

**LATIN AMERICAN
MODERN
ARCHITECTURES**

Ambiguous Territories

Edited by Patricio del Real and Helen Gyger



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FOREWORD

Kenneth Frampton

This remarkable collection of essays emerging out of the symposium, *Ambiguous Territories: Articulating New Geographies in Latin American Modern Architecture and Urbanism*, held at the Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation at Columbia University on March 27 and 28, 2009, may be taken as an indicator that Latin America is a continent whose time has indisputably arrived after half a century of provincial amnesia and neglect. One has to go back to Philip Goodwin and G. E. Kidder Smith's *Brazil Builds* (1943), Henry-Russell Hitchcock's *Latin American Architecture since 1945* (1955), or to Andre Bloc's editorship of *L'Architecture d'aujourd'hui* in the 1950s to find comparable international interest in Latin American architectural culture and even then, as the editors of this anthology imply, the documentation and analysis in this period invariably tended to assume a simplistic laudatory tone or, occasionally, a militant, nationalistic perspective put together by an earlier generation of international critics and scholars. Here instead we have a set of newly emergent scholars from Latin America and beyond, who have not only mapped these ambiguous territories, but also cultivated a different critical optic capable of passing with revelatory effect from tightly focused local cultural developments to ideological and political manifestations having a wider transnational scope.

This anthology is subdivided for editorial convenience into three different categories; focusing first, on unfamiliar cultural trajectories pursued by exceptional individuals; second, on the various forms assumed by the overarching thrust of modernization throughout the continent; and third, on the various overlaps and interactions between quite different national territories and policies.

Irrespective of this taxonomy, the complex labyrinthine process of modernizing culture-politics permeates every one of the chapters, as we may judge if we randomly compare Gaia Piccarolo's study of Lucio Costa's inadvertent reversal of the time-honored hierarchy between center and periphery to Daniel Talesnik's account of the realization of the highly symbolic UNCTAD III convention center in Santiago during Salvador Allende's tragically eclipsed tenure as president of Chile, or to María González Pendás's analysis of Félix Candela's hitherto unknown "geopolitical imagination."

In one way or another, most of this material treats with the modernization of the Latin American continent and with the tragic political and ecological consequences that this has often brought in its wake. This is never more evident than in Paulo Tavares's chapter on the development of the Amazon basin from the mid-1950s onward; the state-sponsored exploitation of the rainforest entailed among other egregious operations the surreptitious involvement of the CIA in the 1964 military seizure of power in Brazil and the ensuing "fish-spine" clearing of the jungle which led among other things to the so-called "humanistic" clothing and sequestering of the indigenous population and the engagement of such distinguished modern architects as Oswaldo Bratke in the contradiction of planning a "utopian" steel company town in the midst of the Amazonian delta.

AVIATION, ELECTRIFICATION, AND THE NATION

Visions from Colombia and Chile¹

Hugo Mondragón López

The magazines *Arquitectura y Construcción* (AyC) and *Proa* (meaning "Prow") both began publication in the mid-1940s, and their first issues demonstrate the optimistic spirit of the postwar period. AyC was published in Santiago, Chile, between December 1945 and August 1950, with a total of eighteen issues. *Proa* first appeared in Bogotá, Colombia, in August 1946, and in November 1951 issued a retrospective compilation after five years and fifty-three issues, thereby concluding its first phase of publication. Besides their contemporaneity, the magazines shared the determination to articulate a synthesis between economic modernization and nationalism; how the editorial teams developed opposing strategies to achieve the same goal is explored in this chapter.

A striking feature of the articles published in the first issues of *Proa* is that a good number are dedicated to the architecture of the past, specifically to Colombia's colonial architecture. Strictly speaking, according to the standard historiography these should not be appearing at this date. However, their existence was neither accidental, casual, nor random—much less contradictory to the task that the editors had undertaken: to set down the foundations of a new architecture.²

For Carlos Martínez, editor/publisher of *Proa*, in the period from the foundation of Colombia's earliest cities to the 1920s, the impossibility of constructing a notion of national unity based on geographical proximity was the outcome of a spatiality of dispersed urban nuclei—cities which, in the best case, were connected by rudimentary and dangerous roads (as revealed by period engravings reproduced in the magazine), or lacked them altogether. Martínez linked this dispersal to the convergence of two phenomena: the particularly uneven



11.01. "Riverine roads: The Magdalena, marvellous pathway, route of gold and of coffee." *Proa*, 1949

²⁰ Ibid., 78. "Syrian-Vaseline" is apparently a reference to a specific house, the Casa Ayub, which belonged to a prominent Lebanese family in Mexico City; see <http://polancoveryhoy.blogspot.com/2011/04/la-casa-ayub.html>—Ed.

²¹ Israel Katzman, *La Arquitectura Contemporánea, precedentes y desarrollo* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1964), 77–98.

²² Ignacio Díaz Infante, who designed hotels and train stations in the Spanish colonial style, was one of his teachers.

²³ Alvaro Aburto, in *Pláticas de arquitectura México: 1933* (Mexico City: Sociedad de Arquitectos Mexicanos, 1934), 129–133.

²⁴ Borr, *The New Architecture in Mexico*, 68–69, 91, 99–109.

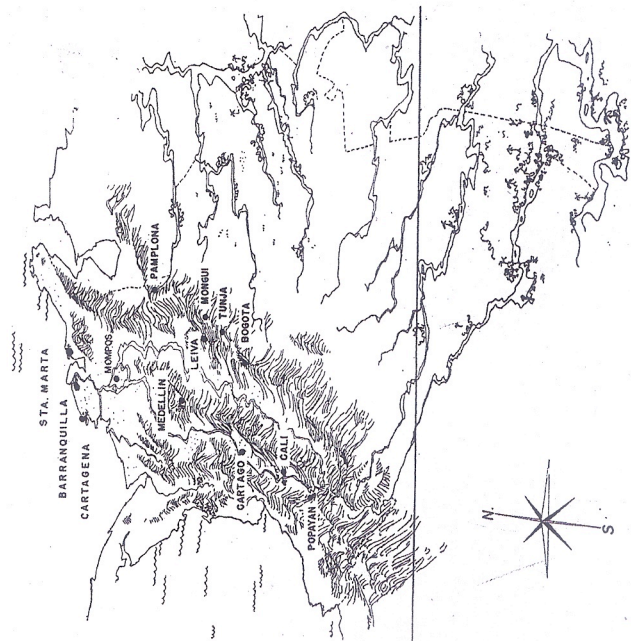
²⁵ Sylvester Baxter, *Spanish-Colonial Architecture in Mexico* (Boston: Millet, 1901); subsequently translated into Spanish as *La arquitectura hispanocolonial en México* (Mexico City, 1934).

²⁶ G. Richard Garrison and George W. Rustay, *Mexican Houses: A Book of Photographs and Measured Drawings* (New York: Architectural Book Publishing Company, 1930). The book has recently been reissued as *Early Mexican Houses* (Stamford: Architectural Book Publishing Company, 1990).

²⁷ "Federal Schools of Mexico," *Architectural Record* 75, no. 5 (May 1934): 444–446.

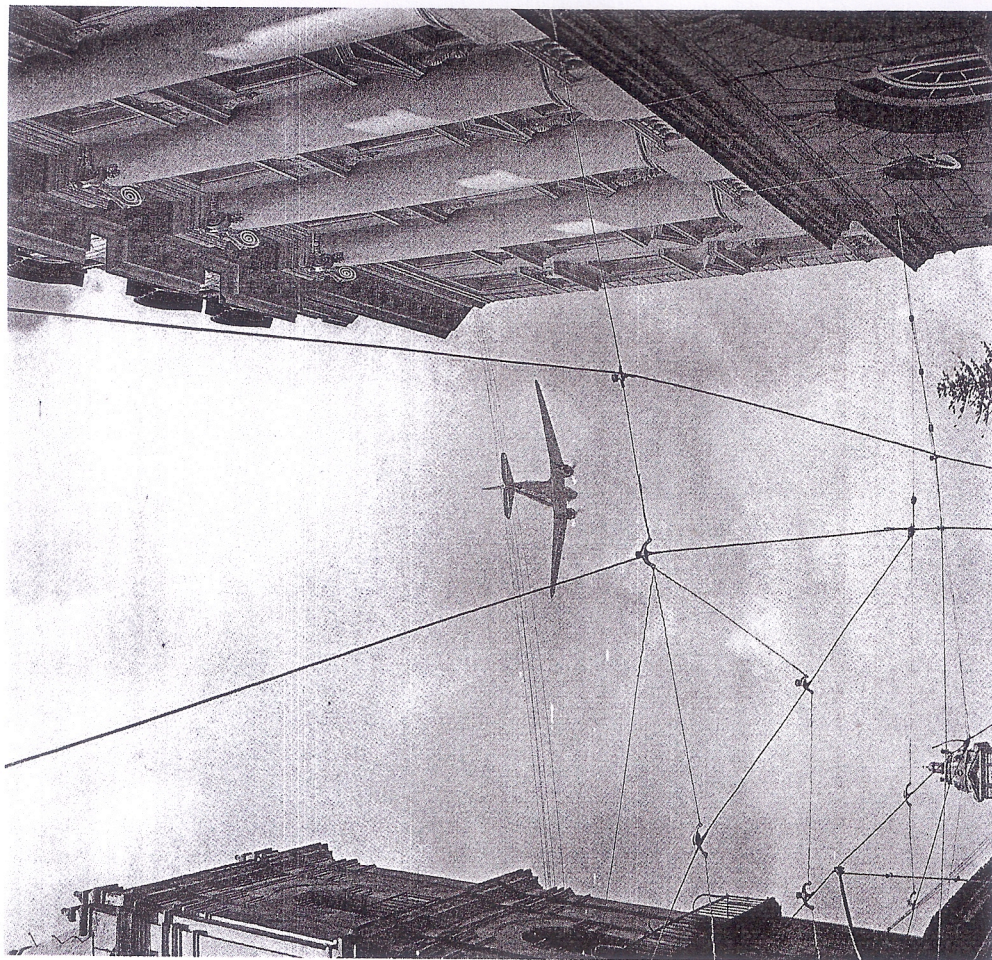
topography of the Colombian territory, crossed by three mountain ranges in a north-south direction, and the fact that "[t]he Spanish settlers didn't—as the Romans did—take the precaution of establishing roads able to be traveled by wagons on the territories that they conquered."¹³ On one hand, this uneven topography had made Colombia an extremely rich and well-supplied territory in environmental terms, but on the other hand, these same conditions had become the biggest obstacle for the emergence of a "larger and more important civilization." To provide an image of how isolated Colombian cities were from each other, Martínez included an evocative space-time comparison: "[t]he statue of General Santander . . . took less time to get from Paris to Cartagena than it [then] took to get to Honda, and this was shorter than the time needed to transfer it from there to Bogotá."¹⁴

Colombia was shown not only as a country excluded from the possibilities offered by the modern world—where "the highway had been the vehicle of other big colonies, such as Canada, the United States, Argentina, Australia"¹⁵—but also occupied by isolated cities, a sort of system of solitudes that prevented the process, and the consciousness, of converting itself into a unified nation. Various articles published by the magazine linked the lack of a sense of a nationhood experienced through geographical unity to the difficulties of building an efficient road network. As Jorge Arango and Carlos Martínez noted in their 1951 compilation, *Proa* believed that it was ineffective methods of transportation and the "painful circumstances of the trips that for over three centuries stimulated the formation of regions that became self-sufficient as in a progressive autarchy."¹⁶ Their systematic reading of the articles on historical topics revealed that, for *Proa*, the nation's particular populating strategy prior to 1920 could be synthesized in



GEOGRAFIA DE LA ARQUITECTURA
COLONIAL COLOMBIANA

11.02 "Geography of Colombian Colonial Architecture": colonial-era towns were scattered throughout the Andes



two words: dispersal and isolation. The magazine saw Colombia as "a series of isolated prosperous parts whose constant progress had required painful and tenacious efforts."¹⁷ But these conditions changed radically with a single event: the arrival of the airplane. This was at once the symbol of the arrival of modernity and the instrument that would allow Colombia to achieve national unity. As a new means of transportation, the airplane released the cities from what Arango and Martínez termed their "centuries-long seclusion." As *Proa* wrote in 1948:

One day Colombians . . . lifted their eyes to the sky and saw a redeeming sign. It was an airplane, that, for the first time in a morning in July 1919, leaped among the clouds of the Bogotá sky. From then on things changed: mountains which were until then unbroken obstacles, disappeared. The tense relationship between the earth and man all of a sudden became friendlier.

11.03 Bogotá, November 1946: in twenty years, the airplane completely modified Colombia's complex topography. Photograph by Sady González

The country became flat and the distances that before took weeks or months, became hours or fractions of an hour. All that was separated, vast, unreachable, became familiar. The most distant Colombians could be greeted, could get to know each other, and strengthen their commercial relationships. When America's first organized air transportation company was born—abruptly and without completing the intermediate stages—people, commerce, and agricultural production got off the mule and entered the shaking airplane cabin.⁸

For Martínez, economic modernization implied a strategic domestication of the landscape with clear productive and economic ends, including networks of highways, railroads, irrigation systems, hydraulics, and so on. These projects had always been very difficult if not impossible to execute, delaying the development of an economic modernization based on the continuous and rapid movement of people, but especially of goods and—of course—capital. According to *Proa*,⁹ the first signs of a modernization of the territory appeared just as aviation consolidated itself as a means of transportation, and the enormous demographic, industrial, and commercial growth of the country between 1920 and 1950 was due to its arrival: "the airplane turned Colombia into a flat country and Bogotá into a port."¹⁰ With its speed, the space-time relationship between Colombian cities—where a smaller distance had not always meant a shorter travel time—now became directly proportional. This new proximity brought a unity of clearly economic origin built thanks to the airplane's network of "routes," but it surpassed the purely utilitarian and productive dimension to create a social, political, and cultural unity—in other words, a nation. For Martínez, modernity and nation were paired and depended on a single group of actions on the territory that, without physically modifying the geography, transformed the way it was experienced. From 1946 to 1954, *Proa* disseminated the idea that a nation only existed within the framework constructed by economic modernization, and that there was no possible nation beyond the limits that this imposed.

With the transition from a world of dispersed and unattached urban nuclei to the self-image of a unified nation, *Proa* promoted the idea that only architecture produced after this consummation could truly be called "Colombian." For Martínez, this meant that only modern architecture built after 1945, made in Colombia, by Colombian-trained architects. Martínez explained that:

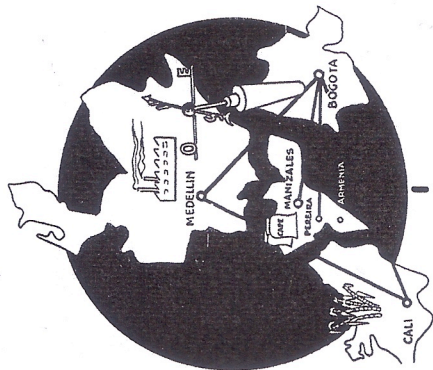
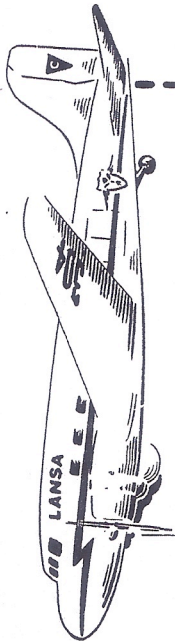
very recently there was no need for architects [and] [w]hen, on odd occasions, it was necessary to build an important building, such as the National Capitol of Bogotá [1887–1915], foreign architects were imported and in some cases complete plans were studied in France and in Italy.¹¹

Furthermore, the republican period "doesn't offer, generally, any architectural examples of importance," perhaps because "[t]here wasn't a rich and prosperous nineteenth century—unlike in Chile, Argentina, or Uruguay—in which to change the sober colonial demeanor for a more splendid one of French or Italian appearance."¹² But not all other modes of architectural production were discarded. If the buildings of the colonial period had been made without the intervention of architects, then this anonymous architecture was a collective creation and it therefore possessed the purest expression of the spirit of the Colombian people. As Martínez and Arango argued:

The colonial architecture in Colombia is sober and austere. . . . Our architecture, in comparison to others of the Americas, is less restricted and tied to symbolic obstacles; it is the least eclectic, the most Creole, the least imported, thus maybe the most functional.¹³

11.04. Airline advertisements promoted the notion of the airplane as builder of a new transportation network

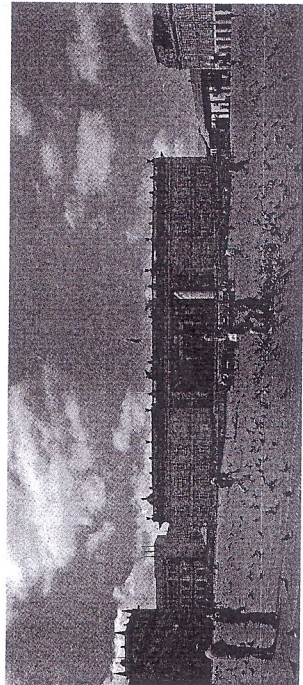
EL OCCIDENTE COLOMBIANO se vincula a través de LANSA



Cada Douglas de LANSA cumple a mañana y tarde una función de ensanche y desarrollo de la economía nacional.

Alas Colombianas  Sobre Colombia
Personal 100% colombiano Capital 100% colombiano

— LANSA, LA EMPRESA AEREA NACIONAL —



11.05 Thomas Reed, National Capitol, Bogotá, 1887–1915

In this way, colonial architecture became the Colombian equivalent of what classical or medieval architecture had been for modern architects in Europe who were interested in building links with tradition.

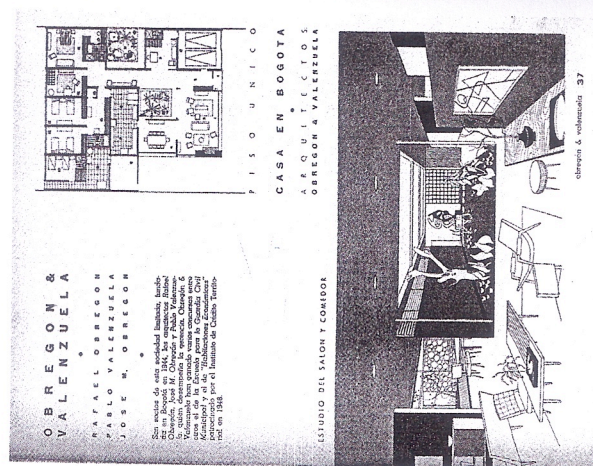
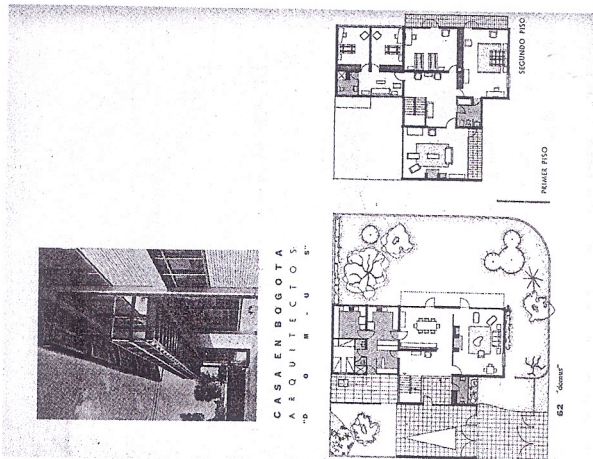
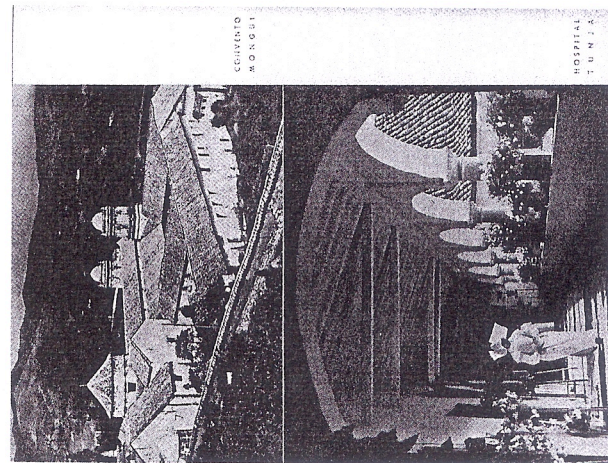
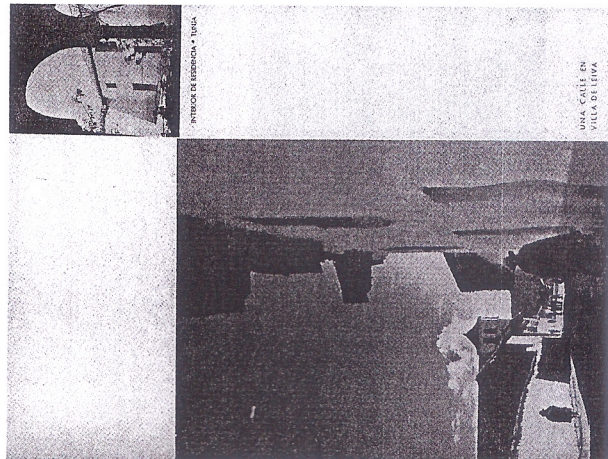
Colombian architecture presented Colombia's architectural character in its purest form; on the other hand, contemporary architecture could be interpreted as a natural evolution of certain archaic principles already found in colonial buildings, as rediscovered by Martínez.¹⁴ This supra-historic continuity allowed Martínez to select from the multiple experiments of contemporary architecture those that did not contradict the character and the values of colonial architecture, thus encouraging architects to experiment further in this direction. This will to establish a bond between colonial and contemporary architecture appears in Proa's description of a rural chapel:

In the feelings of many modern architects, the functional aspect in construction relies on the logical use of a region's materials. This nice rural chapel with its modesty is an admirable example set down to those parish priests that prefer the pomp and the fanciful over the purely logical and rational.¹⁵

In Colombia, the possibility of building a connection to the Pre-Hispanic past was not very productive because the indigenous people of Colombian territory did not build any monumental constructions that lasted over time.¹⁶ According to Martínez, the austere character of Colombian colonial architecture was somehow determined by this absence of a rival for the Spanish conquerors to compete with, as had been the case in Mexico and Peru. Nonetheless, he did not fail to recognize that a good part of the constructive methods used during the colonial period were of indigenous invention: "This was, in general terms, the architectural legacy of the Indians. It was a simple contribution, without valuable examples of plastic order or of any plan composition."¹⁷

11.06 (below left) A street in Villa de Leiva, and interior of a residence, Tunja, published in *La arquitectura en Colombia*, 1951

11.07 (below right) Convento Mongui, and Hospital Tunja, published in *La arquitectura en Colombia*, 1951



11.08 (above left) "Domus" Architects, house in Bogotá, 1951: modern house "quoting" the long balcony typical of colonial buildings

11.09 (above right) Obregón and Valenzuela, residence in Bogotá for Alvaro López, 1950: modern house "quoting" the patio typical of colonial buildings

Martínez referred to the peak of the nationalist styles of the 1930s as the event that had helped to "break the umbilical cord that sentimentally united Colombians with the colonial house," thus preparing the ground for a new architecture, whose arrival was sudden and without any intermediate stages: as the mule's back was replaced by the aircraft cockpit, this new architecture did not replace "stylish [architecture], as in most countries, but the uncomfortable colonial house."¹⁸ Proa's historical articles were like the mesh of a sieve, separating and selecting fragments that were desirable. The mesh caught the values of colonial architecture which could be re-utilized: rationality, sobriety, austerity, functionality, simplicity, and the economy of financial and expressive means. These words indistinctly described the character of colonial as well as contemporary architecture, and were useful for Martínez to express his non-temporal conception of the modern in architecture. The confrontation between contemporary and colonial architecture appeared dramatically in the compilation published by Proa in 1951. The book's subtitle proposed a deliberate, historical leap juxtaposing these architectures, by eliminating all architectural production from 1810 to 1945 in a single blow, thereby establishing a radical historical continuity between colonial and contemporary architecture. As the introduction noted: "350 years of the colonial era and five years from 1946 to 1951 correspond to the most important periods in Colombian architecture."¹⁹ One notable example of this crossed influence as synthesizing the Colombian modern was Casa en Bogotá by Domus Architects. With its striking structure of concrete vaults, this house had caught the attention of Le Corbusier, who carefully sketched them on his trip to Bogotá, but it was the long wooden balcony which Martínez discussed in an exhaustive commentary, translating this typical colonial element into a modern language. Proa also published numerous examples of houses that employed a plan with a central courtyard as a hierarchical element, which Martínez similarly considered part of the colonial Colombian tradition transplanted to modern architecture. One example was the home for the architect José María Obregón, published in June 1949. With these and other examples it becomes clear that Proa was the work of

a modernist-nationalist—Carlos Martínez—who saw both these dimensions as complementary and necessary to the configuration of a program of architectural modernity in Colombia.

In Chile, the relationship between economic modernization and geography was perceived quite differently. Very early on, Chile was able to build an efficient network of roads and railways throughout its long and narrow territory. In contrast to Colombia, Chile's problems of territorial organization were not concerned with the lack of transportation networks, but with the excessive centralization of economic and political activities in the Valparaíso–Santiago axis. As the editors of *Arquitectura y Construcción* informed their readers in 1946, 70 percent of the country's population and industries were concentrated in these two cities, with a further 10 percent in Concepción, and the remainder throughout the rest of the country:

Is this excessive concentration convenient? Was it initiated for industrial reasons or, as seems more probable, is it a simple consequence of the political, economic, and other centralisms which the country has suffered? Doesn't this produce a disproportionate growth of the capital and its port to the detriment of the rest of the country?²⁰

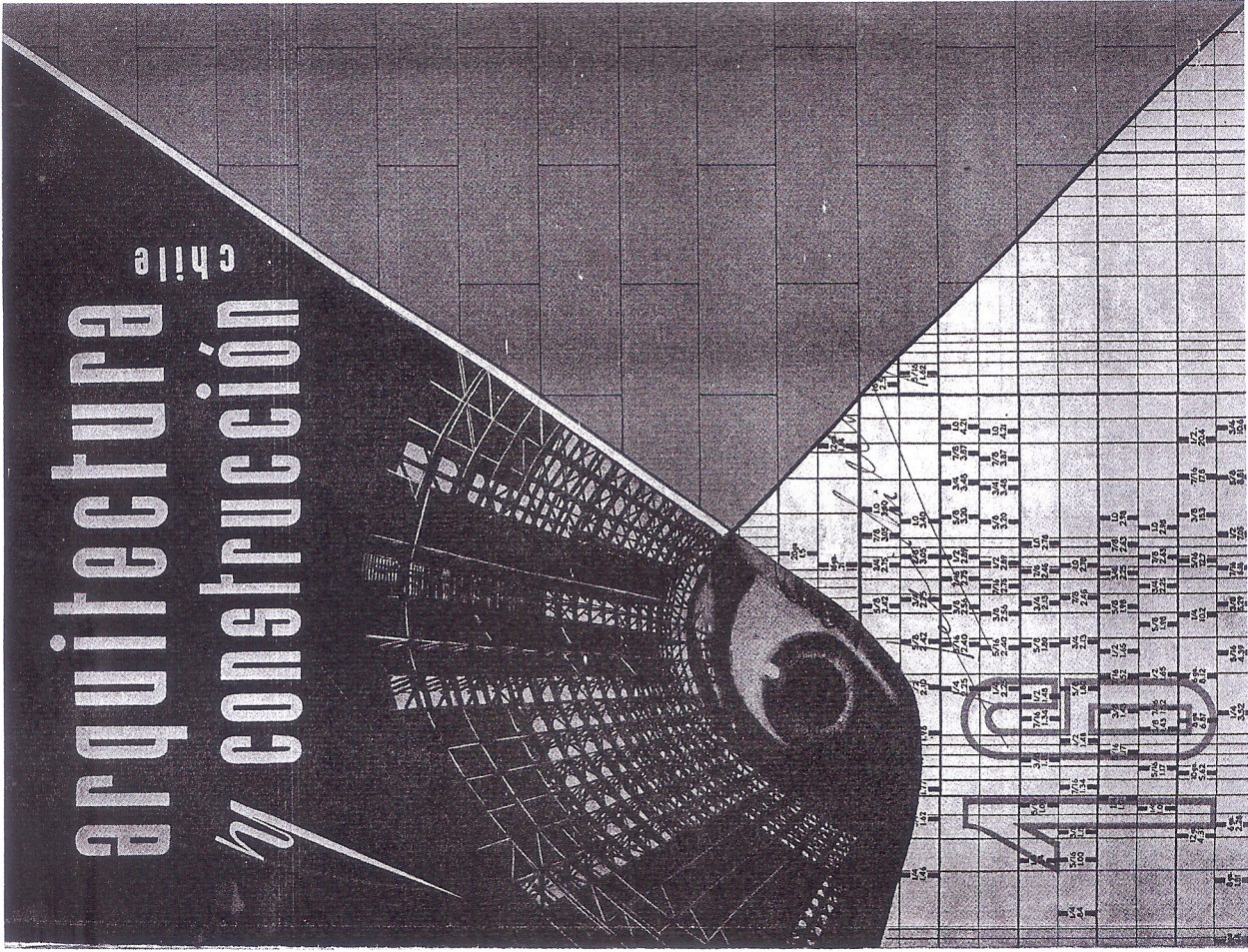
The editors supported decentralization, but how could this be applied? The answer appeared in the context of developing energy sources for industry.

Thus Ayc published several articles on industrialization by authors with a close relationship to the government's Corporation for the Development of Production (CORFO). These presented industrialization as a means to progress beyond the production of raw materials for export—perceived as maintaining Chile in a state of economic colonialism—and toward the production of manufactured goods. As Sergio Vergara highlighted in an article titled "Chile: Country with an Industrial Destiny:"

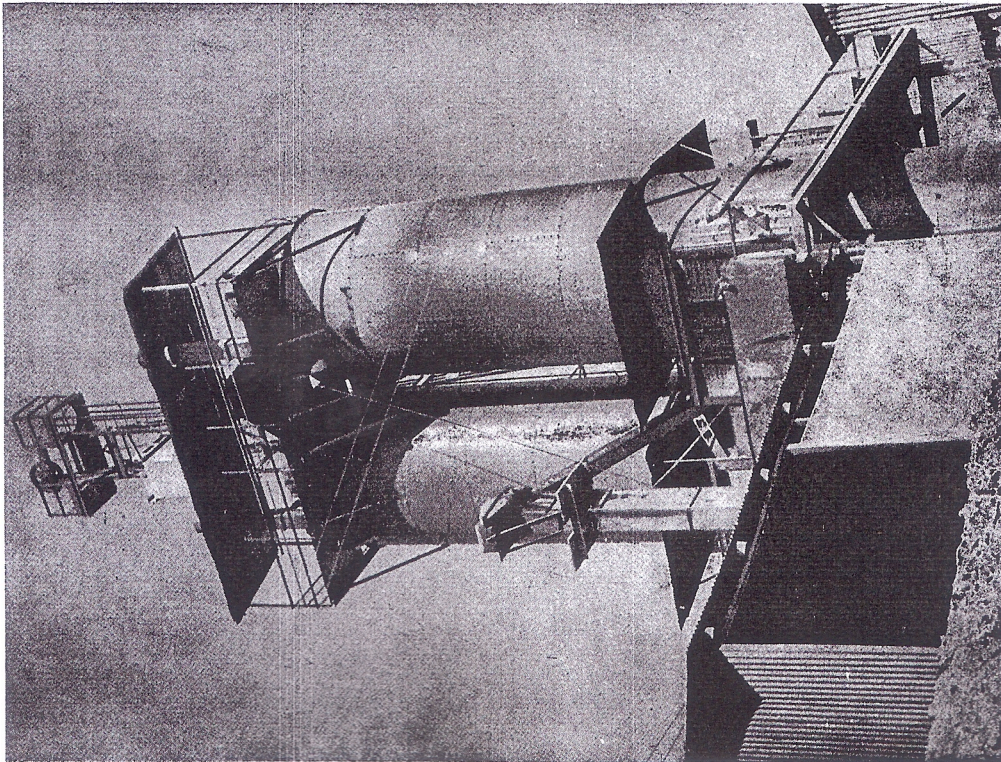
People that are not able to transform the production of raw material into manufactured goods are only partially free. . . . How heavily does this economic semi-servitude weigh on most South American countries that are positioned by their capacity as simple extractors of raw materials!²¹

Vergara asserted that for Chile industrialization was not merely an option but the only road that it should follow. This was symptomatic of the moment: the political and cultural project of constructing a modern nation depended on industrialization.

Vergara pointed out that the development of new energy sources was fundamental for the construction of an industrialized nation—not just coal and petroleum, but most particularly electricity, which was regarded by Ayc as the most suitable and efficient form of energy. In this context, he highlighted CORFO's National Electrification Plan, which had considerably increased the country's electricity production. As Ayc affirmed, this was essential for moving from an agrarian and mining economy to an industrial economy. In an article dedicated to promoting the work of the recently created National Electricity Company (ENDESA), Ayc argued that the core of CORFO's politics "can be expressed in the statement that a country's industrial production capacity is in practice independent from the population and . . . depends exclusively on the availability of the country's mechanical energy."²² In Ayc this was particularly linked to hydroelectric power stations, which were a significant element of the program for industrial decentralization it imagined. In the article on ENDESA,



11.10 Cover of *Arquitectura y Construcción*, 1949

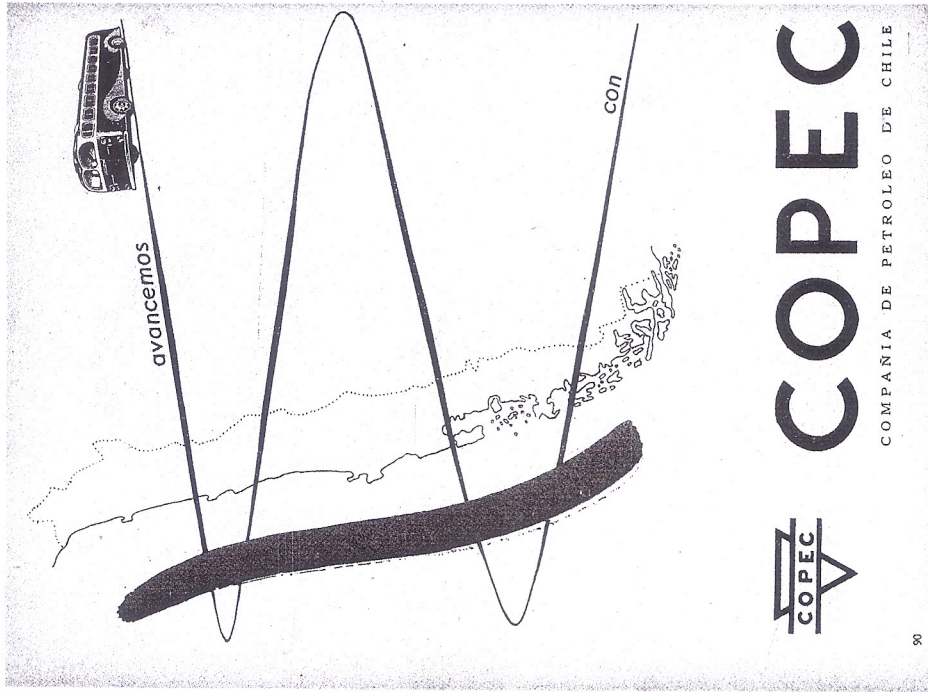


CHILE: PAIS DE DESTINO INDUSTRIAL

Artículo escrito especialmente para nuestra revista por don Sergio Vergara Vergara, autor del libro "Decadencia o Recuperación — Chile en la Emergencia", de reciente publicación.

25

11.12 "Let's move forward with COPEC": navigating Chile's elongated geography with the assistance of the Chilean Petroleum Company. *Arquitectura y Construcción*, 1946

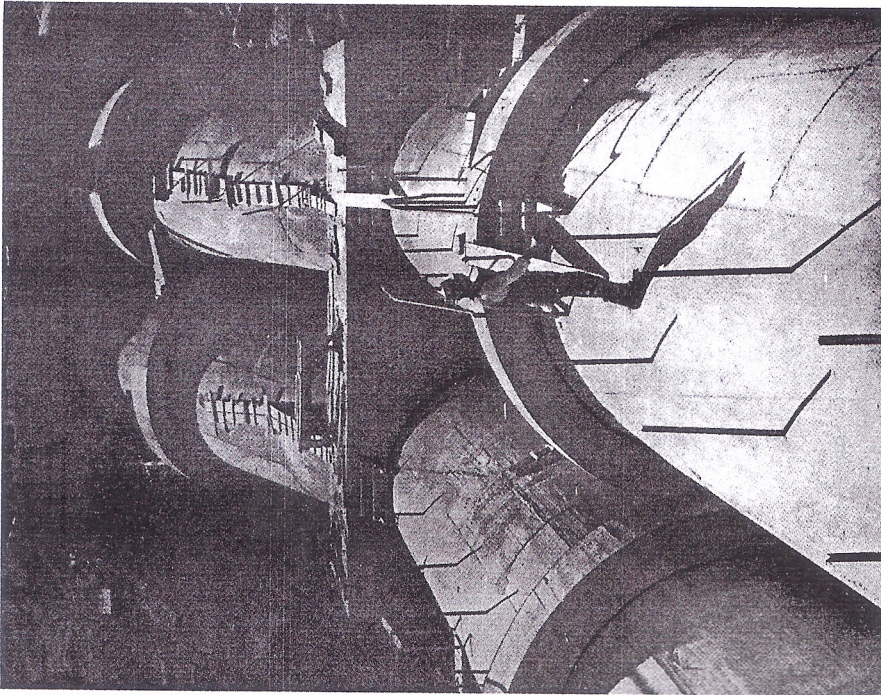


Chile—articulated in an economic—industrial sense—was bounded by the strip of land between Coquimbo-La Serena to the north and Puerto Montt to the south, leaving the northern desert and Patagonia outside of the national territory. The central section of this mutilated territory was divided into six regions defined by access to water resources, each with a hydroelectric power station as a nerve center. (Three were already completed, and three projected.) The national territory was conceived as an intricate network of transmission cables with focal points in these power stations, each of which provided regional coverage and also communicated with each another, building a continuous nervous tissue across the selected territory. In this way, the articulation of the national economy's project of industrialization gave birth to a new cartography that was strongly defined by the absence of a single center—which, under the old system, was Santiago-Valparaíso—in favor of a polycentric territorial system.

By the time that AyC appeared in 1945, the future, progress, technological advancement, and modernity were embodied in the project of industrialization

11.13 Santiago refrigerating plant, for the Agricultural Export Board, *Arquitectura y Construcción*, 1946

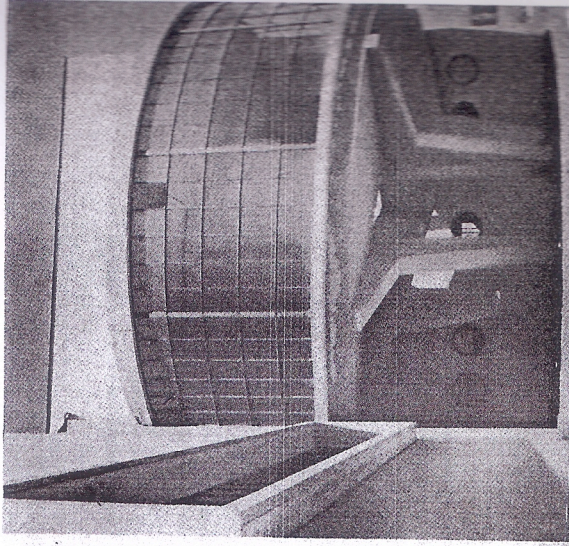
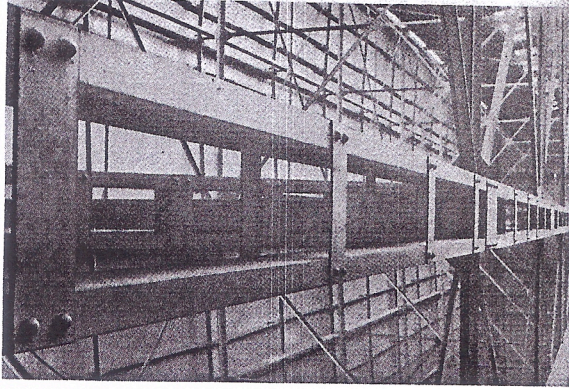
HUGO MONDRAGÓN LÓPEZ



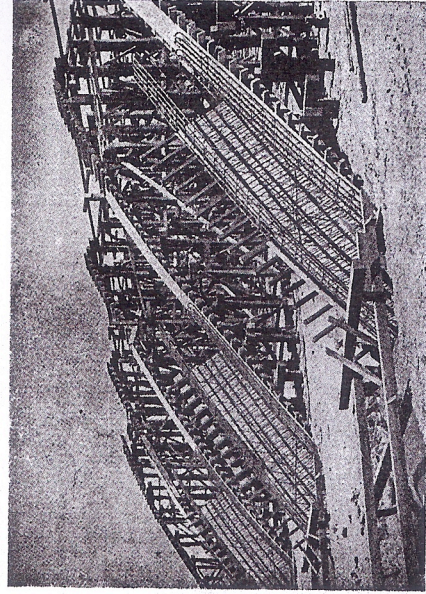
which Chile had promoted beginning in the 1930s. With the creation of CORFO in 1939, a new phase of this process had begun, characterized by proposals for national development. The pages of AYC picked up these themes with articles on an important group of industrial buildings, the development of the construction industry, and an enormous quantity of advertising announcing the development of a national industry producing construction materials. From the second half of the nineteenth century and until the celebrations of the Centennial of Independence in 1910, metal structures were considered the material signs of progress in construction technology; by the 1930s, these had already been relieved from that function by structures in reinforced concrete.

The consolidation of this shift can be verified with particular precision through analysis of the advertising published in the magazine over its lifetime, between 1945 and 1950. This indicates the centrality of the production of cement—and to a lesser extent the production of iron and glass—in the construction industry's self-image. Through these advertisements, the Chilean construction industry tried to grant a social use to construction materials: reinforced concrete was championed as a material embodying modern construction, with its natural destiny to build

VISIONS FROM COLOMBIA AND CHILE



11.14 Central aviation hangars, *Arquitectura y Construcción* 1946



LAMIFUN

PRODUCE TODO EL FIERRO NECESARIO
PARA SU CONSTRUCCION

11.15 Advertisement for Lamifun iron suppliers, *Arquitectura y Construcción*, 1947

bridges, industrial warehouses, and "skyscrapers." In the pages of *AyC*, these reinforced concrete structures were presented not only as a significant indicator of Chile's material progress, but also as the consolidation of the nation's commitment to the project of industrialization.³³ As a consequence, the aesthetic valuation of reinforced concrete structures promoted by *AyC* magazine did not face any resistance from the architectural profession or the culture more broadly. During the period of the magazine's circulation, reinforced concrete's mathematical, precise, and plastic beauty, and the value of its genuine contribution to national development, became the prevailing discourse within the discipline. In the issue of March 1946, devoted to the publication of industrial facilities, several images showed exposed reinforced concrete structures, one example being the Electrical Materials Factory ELECTROMAT. Moreover, the use of reinforced concrete with an aesthetic or plastic purpose was probably first applied in three emblematic works of the 1940s: the Chillán Cathedral, a large central nave built with parabolic arches of reinforced concrete, and two workers' clubs—the Hogar de Defensa de la Raza and the Hogar Hipódromo de Chile—which were published in great detail in *AyC*.³⁴ Advertisements for the Juan Soldado Cement Industry in La Serena published in October 1946, or photos of the construction of the ENDESA dams in March 1946, among others, indicate the importance given by the editors to a modernization process that aimed to develop a larger, decentralized territory.

The two magazines are united by their intention to articulate a connection between economic modernization and a national political and cultural agenda. In the postwar period, many Latin American countries felt that their economies, now industrialized, were stronger than in the interwar period. In ideological terms, this brought into focus a paradoxical synthesis between two opposing conceptions. On the one hand, economic modernization linked to progress, and to the future; on the other hand, a nationalism connected to tradition, to heritage, to culture, and to the past. These two magazines' shared purpose was to articulate a program of nationalist modernization; nonetheless, their two contrasting modes of expressing this project were emblematic of the two ideological poles between which the architectural culture of the region oscillated. In the case of *Proa*, the program of national modernization led toward a recovery of the architecture of the past, demonstrating how the character of modern architecture shared a common set of values with colonial architecture. In the case of *AyC*, national modernization chose the future as its battlefield. Modern reinforced concrete structures were spread throughout the pages of the magazine as monuments evoking a future nation that cohered around the project of economic modernization. Furthermore, while Carlos Martínez was interested in showing how the development of commercial aviation enabled various Colombian cities to feel part of the nation for the first time, the editors of *AyC* were more concerned with championing territorial decentralization for purely economic ends.

In this sense *Proa* and *Arquitectura y Construcción* would come to represent two emblematic positions characterizing the development of modern architecture in Latin America during the twentieth century. On the one hand, balancing the modernizing impulse and tradition, while on the other, dissolving culture in the modernizing project. In the first case, the nation was a cultural project, of the past and of permanence; in the other, the nation was a development project, of the future and of change.

Notes

Translated from the Spanish by Gisela Frick.

1 This chapter is based on my earlier research, including: Hugo Mondragón, "Chilean Architectural Culture and its Periodicals, 1930–1960" (Fondecyt Project no.1990449).

2010); "Architecture in Colombia 1946–1951: A Critical Reading of *Proa Magazine*" (MArch thesis, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, 2002); "The Speech of Modern Architecture, Chile 1930–1950: A Construction from Periodicals" (PhD diss., Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, 2010); Hugo Mondragón and Andrés Téllez, "Arquitectura y Construcción, Chile 1945–1950: A Magazine of Modern Architecture."

2 Architects of the time declared themselves openly and resolutely against historical architecture, especially of the recent past, while, according to Silvia Arango, they had a reluctant respect for colonial architecture: "Out of this tabula rasa of the past only colonial architecture emerged clean, and only because it shared some characteristics with the features they defended." Silvia Arango, "La evolución del pensamiento arquitectónico en Colombia, 1934–1984," (1370 Anuario de la Arquitectura en Colombia, Sociedad Colombiana de Arquitectos, Bogotá, 1984).

3 "Los caminos de Colombia," *Proa* 22 (April 1949).

4 The magazine's almost obsessive concern with this topic finds a probable explanation in its belief that: "Transportation routes determine the fate of cities. A great city does not exist without large transportation networks. Ground, marine, or air routes help to structure the physiognomy of the urban nuclei. If we want to inform ourselves about the origin and development of a city it is necessary to observe its location and its geographic horizon, always tied with its transportation routes." *Ibid.*

5 *Ibid.*

6 Jorge Arango and Carlos Martínez, *Arquitectura en Colombia: arquitectura colonial 1538–1810, arquitectura contemporánea en cinco años 1946–1951* (Bogotá: Ediciones Proa, 1951), 9.

7 *Ibid.*

8 *Ibid.*

9 This was *Proa*'s version of growth. "Today [1951] with transportation three hundred times faster, the confused situation of isolation has disappeared. In three decades, the most important urban centers in the country have increased the volume of their industries and trade a hundredfold. Fiscal profits have increased 20, 50, or 100 times over . . . this combined process, whose effects are evident, has resulted—due to the great number of urban nuclei—in Colombia's epithet of the country of cities." Arango and Martínez, *Arquitectura en Colombia*, 9.

10 *Proa* 22 (April 1949).

11 *Ibid.*

12 *Ibid.*

13 *Ibid.*, 18.

14 The word "evolution" appears in the titles of two of the articles examined in this section: "Evolution of Styles in Colombia" and "Study of the Evolution of Bogotá's Streets."

15 *Proa* 4 (January 1947).

16 Nevertheless, during the 1930s the artistic group Los Bachués had experimented, without much success, with the metaphor of *miscegenation*—the incorporation of indigenous motifs into contemporary buildings. The vindication of colonial architecture as the earliest form of Colombian architecture made by Carlos Martínez in the mid-1940s is partly explained by the failure of such experiments.

17 Arango and Martínez, *Arquitectura en Colombia*, 14.

18 *Ibid.*, 32.

19 *Ibid.*, 33.

20 "Generalidades Estadísticas de la Industria Chilena," *Arquitectura y Construcción* 4 (March 1946).

21 Sergio Vergara Vergara, "Chile: país de destino industrial," *Arquitectura y Construcción* 4 (March 1946).

22 *Ibid.*

23 Architectural structures in reinforced concrete had been admitted into the discipline and culture at least since the centennial celebrations in 1910, but still under the garb of historical styles. Belonging to this period are works such as the Museum of Fine Arts, the National Library, or the main building of the Universidad Católica, all works of Beaux-Arts expression with supporting structures built of reinforced concrete. By the late 1920s, the first reinforced concrete bridge was built over the Mapocho River, the main waterway that passes through the city of Santiago, and immediately became

the new sign of constructive progress in Chile. The inauguration of the Puente del Arzobispo in 1929 not only overcame the old obsolete metal bridges that were built on the same river, but its entry into service was an event celebrated in the pages of magazines—both popular and specialized—as marking the beginning of a new era of material progress for the city and the country.

While the Chillán Cathedral used concrete for the expressive power of its monumental structure, in the workers' clubs a more domesticated, or at least less dramatic, use of the material is observed. These are works that exhibit an almost academic, careful plastic use, trying to approach some of the artistic expression of Le Corbusier's works derived from the use of the Dom-ino prototype.

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MARIO PANI'S HOSPITALITY

Latin America through *Arquitectura/México*

George F. Flaherty

Architect Mario Pani was unhurried in embracing the work of his Latin American colleagues in the journal he founded and edited, *Arquitectura*, which would become the longest running (1938–1978) and, arguably, the most influential architecture journal in Mexico.¹ That, as Latin Americans, they were colleagues at all was still crystallizing for Pani—starting in the late 1930s—as was the practice of an expansive form of architecture. This expansion was both territorial, looking at not just buildings but entire cities and beyond, and jurisdictional, claiming professional domains of technical and social expertise. Mexico's modernist architects continued to grapple with the notion of a national school of architecture while at the same time reproductions of their work traveled through increasingly permeable—though never wide open—borders. Pani's treatment of Latin American modern architecture in *Arquitectura* was a speculative enterprise, depending on a rotating network of correspondents as well as secondhand reports and reproductions rather than established bureaus and beats. The journal played a major role in eventually consolidating a modern Mexican architecture in connection and contrast to Latin American examples; or just as often, with no affinity at all. Pani's uneven approach does not appear extraordinary when held up to the wavering light of Latin Americanism. Historically, interest in hemispheric solidarity has rarely been disinterested. *Arquitectura* did not fulfill a Bolivarian fantasy. That is not to say, however, that there was not much to gain and lose in how Latin America—and Mexico—were defined in its pages.

The journal's interest(edness) in Latin America coincided roughly with a period known as *apertura* (aperture, or opening) in Mexico at mid-century. Beginning in the 1940s and intensifying as the 1968 Olympic Games in Mexico City approached, Mexican elites looked outward more publicly than during the first decades after the revolution (1910–1920). The state also revised its macroeconomic policies, shifting from an import-substitution industrialization model, which was showing signs of distress, to what it called “stabilizing development,” expanding the banking sector to attract increased capital investment, especially from abroad.² Much of this money flowed toward urban and transport infrastructure, leading to a real estate boom, especially in Mexico City, which was also experiencing unprecedented population growth. This period came to be known as the “Mexican Miracle,” although it was more a leap of faith than a comfortable reality for most Mexicans. Given the journal's long run and many contributors, a comprehensive analysis is beyond the scope of this chapter.³ The charge instead is to identify its overarching territorial and jurisdictional logic while respecting its heteroglossia. Pani, as founding editor but also urban theorist and politically connected real estate developer, will serve as the organizing figure, standing for the relationship between material and discursive interventions required to constitute a Latin American modern architecture—if such a category ever existed.⁴

Pani created his own *apertura*, which gestures to passage as well as restriction, within *Arquitectura*. In 1949, the journal changed its name to *Arquitectura/México*,