is possible to identify central themes in the development of the cities of the Hapsburg Empire. We can follow cross-cultural influences in the establishment of aesthetic and technical developments in Central European architecture and planning during this period. The notion of 'Central Europe' is problematic, and some of the difficulties discussed later can be resolved by delimiting the study to the lands of the Habsburg dynasty.

The Empire, a multicultural and multilingual society in Central Europe (1.1), displayed an early engagement with urbanisation, planning and architectural modernism. This, it is argued here, led to a creative milieu where opposition, contrast and difference were the norm. This work investigates some of the cross-pollination that occurred.

Much of this milieu remains unknown (or at least unacknowledged) by the authors of standard 'histories of architecture.' The preference for generalisation identified by Jencks (p.6) leads the authors to an underlying assumption that the 'truth' of the histories is firmly established in time and place by the authors' own selection of who and what is important. Unfortunately, within this selective editing, much that may be significant may be lost.

In restoring some of this missing, but significant, detail a number of questions needs to be posed. This is particularly so in relation to the generation of early urban plans in cities such as Zagreb and Ljubljana, which progressed to a widespread urban culture of architectural planning throughout Central Europe.

I.1 The Dual Monarchy: The Nationalities of Austria-Hungary, 1867-1918



- To what extent did the towns and cities of Central Europe, as historical domiciles of learning and culture, generate architectural solutions that were particular to an ethnic understanding or a perceived cultural imperative?
- How did the towns and cities of the (former) Empire seek to establish their own individual positions as modern cosmopolitan centres, while at the same time revisiting their individual histories in pursuit of a national style?
- Were the ideas of Otto Wagner in the *Grosstadt* (the Great City) as utopias of city dwelling on a comparatively vast scale, accepted and supported beyond Vienna?
- Was there a preference for architectural development that safeguarded historical buildings, while at the same time integrating the necessary transport and communications infrastructure for modern living?
- Did the impetus for the development of the Modern Movement in Central Europe depend on Western European ideas, or was the perception of Phillip Johnson (voiced at the time) a more geographically and culturally accurate attribution? By inference, are the 'others' identified below worthy of far greater scrutiny?

Gropius and others created Modernism in architecture before the First World War in Central Europe, and it was accepted elsewhere from the late 1920s onwards.¹

Johnson's use of '[C]entral Europe' to denote little more than a geographical position, rather than referring to nationality and culture, is representative of a misunderstanding in the 'West' of what Central Europe connotes. Therefore there is a need to define 'Central Europe' not only geographically, but also historically, ethnically and culturally.

The concept of *Mitteleuropa* (literally Middle-Europe) has been the subject of intense academic debate. The term's conceptual root in German politics perhaps occasions a great deal of angst. Certainly, the term *Mitteleuropa* is used in particular contexts in English as a loan word; elsewhere it is replaced or translated by the more familiar 'Central Europe.' Which countries are included in the description *Mitteleuropa*, but excluded from a definition of 'Central Europe,' depends (broadly) on whether one approaches the question from a Germanic or Slavic perception. In resolving this interesting (but divisive) debate, it is possible to arrive at a position that uses arguments from both positions equally. In such a resolution, the region is seen as an historical buffer zone between Western and Eastern powers, where *Mitteleuropa*/Central Europe is defined as having three distinct characteristics:

- a cultural *Gemeinschaft*, [community] in the heart of Europe, with common values, common traditions, and a common history,
- a common market or free trade zone,
- a region with common political interests primarily directed against Russia in the East and France in the West.²

Clearly Slav and German people share these three distinct characteristics to some extent, as confirmed by Milan Kundera, the Czech writer (p.7). However, the last geopolitical characteristic of the Brechtefeld definition would appear to be conditioned by the author being of German descent. This is revealed by France replacing Germany as the historical 'West' against which Central Europe acts. This allows all of Germany–Austria to be placed in 'Central Europe.'

Others hold that the region (if it is seen as such) is characterised by usage of Latin forms, adherence to Roman Catholicism, not sharing an Ottoman influence, not adhering to Orthodoxy or using Cyrillic forms. The present nations may be linked by/through the Habsburg Empire, the Hungarian monarchy, the Holy Roman Empire, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth or Imperial Germany. To some degree it is easier to place bounds on Central Europe North (the Baltic) and South (the Alps) than East to West. In the East, a line runs shakily through Belarus and Ukraine (where parts of those countries formed part of a greater historical Poland), and the Rhine marks a boundary, largely with France. This boundary would, of course, be the one contested by Slavs. In Slavic conceptions (at least those of the western Slav nations), shared cultural and linguistic forms mark the distinction, with the Orthodoxy of the East and South marking the boundaries between the two chief forms of Slavic nation.

Geographical, ethnic and cultural misconceptions about the peoples of Central Europe, particularly from an American/Western perspective, are easily illustrated when Vienna is seen as Western and Prague as Eastern, despite the fact that geographically Prague is some 200 miles west of Vienna (1.2). Within the German historical view, shared by much of the population of Western Europe, the people of Vienna and Austria are presented as German speaking and from a Germanic cultural root – and they therefore are all Western.

The allied notion of the 'Aryan race' was first used in 1848 by a German professor in Oxford, Max Muller. Every nationality in Europe was tempted to

conceive of itself as a unique racial kinship group, whose blood formed a distinct and separate stream.³

This view was taken to the extreme by Englishman Houston Stewart Chamberlain working in Germany in 1899, when he narrowed the 'creative race' from Aryans to Teutons:

True history begins from the moment when the German with mighty hand seizes the inheritance of antiquity.⁴

Using these definitions, the Northern Slav Czechs, who were the majority population in Bohemia and Moravia and who spoke a language very different from German, were from a distinctly different ethnic group to the Teutons. They could only be disenfranchised and regarded as 'foreign,' despite the geographical centrality of Prague. This type of ethnic distinction, when extended to the rest of Central Europe, marginalises the Southern Slavs, Romanians, Ruthenes (Ukrainians) and Istrian Italians and all but excludes the favoured Magyars, the ethnic Hungarians who had shared power with the Austrians from 1867.

This power sharing and thereby exclusion of others was justified by Julius Andrassy, the Hungarian foreign minister of the Austro-Hungarian Empire:

The Germans and Magyars were to be the two Peoples of state; as for the others, the Slavs are not fit to govern, they must be ruled.⁵

This apparently unequivocal position was further complicated when increased activity in the fields of ethnography in the late 19th century revealed earlier ethnic divisions within Austria-Hungary which had caused Baron Andrian Warburg [sic] to describe Austria thus in 1842:

A purely imaginary name, which signifies no self-contained people, no country, no nation, a conventional usage for a complex of distinct nationalities. There are Italians, Germans, Slavs, Hungarians, who together constitute the Austrian Empire, but there is no Austria, no Austrian, no Austrian nationality, nor has there ever been any save for a strip of land around Vienna.⁶

A difficulty in making observations about Central Europe is that of understanding how Vienna and Austria were (and are) perceived by the majority non-Germanic population of Central Europe. Here, Vienna is seen as the former administrative capital of the Austro-Hungarian Empire; an Empire peopled by a large range of nationalities stretching from the Tyrol in the west to Bucovina in the east. This area incorporates

much of what today is seen as Central Europe (I.2.) This view contrasts with that of the Viennese, where Vienna is presented as the capital of Austria, a distinct country with a dominant Germanic population and culture.

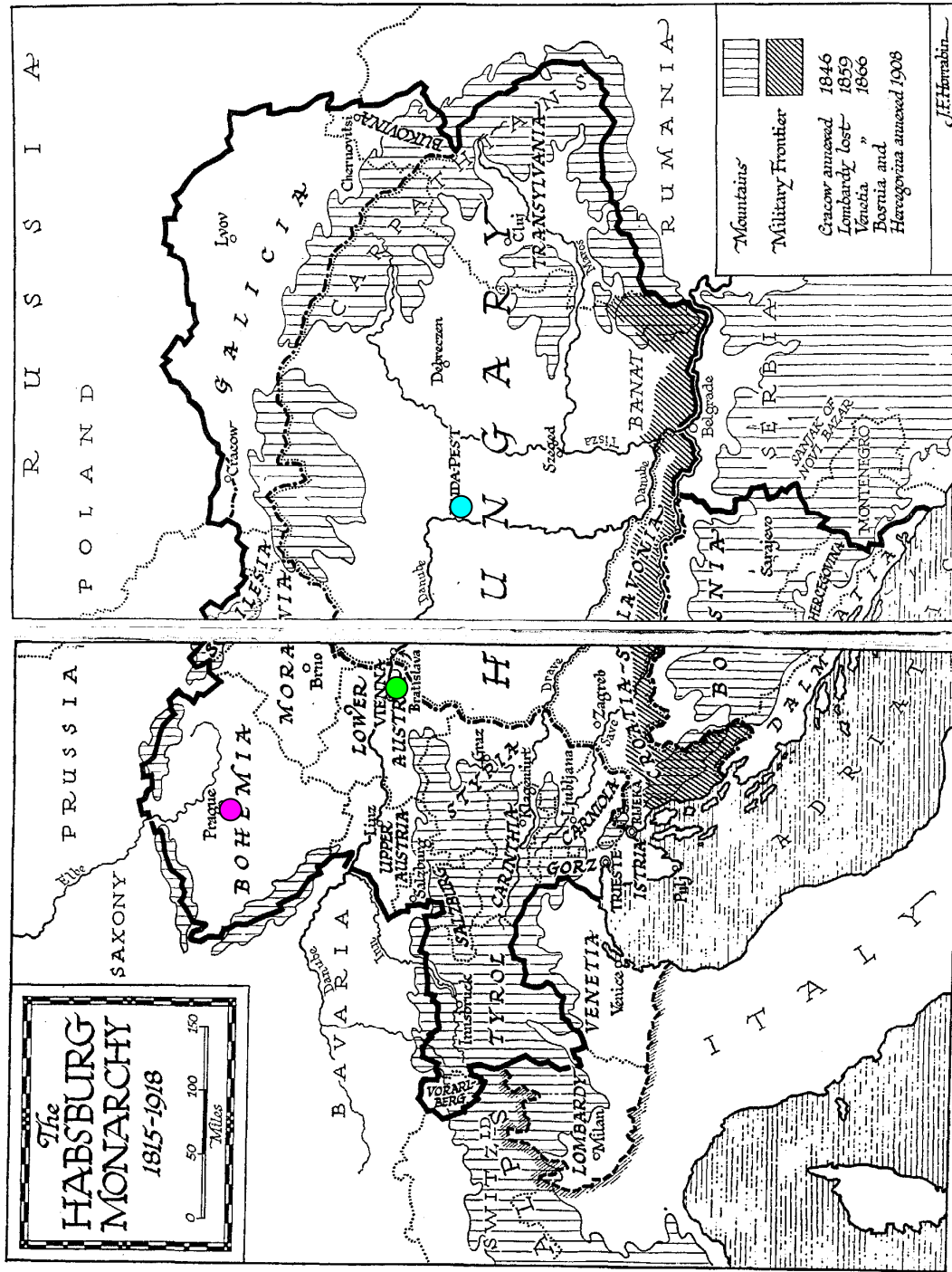
The difference between these two perceptions is central to understanding how ideas and actions grew within Austria-Hungary from 1867-1918 under the Dual Monarchy, and how these opposing ideas were manifest in the independent countries after the Treaty of Trianon from 1920.⁷ These distinctions rippled through the peace of the inter-war years, until the severe hardships of the Second World War and then Soviet Communist occupation. Today, the contribution made by the peoples of Central Europe to the modern world is being re-evaluated by learned bodies and individuals.

Prior to the fall of the Berlin Wall and the dissolution of the Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc, Milan Kundera wrote an article entitled *Un Occident Kidnapped* - later published as 'The Tragedy of Central Europe' in the 'New York Review of Books', April, 1984. Kundera argued that the West was in danger of losing a part of Europe which he and many others regarded as western in outlook, even under communist control, to a Soviet-dominated view of Eastern Europe. Kundera believed trying to identify Central Europe within strict geo-political boundaries was senseless: he defined the area of Central Europe by their peoples and shared cultural traditions,

the great common situations that reassemble peoples, regroup them in ever new ways along imaginary and ever changing boundaries that mark a realm inhabited by the same memories, the same problems and conflicts, the same common tradition.⁸

Although Kundera does not clearly define where his Central Europe lays, he does list a number of countries sandwiched between the borders of Germany and Russia. These include Poland, Hungary, Bohemia, Slovakia and Austria. But what of Croatia and Slovenia and other parts of countries which were once part of Central Europe historically? Romanian Transylvania and Bosnia Hercegovina are not included in his list of countries, but are clearly defined culturally within his terms. The problem Kundera had encountered has caused extreme confusion among commentators for many years; because, as he says, the definition of the region of Central Europe is not solely geographical, it is driven by culture, ethnicity and nationality.

I.2 The Relative Geographical Positions of Prague, Vienna and Budapest



Once the communist regimes throughout Central Europe fell there was far greater opportunity for discussion. One of the most passionate pleas for a reconsideration of what Central Europe was and is came from a group of literary figures: Vaclav Havel, Árpád Göncz and Adam Michnik – as representatives of the Visegrad Group (Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary). All went on to become major political figures. Havel became the president of the Czech Republic, Göncz became the president of Hungary and Michnik was founder and editor-in-chief of *Gazeta Wyborcza*, one of the most influential new daily newspapers in Poland, and latterly a member of the Polish parliament.

They argued that the simplistic view of Central Europe now labelled 'post communist' by external commentators was another generalised concept of a complex of nations that had never been fully understood or explained in the West. What was needed (they reasoned) was an understanding of Central Europe as a region that accepts past history as presented by external observers, but also requires a far more thorough and wide-reaching evaluation of all that happened in Central Europe from the beginning of the 20th century and how those events framed the future.

Definitions

This period has been considered in terms of the historical, philosophical and aesthetical approaches to architecture and planning within two principle eras: architectural modernism from 1895-1925 and the Modern Movement/Modernism (used as a collective term for the International Style through Functionalism, Rational, Anti-Rational, to the mature styles we now recognize as Modern) from 1925-1939.

The word 'modernism,' used with the related terms modern, modernist and modernising, refers to the development of architecture and planning which grew from the Age of the Enlightenment in the eighteenth century to the end of First World War. This period is defined by the belief that 'truth shall set you free' with the central concept of freedom from overt religious, political and secular control making the world a better place in which to live. Architecturally this modernism could accommodate many different proposals in improving both urban and rural fabric.

No such precise definition of Modern Architecture, or the Modern Movement, can be made. As Charles Jencks points out in his introduction to 'Modern Movements in Architecture, the Plurality of Approaches' there are significant problems with any linear chronology or strict classification.

For instance when one hears an historian say 'The Modern Movement', one knows what to expect next: some all-embracing theory, one or two lines of architectural development, something called 'the true style of our century', a single melodrama with heroes and villains who perform their expected roles according to the historian's loaded script. Dazzled by this display of a consistent plot and inexorable development, the reader forgets to ask about all of the missing actors and their various feats - all that which ends up on the scrap heap of the historian's rejection pile.⁹

In taking Jenck's analogy further, this clarification as to who were the 'leading actors' becomes all the more difficult when the historical record in English carries little witness to the activities of many Central European architects and planners. Their work has been submerged in wars and occupation, followed by a period of isolation during the Cold War 1948-1989. In that period the need to project the superiority of everything emanating from the West as capitalist, democratic and free, is contrasted to that of the East, where a communist-led, world-wide patronage was presented as backward, dangerous and bad (or the opposite, depending on which side of the Iron Curtain the author sat.)

Sitting very unhappily between these two extremes were the people of Central Europe, who throughout continued to live as they always had, recording their histories in their own languages but with very little stimulation from sources beyond the communist world.

In seeking to avoid obvious bias, any form of comparative survey where events and works in Central Europe during this period are incorporated into an established Western chronology is eschewed in favour of a parallel survey, where a Western and Central European chronology are run side by side. Only where there is compelling evidence of contact and exchange between parties do the chronologies interconnect. By this method, it should be possible to identify the key characteristics of Western and Central European ideas, plans and buildings feeding into modernism and the Modern Movement as a whole.

The other area of 'restoration' which this work seeks to achieve is the clarification of ethnicity and nationality. Architects, who have lost their antecedents and history by being called 'Austrian' and or 'Viennese' for example, have their forebears restored to them. Two examples of figures to suffer from this re-labelling are Josef Hoffman and Adolf Loos, both of whom are Czech by birth. More precisely, Hoffman was born in

Brtnice, Moravia and Loos in Brno, Moravia. Although sharing this Moravian heritage, the term 'Austrian' (as applied to both in Vienna) to give them a particular kinship took no account of the differences in their buildings and outlook.

So it may be profitable to contrast Hoffman's delightful building [Palais Stoclet, Brussels, 1905] with the work of Adolf Loos, so completely opposed in character, though Loos was [also] an Austrian.¹⁰

What this statement ignores is the individual differences between the two men in their formative years, and their personal exploration of architecture, to arrive at very different, conflicting styles. Once this information on upbringing, exposure to mentors and ideas is restored to the planners, architects and builders, a picture can be shaped which portrays by nationality, date of birth and mentorship the key practitioners within the history of architectural modernism and the development of the Modern Movement. Where this understanding is then extended to groups and movements by the application of prosopographic analysis (see Method below), many of the discovered similarities and differences reveal a more comprehensive picture of the development of architectural modernism and the Modern Movement without the usual separation between East and West.

Method

The first notion of writing about architectural modernism and the Modern Movement began in 1983 when conducting research into Henryk Berlewi, *Mechano-Faktura* and Helena and Szymon Syrkus as part of a paper on Polish Constructivism. In so doing it was quickly revealed that beyond snippets of information in the Penrose Annuals there was little else about Central European avant-garde movements. Over the intervening years fragmented periods of research, attendances at conferences and seminars and informal discussions have located hitherto unknown sources e.g. 'The Hungarian avant-garde – The Eight and the Activists', Hayward Gallery, February, 1980. Views as to the feasibility of a study that looked at what was then a prohibited region, from the birth of the 20th century to the start of the Second World War, were sought.

Clearly this entire process was aided considerably by the fall of communism and the destruction of the Berlin Wall in 1989. The growing interest from historians, architects and designers in the achievements of Central European 'schools' gave rise to an increased number of conferences and exhibitions (as detailed below). From this point forward the levels of contact facilitated by the internet improved communication and

information considerably, allowing important sites to be identified and a network of key informants throughout Central Europe to be established.

The primary research for this thesis was conducted through a programme of visits to Central Europe between August 2000 and August 2004. A number of semi-structured interviews with key informants and site visits of between two and four hours were conducted. Before embarking on the interviews, archival research in English language articles identified limited sources that included a range of multilingual periodicals in the RIBA reference library.¹¹ These periodicals were used as English language primers in conjunction with catalogues and conference notes from a number of events:

- 'Jože Plečnik 1872-1957, Architecture and the City', Oxford Polytechnic, Urban Design, 1983
- 'Constructivism in Poland 1923-1936', Kettles Yard, Cambridge, 1984
- 'Adolf Loos', Arts Council, Sheffield City Art Gallery, December, 1985,
- 'Devetsil, The Czech Avant-Garde of the 1920s and 1930s, MOMA, Oxford, 1990
- 'Katarzyna Kobro' Henry Moore Institute, March 1999, Leeds¹²
- 'Karel Teige: Modernist Architecture and *Avant-Garde* Typography', RIBA, February 2000, London¹³
- 'Peasants Real and Imagined', Brighton University, March 2000¹⁴
- 'The Werkbund Housing Estate Prague', Vienna, 2000
- 'Czech Design, Culture and Society: Changing Climates', Brighton, December, 2005

These sources were used to confirm the accuracy of information to date.

In writing this thesis one other question had to be resolved. Was this to be:

History as *the past* or

History as an *account of the past*?

Although the differences between the two are subtle in their linguistic statement the actual difference between the two approaches is considerable. The first is a very simple statement about what happened in the past, as in 'it's all history now' meaning 'it's all in the past'. The latter statement is implied when we enter into a discourse on a particular event e.g. the First World War, where opinion and counter opinion have to be weighed.

This research uses the latter approach despite the dearth of archival material either written in or translated into English. Most research methodology gives primacy to the written word because it can be tested by cross reference across a number of sources. This method has been viewed as the most reliable and verifiable for many years. However a growing body of thought reasons the facts as recorded in these documents are only part of a much greater 'truth'. This has led to a considerable re-examination of historical methods particularly in regard to the stating of historical facts. The records of the past by definition are incomplete and will always remain so:

- The past was not recorded in every detail by the people at the time.
- The historian relies on the memory and accuracy of recall of others.
- The past has gone and therefore it is impossible to check the validity and accuracy of our accounts of it.
- The past is viewed through modern eyes using contemporary understanding and concepts.

As a partial answer to some of these difficulties the use of prosopography or prosopographic analysis as a subset of historical research has been growing in importance in academic circles.¹⁵ Within prosopography the study of biographical details (educational background, family background, religion, ethnicity, childhood events, etc.) that can be identified as being 'in common' or as an aggregate part of an organisation are used to analyse patterns found in societies' elites.

This approach, in combination with the standard practices of historiography, adds considerable evidence particularly where written record is scarce. The method is capable of yielding revealing insights particularly in comparisons between individuals who share the same ethnicity, religion and level of education. Another advantage this method displays over historiography is that it is less inclined to bias and hagiography than those works fed by biographies. Within these works the lives and works of architects as individual monographs are reassembled to give a comprehensive picture of their participation in a movement as a whole. In using prosopographic analysis it is gratifying that architects and architectural historians have placed their trust in someone who is progressing from the position of a design/cultural historian who would make observations about the practices of architecture and urban planning.

Literature Review

The complex nature of the multicultural and multilingual Habsburg Empire and the independent nations that were to emerge in the wake of its collapse makes any account of the literature that relates to the period under review very difficult. However, less problematic is an account of the authorities and texts that first provoked this thesis and subsequently provided material for consideration.

For example, *The Modern House* by FRS Yorke (1934 revised 1946) proved inspirational in its prophetic and reasoned explanation of The Modern:

In England there was C.F.A. Voysey, Baillie Scott, Edgar Wood, George Walton and C.R. Mackintosh, in America, Frank Lloyd Wright “whose open planning broke the mould of the traditional.” On the continent, Otto Wagner “the real precursor of modern structural architecture”; Josef Hoffman his pupil and partner who was among the most notable of its earliest pioneers; Behrens, Berlage, Josef Olbrich, Adolf Loos, Hans Poelzig, Van der Velde, Perret, Kotěra and his pupil Gocar. Their attitude, in consideration of the immediate architectural background was inevitable. There was no stylistic integration until the War came, accelerating the disclosure of objects, and emphasising the importance of economy and hence the inseparability of architecture from structure.¹⁶

Two factors are immediately apparent from the above quote: firstly, Yorke was aware of developments in the Vienna School of Otto Wagner, especially through student disciples who were by birth of Central European origin and who would disseminate the precepts of Modernism far and wide. Secondly, Yorke is adamant that Modern architecture would ‘break the mould of the traditional’. Modern architecture would be concerned with a new plan for a new way of life and therefore the new functional plan using new building materials, methods of construction and arrangements of home, town and city would become the norm. Yorke was one of the first architecturally-qualified commentators to understand that:

Experiment, invention, the immense scale and scope of modern industry and the demands imposed by modern life, have completely changed the methods of construction which prevailed for centuries and have produced new synthetic materials which are stronger and lighter and generally more efficient than the old natural materials. It is absurd to impose upon the new materials that are essentially light the classic forms that are essentially heavy.¹⁷

Within Yorke’s introduction we find the quintessential definition of Modernism/International Style, i.e. new ways of building with new, technologically

advanced materials to create towns and cities fit for the new century that existed for the benefit of everyone.

Yorke's knowledge of Czech architectural developments was facilitated by his friendship with Karel Honzík whereby these advances in architectural form and construction were highlighted in Yorke's writing; a number of notable buildings were discussed in these works.¹⁸ For example, the Smíchov House Prague by Honzík and Havlicek (1929) and Evžen Linhart's house in Prague (1930) both exemplify the freedom of working with new ideas, new materials and a:

... freedom conditioned by the absolute necessity for economy and efficiency, but drawing strength from these rather than regarding them, as in the past, as impediments to fine design.¹⁹

Yorke then uses a number of other houses, including ones by J.K. Riha (architect's own house, 1931), Adolf Bens' villa in Prague (1932), Karel Hannauer's villa in Prague (1932) and Ladislav Zak's house in Prague (Villa Hain, 1932) to point up another important characteristic of Modernism – the disposition of the property via its orientation, terraces and fenestration allowing the occupiers to take full advantage of the surrounding landscape.²⁰

At the same time Hitchcock and Johnson published *The International Style: Architecture since 1922* (1932 revised 1966) to much acclaim.²¹ This text defined a new style, inherent in which were the intrinsic qualities of materials as distinct from contrived applied decoration; regularity of form as contrasted to symmetrical arrangement; and, of great importance, volume as opposed to mass. The definitions of Modernism/International Style by Yorke and Hitchcock and Johnson consider a totality of architectural structures and town and city planning which match the needs of modern living.

These ideas were taken further by Peichl and Šlapeta in *Czech Functionalism 1918-1938* (1987). In their analysis of the Zak house they reveal that the client who was a leading aeronautical engineer, wished the property to face south-east overlooking the site of the new main Ruzyně aerodrome designed by Adolf Bens 1932-34. Bens saw his work thus:

By working in the spirit of modern architecture, we are creating a new lifestyle and new character for human beings, with space, light and air in place of the gloomy, closed arrangements of the past.²²

Yorke believed that modern houses and villas should be constructed using the very latest materials within cubic, clearly-defined, architectural spaces: these included Isostone lightweight blocks, Mexiko Ebanos bituminous coating, Heraklith wood-wool board, Rabitz reinforcing mesh, Kraus patent sliding and folding double glazed windows, Orlit cast coat rendering of small stones and cement; the whole to be centrally heated by the Strobel boiler. Interestingly enough, all of these were to be used without the architect being able to predict either the performance of these new materials, either individually or in combination.

As part of the further industrialisation of the First Czechoslovak Republic 1918-1938, Vladimír Šlapeta in *The Brno Functionalists* (1983) reveals that commercial and industrial architecture was being expanded and developed apace throughout the Republic. Examples include Otto Eisler's Double House (Brno, 1926), Bohuslav Fuchs's Pavilion of the City of Brno for the Brno Exposition (1928), Josef Kranz's Café Era (Brno, 1929), Ludvik Kysela's Bat'a Shoe Store (Prague, 1929) which were all indicators of a commercially prosperous country that had embraced Modernist values:

Clearness, cleanness, purposefulness, proportion and convincing constructional logic: it is interesting that the first things to exhibit these formal characteristics were modes of transport- ships, automobiles, locomotives and aero-planes, designed by engineers who felt the need for close contact with civilisation.²³

It was precisely these products of engineering that would generate wealth for the population of Central Europe. These works were paralleled by developments throughout Central Europe which during the period 1905-39 had one of the greatest concentrations of Modern Movement architecture through explicit modern planning to house a greatly expanded workforce in industry and commerce – more than most other parts of the world. Yorke, Hitchcock and Johnson, Šlapeta and Peichl attest to all of this development, but significantly post-1945 this information is conspicuously absent from the histories of architecture published in the West.

An example of this lapse in memory was evident in the case of Nikolaus Pevsner and his landmark text *Pioneers of the Modern Movement* (1936). Pevsner, who was born in Leipzig and studied in Berlin, wrote the original work which was later republished as *Pioneers of Modern Design* (1960). Within the text he does not refer to any of the developments in Central Europe except for two earlier works in Breslau; Max Berg's *Jahrhunderthalle* (Centenary Hall) (1910-13) and Hans Poelzig's Office Building (Breslau, 1911).²⁴ Pevsner, who through his circumstances one might expect to have been aware of developments throughout Central Europe chose not to include them either in the

original or revised version of his work possibly because of the political situation in which he found himself.

Another seminal work, *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age* by Reyner Banham (1960), recorded the works of the Breslau Group, Wroclaw, Poland, especially in the reinforced concrete construction of *Jahrhunderthalle* 1910-13 by Max Berg, where it went a little further. Unusually, the builders Konwiarz and Trauer were acknowledged, possibly in anticipation of a developing form of design and build which would become more common throughout Central Europe from 1920 but, as before, no mention was made of the Modern Movement in the Czech lands or throughout Central Europe as a whole.²⁵ This absence is also apparent in *The History of Modern Architecture, Volume 2, The Modern Movement* by Leonardo Benevolo (1977).²⁶ Considering the reputation of this work it is clear that the view that architectural development in Central Europe was negligible was still very much to the fore.

By 1980 Kenneth Frampton's *Modern Architecture, A Critical History*, could acknowledge in Chapter One that:

The one country which has always been inadequately represented in any account of the International Style (Modernism) is Czechoslovakia and an adequate history of the Czechoslovakian Functionalist movement has yet to be written.²⁷

This apparent rediscovery of the importance of Czechoslovakian architecture in 1980 was in marked contrast to earlier views developed by influential figures like Theo van Doesburg, who expressed a very different view:

The Czechs are lacking in original creative initiative as much as the Germans and this is the reason why neither of the two countries possesses an original, new architecture.²⁸

Van Doesburg clearly preferred Dutch architecture, claiming:

Dutch architects had understood the challenge of the cubist innovation much better than their Czech colleagues.²⁹

Van Doesburg continues to cite architectonic design devoid of decoration as proof of this statement. This standpoint, i.e. the denial of the achievements of Central European architecture, is made all the more puzzling when Van Doesburg demonstrates a clear understanding of the architectural intentions of Adolf Loos with the following quote:

It is always a sign of a kind of narrow-mindedness when a person dresses very individualistically according to his or her own design and own tailoring, - The

modern intelligent person must present a mask to other people. This mask is the general life form, originating from necessity and culture, a person's life habits, his clothing and physiognomy, all crystallized together in his dwelling. His dwelling is his mask.³⁰

Perhaps like many others, he saw Loos as essentially Austrian/Viennese and therefore not of Central Europe origins, despite his Moravian antecedents.

Although Frampton in his work catalogues the omissions of architects Jaromír Krejcar, Karel Tiege, and the Devenstil [sic] group from previous publications, it is very striking that he does little to rehabilitate the importance of Central European developments – except for citing the importance of Adolf Loos in terms of his influence on Le Corbusier. This influence is particularly important in terms of the 'free plan' as demonstrated in Loos' 'Raumplan', where the bridge between the first phase of modernism and the later Modern Movement was established and could be seen to transcend cultural legacies. As an acerbic critic of modern culture, Loos reasoned that architecture needed to develop beyond the nineteenth century form and be plastic and fluid in resolving the architectural space within in contrast to the more formal resolution of the external architectonic structure. First postulated by Loos, this proposition was to be developed in the work of the later generation where the radical 'free plan' was fully resolved.³¹

The logical deduction was that construction pure and simple was to take the place of the fantastic forms of past centuries, the luxuriant decoration of past epochs. Straight lines right-angled edges. That is the way the craftsman works who has an eye to function and has materials and tools to hand.³²

This statement (one of many written by Loos) dates from 1917 and could well serve as the clarion call for the Modern Movement, echoed many times over and by none more so than Le Corbusier's in *Vers une Architecture* (Towards a New Architecture, 1931 revised 1986), a seminal text on the development of building and town and city planning with regard to aesthetics, economics, morality and functionality.³³ Here Le Corbusier sets out in a declamatory fashion his views on architecture, drawing on the work of Garnier, Cerdà, Sitte, and Geddes amongst others. In the first section mass, surface and plan are considered in light of their application in the manufacture of liners, aeroplanes and automobiles. Subsequently, this understanding of materials and technology is applied to the discipline of architecture which in a modern world is seen as a combination of plastic invention, intellectual speculation and higher mathematics.

By adjusting the accepted chronology of the Modern Movement, present in so many histories, so that Le Corbusier comes into play at the end of the first so-called 'pioneer'

phase along with contemporaries like Mies Van der Rohe and Phillip Johnson but go on to dominate the second so-called 'international' phase, does a more balanced view of the development of the Modern Movement appear. However advocating this improved symmetry is difficult because of the weight of history and the bias in the literature. Pevsner, Banham, Benevolo and Frampton have all provided definitive architectural histories but it is clear that their focus lies within Western Europe and America. It may be that international politics post-1944 did not allow for anything within the now Communist East to be seen as an important precursor for the development of the Modern Movement.

This asymmetry has only recently been addressed by authors like Adolf Max Voght and his ground-breaking work *Le Corbusier the Noble Savage—Toward an Archaeology of Modernism* (1998) which offers 'an unexpected and vital piece of Le Corbusier scholarship':

Adolf Max Voght looks to the early, formative years of the architect's life as a key to understanding his mature practice, taking aim at such fundamentals as "Where did his design vocabulary come from?" and "How was his aesthetic sense formed?"³⁴

Voght points out the significance of Le Corbusier's perambulation around Turkey, the Balkans and Central Europe during 1911 which exposed him to ideas, writings and buildings the like of which he had dreamed of but never experienced which were captured in copious notebooks and sketch books.³⁵

In the following quote from Peichl, Le Corbusier appears to be more accepting and constructive towards Czech architecture than does Theo van Doesburg:

When I first saw the Trade Fair Building (Palace) I felt totally depressed, although I did not approve of the building whole-heartedly. However I did realise that the large and convergent structures I had been dreaming of really existed somewhere, while at the time I had just built a few small villas.³⁶

This observation, first made by Le Corbusier in 1930, resurfaced as a growing interest in Central European architecture and planning began to emerge in the mid-1980s. The first publication in the English language to fully address Central European advances was W. Lésnikowski's *East European Modernism, Architecture in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland between the Wars* (1996).³⁷ In this work Lésnikowski, together with Vladimír Šlapeta, John Macsai, Janos Bonta and Olga Czerner argue that:

Despite the collapse of communism and the dramatic change in the political and socio-cultural nature of former Central European countries, information on the twentieth century modernist architecture of Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland available in the west has been imprecise and fragmented. Forty years of communist domination of this part of the world eliminated any rational and objective historical analysis of the modernist heritage.³⁸

This represents the most forthright statement in terms of how Central European experts regarded the widespread omission of the contribution made to the Modern Movement by their countrymen. The volume was also vital in terms of providing many illustrations had not been seen in print previously.

This groundbreaking tome was soon followed by the most comprehensive work to date. Ákos Moravánsky's *Competing Visions, Aesthetic Invention and Social Imagination in Central European Architecture, 1867-1918* (1998), described by Eric Dluhosch, (Professor Emeritus, Department of Architecture, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, MIT) in the following terms:³⁹

Ákos Moravánsky's remarkable achievement is his ability not only to show the reader what is distinctive in the architecture of the countries formerly designated by westerners as 'Eastern Europe', but also to convincingly demonstrate what they hold in common as members of an all-European culture; His phenomenal knowledge of both major as well as minor languages of Central Europe allows him to tap into sources hitherto inaccessible to western scholars. His narrative proves beyond any doubt that the term 'Central Europe' implies not only Vienna, Budapest, Warsaw and Prague, but draw into its orbit Berlin, Paris and London as well.⁴⁰

It is clear that this work represents a lifetime's knowledge of the subject drawn from a scholarly understanding of the many languages and complex history of Central Europe. Moravánsky poses many interesting aesthetic and cultural questions in a lucid text supported by numerous illustrations.

It is unfortunate that Moravánsky's study ends in 1918 as his insight and knowledge would be of benefit to any study of the inter-war period. However, this gap in the chronology was addressed in part in 1999 with the staging of the exhibition *Shaping the Great City, Modern Architecture in Central Europe 1890-1937*. This exhibition and its accompanying catalogue takes the lineage of cities like Vienna, Budapest, Prague,

Zagreb, Ljubljana, Brno, Zlin, Krakow and L'viv, exploring the architectural works and forms of city planning generated in such places.⁴¹ As Blau and Platzer note:

From the start we have seen *Shaping the Great City: Modern Architecture in Central Europe, 1890-1937* less as a definitive study than as a way to suggest avenues of research and to open discussion of the central issues it raises.⁴²

The exhibition claimed:

... that it was in the lived cities of the region that the conflicting aspirations of empire and people and the intersecting of urban modernisation and national autonomy gave shape to a modern architectural culture⁴³

However, these concerns were not addressed directly. Blau and Platzer offer little exploration of the development of cities or urban modernisation. There is some recognition of Ebenezer Howard, Camillo Sitte, Ildefons Cerdà, Raymond Unwin, Patrick Geddes or Lewis Mumford and their models of smaller, autonomous residential districts but it is Otto Wagner and the advocates of the metropolis who form the principle subjects of the exhibition and sadly, the absence of so many important prime movers from Central Europe presents a less than complete argument.

To redress these omissions it is necessary to go back to source with G.R. and C. C. Collins and their two seminal works, namely Camillo Sitte - *City Planning According to Artistic Principles* (first published as *Der Städtebau, nach seinen künstlerischen Grundsätzen* and also known as *City Building* [Vienna, 1889]) and *Camillo Sitte and the Birth of Modern Planning* (1965).⁴⁴ Within these two translations is the essence of city planning as developed by Sitte from 19th century German theory and practice. Historical references to Baumeister, Stübben, Classen, Mayreder, Howard and the planning hygienist Pettenkofer, illustrate a significant work which reveals Sitte's specific aesthetic predilections and architectural credentials.

Howard's *Garden Cities of Tomorrow* (originally published as *Tomorrow: A Peaceful Path To Real Reform*, 1898) took these arguments further with its broad exploration of the 'Garden City, Cité Jardin, Gartenstadt, Ciudad-jardín, Tuinstadt', becoming one of the founding texts of modern city planning.⁴⁵

It is perhaps unfortunate that F. J. Osborn who wrote the preface to the 1966 edition and regarded the book as one of the most important works of planning literature, should believe it remained unread by many planners. He further suggests that those planners who have read it have forgotten what it said and in his opinion, they [the

planners] need to pay far greater attention to the purpose of this work. As Mumford also observed:

This is not merely a book for technicians: above all it is a book for citizens, for the people whose actively expressed needs, desires and interests should guide the planner and administrator at every turn.⁴⁶

Town planning was explored extensively by Lewis Mumford in texts like *From Technics and Civilisation* (1934), *The Culture of Cities* (1938), *The City in History* (1961) and *The Urban Prospect* (1968). He, more than anyone else, has made consideration of how people live and the cities they inhabit a key issue for any study of modernism and the Modernism Movement. As Von Eckardt noted:⁴⁷

He stands, along with men like Freud, Einstein, as a great mover of our time...Mumford's insights into the nature of the human habitat will surely move us toward a more comfortable and creative place to live.⁴⁸

Would that Von Eckardt's observations were true of suburban communities but they are an oversimplification of much greater complexity, as Spiro Kostof demonstrates so vividly in texts like *The City Shaped - Urban Patterns and Meanings Throughout History* (1991) and *The City Assembled - The Elements of Urban Form Throughout History*, (1992).⁴⁹ From the organic patterns to the formalised grid and cities executed in the 'Grand Manner', Kostof has provided a vitally important study for architects, planners and social historians, taking into its orbit Vienna, Budapest, Prague, Cracow and other cities within Central Europe. All are considered by understanding the development of cities as if viewed from the air, examining their development historically and geographically from ancient times. The second volume develops the theme of plasticity, looking at the city from ground level and from the centre outward to the edges to explore and explain their expansion and development.

The singular work of Phillipe Panerai, Jean Castex, Jean Charles Depaule and Ivor Samuels in *Urban Forms: The Life And Death of the Urban Block* (2004 - first published as *Formes urbaines: de l'îlot a la barre* in 1977) concentrates on the development of the urban block from Hausmann's Paris to the superblocks of Radburn.⁵⁰ The work is most informative in Chapters 1-7 which traces the progress from 'Hausmannien Paris' through 'The Garden Cities' to the 'Cité Radieuse' and finally to the 'Development and Diffusion of architectural Models'. Within the pages of this slim volume one of the most insightful examinations of the growth of our urban landscape from the 1850s is contained. Authored by a practicing group of architects and urban designers, the book examines in some detail how urban modernism and the Modern Movement have upset

the natural morphology of cities. In abolishing historical street plans and isolating buildings which were once focal points for the confluence of the major thoroughfares, the authors argue that the destruction of these relationships leaves us bereft, looking for other urban forms that can accommodate modern ways of life while at the same time maintaining the qualities of the traditional town.

As this thesis will argue, a historical case can be made that Zagreb, Ljubljana, Cracow, Zlin, Prague and Budapest as examples of Central European development have handled these problems through precise planning and regulation better than their Western European counterparts. Perhaps in all but Zlin, which was built on the English 'Garden City Model', the preservation of the ancient road patterns, as in the development of Roman Emona to today's Ljubljana, is the key to this success. It is clear that the conservation of the old in sympathetic synergy with the development of the new leads to the best resolved towns and cities with regard to transport infrastructure, building and the quality of life for the citizens.

Town and city dwelling is also discussed by Joseph Rykwert in *The Seduction of Place* (2000). Through an analysis of town planning from the late seventeenth century through Howard, Sitte and Cerda to the twentieth century, Rykwert arrives at the view that it has been the denigration of metropolitan values like tolerance, cultural vitality and pluralism (which are seen as the 'nourishing character and soul' of the urban landscape) that has led to a decline in the quality of life for inhabitants of towns and cities. This may well be true in relation to many Western European and American conurbations but (interestingly) it is less so for Central Europe where ethnicity, religion and cultural preferences have determined that this sense of place and belonging is strongly held across all of the diverse communities.

During the writing of this thesis there have been three new works coming from the wider Central Europe. The first two include Djuric and Suvakovic's *Impossible Histories, Historical Avant-gardes, Neo-Avant-gardes, and Post Avant-gardes in Yugoslavia, 1918-1991* (2003)⁵¹ and Blagojevic's *Modernism in Serbia, The Elusive Margins of Belgrade Architecture, 1914-1941* (2003).⁵² Both works break new ground and add to our understanding of Central Europe and the Balkans during this formative period from 1914 to 1941.

The third work, *Art Design & Architecture in Central Europe 1890-1920* by A. Clegg (2003) is a wide-ranging account of both applied and fine arts within Central Europe where it is recognised that it was:

... a place marked by a simultaneous fear and celebration of ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversity that has enormous international resonance a century later.⁵³

It is unfortunate that this enthusiastic and informed observation is contradicted by much of the text. Perhaps as with a number of other American sponsored works cited in this Literature Review this volume is incapable of balancing 'insider' and 'outsider' positions due to pre-determined histories and chronologies as discussed in this text.

In addition to published works a number of Exhibitions have informed this thesis. On 27th February 1980, The Hungarian Avant-Garde Exhibition was staged by the Hayward Gallery and the Arts Council of Great Britain with the collaboration of the Hungarian Institute for Cultural Relations. John Willett noted how:

At first sight the works in this exhibition might seem like a Hungarian (hence relatively unknown) version of all of the recognised art movements from the Fauves up to the eve of Surrealism in 1924 ... then followed them in veering round to the new Constructivism being developed in Soviet Russia.⁵⁴

This exhibition introduced to a western public an almost unrecognised chapter in the history of Hungary and marked the beginning of a greater awareness of planning and architecture in Central Europe.

This event was followed by an exhibition of the works of Jože Plečnik (MOMA Oxford, 1983)⁵⁵ which helped establish Plečnik's importance through the exhibit of plans, sketches and models; all of which was summed up by Ian Bentley and Durda Grzan-Butina in the catalogue in the following way:

This is the first publication to expose the work of Plečnik's most fertile period-his projects in Ljubljana from 1920 to 1957 – to an audience outside of Yugoslavia.⁵⁶

Clearly this belated recognition of the work of artists and architects from Central Europe by a Western public was gaining considerable momentum and by 1987 the auspices of the Architectural Association (London) provided the venue for a number of Austrian and Czech institutions to collaborate in the exhibition Czech Functionalism 1918-1938:

Today both throughout Austria and here at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna, the achievements of Czech architects of the 1920's and 1930's are seen as especially worthy of interest. At the major schools, moreover, they are eagerly discussed as an alternative to the masquerade of so-called Post-Modern architecture. Because of their content, they are gaining more respect.⁵⁷

The exhibition 'Shaping the Great City' (1999), clearly responded to Peichl's wish (noted above) to make the rediscovery of this 'especially worthy' architecture to be part of a debate beyond Europe.⁵⁸ With the sponsorship of The Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, a major touring exhibition was organised. Seen in Vienna, Montreal, Prague and Los Angeles this exhibition alerted an international audience to the hitherto unappreciated history of architectural planning throughout Central Europe from 1890-1937. The approach succeeded in creating debate and raising 'avenues for research' around the central themes as noted by Eve Blau in the accompanying catalogue:

Architecture, during the nearly fifty-year period of intensifying political conflict and radical social transformation covered by this volume, was therefore charged not only with producing the spaces of the emerging culture of the modern city, but was also with constructing meaning in relation to its complex multinational history, diverse cultural traditions, conflicting political agendas and identities.⁵⁹

Another exhibition in 1999 brought Polish history to the fore, in the figure of Katarzyna Kobro:

The effort to place Kobro in her rightful international context was undertaken by a handful of Polish curators and academics from the 1970's as part of their campaign to bring wider recognition to Polish constructivism as a whole and in particular to the collections of the Museum Sztuki [Art Museum] in Lodz.⁶⁰

As with the other exhibitions noted which owe their origins to placing parts or all of Central European modernism and the Modern Movement within the fullest context, the International Symposium on Czech Design, Culture & Society: Changing Climates (2005) took for its direction a display of 100 designs of Czech origin as primers to a number of papers. Raising issues around 20th century 'Czech, Fashion, Dress and issues of National Identity', it closed with presentations from the leading Czech graphic and product design groups, Olgoj Chorchoi and Studio Marvil. This event set the agenda for Central European design developments to be reappraised not only in architecture, but also in graphic design, product design, and fashion design.⁶¹

At this point a review of publications about individual architects/planners might be anticipated, where one author's opinion might be balanced against those of others. However, such a description is not possible because of the very small number of monographs in English or English translation. A core group of some fifteen academics and their research teams are responsible for bringing the history of Central European architecture and town planning to a wider audience to date.

In selecting works on Otto Wagner for example, it was imperative to the validity of this thesis to find works which were not coloured in their argument by being treatments that knew little or nothing of the Wagner School as both Viennese bastion and training ground for Central Europe's new architects. Consequently, only two works were found useful; the first authored by two Austrians, Geretsegger and Peinter and the second from the pen of Vera Horvat Pintarić of Croatian birth.

Otto Wagner 1841-1918 (1964), by Geretsegger and Peinter, 1964, represents a history written by two architects from the Academy of Applied Arts, Vienna. Heinz Geretsegger and Max Peinter bring considerable insight to the work of Wagner particularly as they echo his experience, in being architects, designers and writers who have completed industrial and administrative buildings in addition to exhibitions and trade fairs.⁶² From the introduction by Richard Neutra to the Authors' Note p.271 the text adopts a standpoint where the all too often unthinking reverence applied to Wagner's oeuvre in other writings is replaced by a well observed critique.

Many contemporary architects feel that the architectural polemics of the turn of the century, established a completely self-contained system which is now greatly admired for having 'anticipated' current modes of thought with such amazing accuracy. Consequently a building by Otto Wagner is regarded by these modern thinkers as an imperfect illustration of just such a 'system', which means that – for them – the tangible reality of the actual physical building constitutes no more than a number of individual acts of anticipation.⁶³

This critical position underpins their thorough re-examination of fact and opinion. The section 'Life' within its opening nine pages offers illuminating biographical detail which helps give Wagner (a complex man, a *grand seigneur*) a very human quality. The critique unfolds, supported by new photographs which offer instructive comparisons across Wagner's major works. Equally impressive is the exhaustive bibliography which cites numerous obscure sources particularly in relation to competition decisions and Wagner's lifelong battles with his critics. This singular work also carries a comprehensive chronology and a street plan locating Wagner's buildings in Vienna. If it were possible to reduce the size of the volume it would become the guide to any scholarly appreciation of Wagner and the rich architectural legacy he has left behind.

Horvat Pintarić's Vienna 1900 (1989), in common with the work from Geretsegger and Peinter adopts an unusual standpoint in beginning in 1880 with Artibus and finishing in 1915 with the Emperor Franz Josef Cancer Hospital, Michelbeuren, works which (interestingly enough) do not appear in the exhaustive 'chronological table' assembled

by Geretsegger and Painter. This of course is not a deliberate omission but it is evidence of how sources may differ from one another. In the former much use is made of Wagner's publication of his designs in *Einige Skizzen Projekte und ausgeführte Bauwerke* as it is in Horvat Pintarić but the latter also had at her disposal the Historisches Museum der Stadt Wien. The inclusion of these later drawings with those taken from *Der Architekt* extends our knowledge of Wagner's buildings and his superb draughtsmanship in handling ink and watercolour on coloured stock to give memorable impressions of what it was that Wagner conceived.

Pintarić also understands the significance of the Wagner School as a training ground for the future architects of Central Europe - 160 persons are said to have been Wagner's pupils. These included Jan Kotěra, Josef Chocol, Pavel Janák, Jože Plečnik, Viktor Kovačić, Vjekoslav Bastl, Wunibald Deininger, Emil Hoppe, Otto Schonthal, Karl Maria Kerndle and Marcel Kammerer. In no other publication is such a list available. As Otto Antonia Graf and Marco Pozzetto point out, these students and their projects had:

importance for the architecture of the future. This is an impressive collection of bold designs that may rank among the incunabula of twentieth century architecture.⁶⁴

It is therefore rather surprising when other works choose to ignore or deny this progeny.

Another work which has helped address omissions is Jan Kotěra 1871-1923 - The Founder of Modern Czech Architecture by Šlapeta et.al. (2001). As the only monograph on Kotěra in the English language this volume and its accompanying exhibition is seen as a response to the dearth of works on Kotěra and a riposte to the unfavourable reception to the earlier display of his work in 1926, 1944 and 1972.⁶⁵ This work draws upon hundreds of documents translated into English for the first time and is illustrated by over 400 photographs, illustrations and drawings, many never seen before in the West, to present the most compelling evidence of Kotěra and his work.

Of particular importance is the listing of Kotěra's colleagues, assistants and students (86 names) who were to form the most prolific and influential architects, planners and designers of their day.⁶⁶ These listings in conjunction with the references to texts on Jan Kotěra, books, articles in journals and newspapers and exhibition catalogues are a state sponsored project conducted by Peter Krajčí (Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic). As director of the National Technical Museum Architectural Archive, Prague, and as key respondent in the text of this thesis, Peter Krajčí with Vladimír Šlapeta and Radmila Kreuzzigerová have compiled the most important singular directory of sources on the history of Czech Modernism. The insights and illuminating text from an august

panel of contributors, unequalled then as now, establishes this work as a model of how such studies should be prepared.

Plečnik by Peter Krečič, 1993, is the first monograph to be written in English to offer the complete works of the Slovenian architect, planner and designer who left an indelible mark on the history of modernism and the Modern Movement.⁶⁷ From Vienna to Prague and Ljubljana with works in the newly created Yugoslavia Plečnik's range was immense. All is captured in a lively narrative that gives enormous insight to this very complex man. As the world's leading authority on Plečnik and as custodian of Plečnik's house, Dr. Peter Krečič (Director of the Architectural Museum, Ljubljana) occupies a privileged place. This work explores Plečnik's position as a member of Slovene Moderna, a movement which bridged the period from the late nineteenth century to the end of the First World War.

In the inter war years and post war period, Krečič reveals how Plečnik was integral to our understanding of the development of twentieth century modernism, particularly in his use of materials in reworking historical buildings. Throughout the text Plečnik is revealed as a man capable of resisting all dogmatic approaches to planning and architecture to arrive at forms that combine a playful eclecticism with a rational functionalism. As shown by the over 300 illustrations all of his work was both passionately felt and intensely personal but what Krečič reveals above all in this text is that Plečnik is not easily pigeon-holed; in essence he does not belong to any of the myriad groups labelled by art, design and architectural historians during this period.

Jože Plečnik 1872-1957 by Prelovšek (1997) is a wide ranging exposition of all Plečnik's work from his beginnings with Otto Wagner to the Žale Cemetery opened in 1940.⁶⁸ The text (translated from the original German) has neither the quality nor understanding of the earlier work by Krečič. This may be because Prelovšek (guest professor in Salzburg and Prague before becoming director of the Institute of Art History at the Scientific Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Science and Art, Ljubljana) was obliged to produce a narrative within a very formal construct – either that or much has been lost in translation. Whatever the truth of this matter other works by authors like Krečič, Andrews, Bentley, Gržan-Butina, Šumi, Podrecca, Gilkey Dyck and Gooding in further short monographs and catalogues, offer insights missing from this work.

Karel Teige, 1900-1951 L'Enfant Terrible of the Czech Modernist Avant-Garde by Dluhosch and Švácha (1999)⁶⁹, contains an introduction by Kenneth Frampton which is

even more forthright than his initial condemnation of the ignorance of Czech Modernism in *Modern Architecture: A Critical History*. The contributors to this work have been translated into English for the first time and include Karel Srp, Lenka Bydžovská, Polana Bregantová, Rostislav Švácha, Vojtěch Lahoda, Miroslav Petříček Jr., Rumana Dačeva, Klaus Spechtenhauser and Daniel Webb and also Miloš Aulický, the nephew of Karel Teige, who went to considerable length to correct what he perceived to be:

the many gaps and errors in recent literary biographies about my uncle, Karel Teige.⁷⁰

Chief among these errors was a misunderstanding of his political affiliations. Teige was never a card carrying member of the Communist party and denounced Stalin's Moscow trials of 1936 as a 'counterfeit comedy'. This denunciation of Stalin protected him during the Nazi occupation but would cause him to hide his foreign books and burn all of his foreign correspondence when labelled a Trotskyite counter-revolutionary. Sadly, Teige and his family were pursued to their deaths, his apartment was 'sealed' and over eight linear metres of books and papers were confiscated by the state after the death of his partner. One can only wonder what these writings may have been, perhaps they will emerge in the fullness of time if they are not already destroyed thereby leading us to a greater understanding of Teige and all his works.

One final work used in the preparation of this text was, *Le Corbusier and the Continual Revolution in Architecture* by Charles Jencks (2000). Unlike many previous publications on Le Corbusier characterised by hagiography and weighed down by inaccuracy and imprecise attribution, this work responds to recent scholarship and new theories of architectural change. In essence by using the definition of 'Exemplary Creator' for Le Corbusier, as defined by the cognitive scientist and historian Howard Gardner, Le Corbusier is included in a group of luminaries who dominated the early twentieth century, together with Freud, Picasso, Stravinsky, T.S. Eliot and Martha Graham, Einstein and Ghandi.

Charles Jencks very clearly indicates a lineage which places Le Corbusier at the epicentre of creative activity and whether we agree or disagree with this argument the premise on which it is modelled is abundantly clear. Jencks goes so far as to present a visualisation of the evolution of twentieth century architecture. All is stated very clearly even though 'the diagram is better understood for the complex relationships if seen in three dimensions'. This very clear visual model of the importance of Le Corbusier offers a view that allows considerable debate and discussion. In truth the reasoning contained within Gardner's definition of an Exemplary Creator relies on a number of immutable conditions.⁷¹ Without labouring the point, many of the architects of Central

European origin described within this thesis qualify according to this rubric, which only serves to underline the fact that their contribution to modernism and the Modern Movement requires far greater examination and exposure.

Any review of the literature relating to the subject of this thesis will conclude that there is a considerable amount yet to be uncovered in placing events within Central Europe within a fully informed context and that the publication of any new works and/or the staging of further national and international exhibitions is to be welcomed. And in this connection, the thesis which follows must be regarded (like much of the literature described above) as another part of the academic effort to write the architecture of Central Europe back into the history of the Modern Movement.

Chapter Synopsis

Introduction Central Europe Defined

The thesis opens with the contested notion of *Mitteleuropa* or Central Europe and establishes a framework, temporal and geographical for considering the principal actors. Key terms of reference are defined as are the methodologies employed by the thesis. A Literature Review of publications, exhibitions and conferences is included with a chapter by chapter synopsis

Chapter 1 National Styles and Urban Planning 1890-1910

Within this chapter the emergence into modernism from the 19th century historicism and Beaux Arts, is discussed in the context of an expressed need within the peoples of Central Europe to assert their individual ethnic and cultural identity through the adoption of National Styles.

Chapter 2 Architectural Development in Towns and Cities 1890-1910

The thesis now confirms a chronology for the development of modernism and the dissemination of these ideas through publication of the emergent forms of planning and construction throughout Central Europe that would become the Modern Movement.

Chapter 3 Architectural Development in Towns and Cities 1910-1923

This chapter consolidates the chronology established in chapter 3 by reference to the growing force of the Modern Movement. This advancement in architectural practice is discussed in relation to the development of Rondo-Cubism in Prague as a National Style.

Chapter 4 The Development of Functionalism in The New Czechoslovak Republic 1924-1939

The thesis moves to investigating issues of socio-economic progress in the Czech lands. This developing prosperity found a welcome partner in the widespread adoption of Functionalism as an arm of the Modern Movement. Zlin is discussed as an example of this planned expansion where it is argued that modernism in the form of an English garden City model was married with a Functionalist system of standardised construction methods.

Chapter 5 Jože Plečnik, The Regulation of Ljubljana – Classical Modernism 1928-1939

The debate about Jože Plečnik's position within architectural practice vis-à-vis modernism and the Modern Movement is considered through the remodelling of Ljubljana as a 'Slovene Athens'. Was this return to a classical modern model part of returning the Mediterranean feel to Ljubljana in establishing 'his city' as an independent capital?

Chapter 6 Hungarian Functionalism and Polish Constructivism – Architecture and Planning as Social Advancement 1924-1943

Consideration is given in this chapter to the acceptance of Functionalism, already admitted, and Constructivism as representatives of the Modern Movement throughout Hungary and Poland. The position of city planning as a component for developing a stronger economic infrastructure is examined in the context of these advances apparently leading to a better way of life for all the citizens

Reflections on the Themes

Reflects on the arguments developed by the thesis and its central propositions identifying the contribution to knowledge with due regard to the role of others, as identified within the text. Finally the chapter concludes with potential strands of post-doctoral research which have been identified in examining the arguments in the thesis.

Notes to Introduction

- ¹ Phillip Johnson, q., Fleming J., Honour H. and Pevsner N., *Penguin Dictionary of Architecture and Landscape Architecture*, Penguin Books, London, 1999, p.285.
See Hitchcock H.R. and Johnson P., 1932, *The International Style*, Norton Library, New York, for a contemporaneous account of International Style and Functionalism.
See Johnson P., 1966, *The International Style Twenty Years After*, p.237-257 for a reappraisal of the relative importance and impact of the International Style.
- ² Brechtefeld J., *Mitteleuropa and German Politics*, MacMillan Press, London, 1966, p.9
- ³ Davies N., *Europe A History*, Pimlico, London, 1997, p.817
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, Davies, 1997, p.187
- ⁵ Taylor A.J.P., *The Habsburg Monarchy*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1970, p.142
- ⁶ Waller B., 'Themes in modern European history', Unwin Hyman, London, 1990, p.124
Baron Ferdinand von Andrian-Werburg (1835-1914), ethnographer and anthropologist founded the Anthropological Society, Vienna 1870
- ⁷ see Taylor A. J. P., 1970, *The Habsburg Monarchy*, Chapter 11, The Making of Dualism
- ⁸ Kundera M., *The Tragedy of Central Europe*, The New York Review of Books, April 26th, 1975
- ⁹ Jencks C., *Modern Movements in Architecture*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1973, p.11
- ¹⁰ Pevsner N., *Pioneers of Modern Design*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1977, p.199
- ¹¹ During the summer of 1999 an exploration of the Getty Databases 'International Repertory of the Literature of Art' (RILA) and the 'Avery Index to Architectural Periodicals' identified a small number of publications discussing Central European architecture during the period 1895-1940. Using the periodical archive of the RIBA reference library articles of interest were identified, the information from which would be used to extend knowledge prior to interviewing respondents.
- ¹² In attending the private view I was able to discuss ideas of Polish Constructivism with a highly informed group of experts including Katarzyna Kobro's daughter Nika Strzeminska and was directed by one of the guests to 'The Polish Avant Garde 1918-1939' published in Warsaw in difficult circumstances in 1981.
- ¹³ Although it was intended to speak with Rostislav Svacha after his presentation this was not possible, we did agree a visit to the Charles University in October 2000.
Fortunately the event had an added impetus in being seated next to Dennis Sharp and the late Catherine Cooke with whom ideas were discussed and further contacts established.
- ¹⁴ Prior to this event I had prepared to meet with and interview Josef Sisa the co-editor of 'The Architecture of Historic Hungary', which in the final five chapters provided considerable information particularly on the Godollo Studios.
- ¹⁵ Keats-Rohan S.B., *Progress or Perversion? Current issues in Prosopography: An Introduction*, Prosopography Centre, Oxford University, 2nd September 2004.
See Keats-Rohan, History and Computing 12.1, p.2
- ¹⁶ Yorke F.R.S., *The Modern House*, The Architectural Press, London, 1934, p.24
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.10
- ¹⁸ *Op.cit.*, Yorke, 1934, acknowledgements
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.25
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.128-177
- ²¹ Hitchcock H.R. and Johnson P., *The International Style*, The Norton Library, New York, 1966
- ²² Peichl G. and Slapeta V., *Czech Functionalism 1918-1938*, Architectural Association, London, 1987, p.117
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