

**MODERN UTOPIAS IN SUBURBAN MEADOWS**  
**ARTS-LED ADVANCES OF THE FRONTIER BETWEEN**  
**CITY AND NATURE**

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A CLASSICAL IDEAL RETRIEVED: MUSEUMS AND PUBLIC ART IN GREEN FIELDS

Today the term 'museum' has seemingly little to do with its etymological antecedents — *mouseion* in Greek and *musaeum* in Latin — designating a temple or abode of the Muses. The eponymous hill, in the surrounding of Athens, was a sacred place with pleasant buildings supposedly adorned with fountains and statues, just like Mount Elysium or Plato's Academy. It was one of the conceptual derivations of the "paradise garden" or "sacred grove" inherited from ancient civilizations, which would persist for centuries in our collective imagination. Western culture has often tried to recreate that classical model. In the Renaissance, faithful to such ancient artistic dream, many potentates not only adorned their suburban mansions with sculpture gardens, but regularly hosted artists and writers there and opened the premises sometimes to their fellow citizens.<sup>1</sup> However it was in utopian literature and treatises of ideal urban planning where this classical inheritance endured with greater flamboyance: that was the case of the *Sforzinda* imagined (around 1464) by Antonio di Pietro Averlino, alias Filarete, emulated by Bartolommeo del Bene's *Civitas Veri* (1609), or Johan Valentin Andrae's *Christianopolis* (1619), to cite just three that would reserve a prominent place of honour to the Muses.<sup>2</sup>

Gorgeous natural landscapes were always the obvious setting of these dreamed settlements, sometimes imagined near existing cities, but more often on remote unspoiled soil. This flight

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<sup>1</sup> On the outskirts of Rome, the Cortile del Belvedere in the Vatican hill was designed by Bramante to display Apollo's torso, the Laocoon, and other pieces from Pope Julius II's collection. But many other examples of sculptures continued to enhance other Platonic gardens, blending the amenities of art and nature: Cf. James M. Bradburne, "Local heroes – memory in action in the late Renaissance garden", *Nordisk Museologi*, 1-2 (2008), 74-96.

<sup>2</sup> The lineage of this classical ideal has been studied by Paula Findlen, "The museum: its classical etymology and Renaissance genealogy", *Journal of the History of Collections*, vol. 1, n. 1 (1989) p. 59-78. Marcin Fabianski, "Iconography of the architecture of ideal musaea in the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries", in: *Journal of the History of Collections*, 2, n. 2 (1990), p. 95-134. About the architecture and urban setting of the musaeum-temple see Nicole Pohl, "Passionless reformers: the museum and the city in utopia", in: M. Giebelhausen (ed.), *The Architecture of the Museum: Symbolic Structures, Urban Contexts*, Manchester-Nueva York, Manchester University Press, 2003, p. 127-143.

into wild nature gained momentum in the Romantic age, as can be evidenced by influential examples like Henry David Thoreau's acclaimed book, *Walden; or, Life in the Woods*, and the seminal essay by Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl entitled *Land und Leute*.<sup>3</sup> Escaping from industrial urban civilization to remote lands in isolated countryside would then be the chosen setting for many imaginary or real community settlements, including some artists' colonies like Worpswede.<sup>4</sup> However, as the nineteenth century advanced, urban growth gave special modern significance to the contact zones of cities and their natural hinterland.<sup>5</sup> Such interface areas became the favoured stage for great exhibitions and cultural events dazzling masses of visitors: Hyde Park in London, Champ du Mars in Paris, the Prater in Vienna or the Tivoli in Copenhagen became cultural magnets with pavilions displaying scientific, archaeological, ethnological or artistic pieces.

Those initiatives often derived into museum foundations. Thus, suburban parks became, in a double sense, the most 'natural' setting for art institutions like South Kensington Museum in London, established in 1852, or the Stedelijk Museum founded in Amsterdam in 1898, or Milan's Municipal Gallery of Modern Art opened in 1903 in Villa Reale, and the Italian National Gallery of Modern Art installed in the green belt of Rome after the 1911 international exhibition held in Villa Giulia. Similarly, modern examples of "sculpture parks" also came about in such suburbs: for instance, Frogner Park in Oslo with the monumental statues erected by Gustav Vigeland, which perhaps inspired the sculptural ensemble of Brancusi in a green area on the outskirts of Târgu Jiu. Moreover, many *nouveaux riches*, including successful modern artists or their friends/patrons, often emulated the old aristocratic predilection for suburban residences of glamorous gardens, sometimes decorated with sculptures, as in the case of Rodin in Meudon or the Swedish sculptor Carl Milles in Lidingö.

From an urban planning perspective those attempts reached momentum at the beginning of the twentieth century with luxurious neighbourhoods of villas built in condominium properties. They were green-belt settlements developed for rich denizens, often decorated with artistic ornaments, and occasionally part of the attraction of such an exclusive conurbation was the presence of a famous artist in the colony. For example the Park Güell in the suburbs of Barcelona, a new residential garden district surrounded by walls and surveyed by a concierge living

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<sup>3</sup> On the American and German rapport with forests see Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory*, Londres, HarperCollinsPublishers, 1995, p. 100-134.

<sup>4</sup> An international panorama and bibliography can be found in Michael Jacobs: *The Good and Simple Life. Artists Colonies in Europe and America*. Oxford, Phaidon, 1985. For more specific information on examples in German-speaking culture, see Gerhard Wietek: *Deutsche Künstlerkolonien und Künstlerorte*. München, Verlag Thiemeing, 1976.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Jan Marsh, *Back to the Land: The Pastoral Impulse in England, from 1880 to 1914*, London, Quartet, 1982. See also the contrast between the peripheral model of the *cité industrielle* and the *modèle culturaliste* explained in Françoise Choay, *L'urbanisme, utopies et réalités. Une anthologie*. Paris, Éditions du Seuil, 2001, p. 7-83.

next to the monumental gateway, all commissioned in 1900 to the architect Antoni Gaudí, who eventually moved himself to a house in the vicinity of his patron, Eusebi Güell, and other members of the local *élite* whose mansions enjoyed spectacular panoramas of the Catalan capital and its natural surroundings. That project was architecturally wonderful, but a failed investment never fulfilled. Two decades later, it was eventually acquired by the City Council of Barcelona, and opened to all citizens as a municipal park.<sup>6</sup>

THE MATHILDENHÖHE, ART NOUVEAU GESAMTKUNSTWERK ON A GREEN SUBURB OF DARMSTADT,  
OPEN TO VISITORS

In some aspects, Gaudí's Park Güell resembled another *art nouveau* conurbation planned on top of a hill on the outskirts of Darmstadt by Joseph Maria Olbrich; but this *Villenkolonie* was not designed as an enclosed residential area: in fact, it had been purposely intended for city dwellers to promenade amongst gardens and monuments, as they had been doing here since this former aristocratic estate was open to public access by the Grand Duke Louis III of Hesse and his wife Mathilde, in whose honour it was named Mathildenhöhe. The hill will be transformed by a collective dream whose origins are usually evoked partially quoting some passionate words addressed by Olbrich to his colleagues at the Vienna Secession when they were celebrating the completion of the exhibition building in 1898. He had announced them his desire to build a city, an entire city, no less: "*Eine Stadt müssen wir erbauen, eine ganze Stadt! Alles Andere ist nichts!*" It is true that to do so he simply requested a green field — a well-known demand repeated some years later by Le Corbusier. Many have, however, neglected the fact that Olbrich suggested placing it on the outskirts of Vienna, in the Hietzing woods or on the hill of Hohe Warte:

"Die Regierung soll uns, in Hietzing oder auf der Hohen Warte, ein Feld geben, und da wollen wir dann eine Welt schaffen. Das heißt doch nichts, wenn Einer bloß ein Haus baut. Wie kann das schön sein, wenn daneben ein hässliches ist? Was nützen drei, fünf, zehn schöne Häuser, wenn die Anlage der Straße keine schöne ist? Was nützt die schöne Straße mit schönen Häusern, wenn darin die Sessel nicht schön sind oder die Teller nicht schön sind? Nein — ein Feld; anders ist es nicht zu machen. Ein leeres weites Feld; und da wollen wir dann zeigen, was wir können; in der ganzen Anlage und bis ins letzte Detail. Alles von demselben Geiste beherrscht, die Straßen und die Gärten und die Paläste und die Hütten und die Tische und die Sessel und die Leuchter und die Löffel Ausdrücke der selben Empfindung, in der Mitte aber, wie ein Tempel in einem heiligen Haine, ein Haus der Arbeit, zugleich Atelier der Künstler und Werkstätte der Handwerker, wo nun der Künstler immer das beruhigende

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. Mireia Freixa & Mar Leniz, "El Park Güell, de projecte urbanístic per a famílies benestants a espai d'oci per als barcelonins", in T.-M. Sala (coord.), *Pensar i interpretar l'oci. Passatemps, entreteniments, aficions i addiccions a la Barcelona del 1900*, Barcelona, GRACMON-Universitat de Barcelona, 2012, 218-231.

und ordnende Handwerk, der Handwerker immer die befreiende und reinigende Kunst neben sich hätte, bis die beiden gleichsam zu einer einzigen Person verwachsen würden!”<sup>7</sup>

Hence, this vision of creating a new urban complex, designed until the last detail in harmonised style, did not involve starting from scratch but would be located in a green suburb of the Austrian capital. In fact, when Olbrich came to fulfil this dream by the capital of the state of Hesse, he did not exactly start from an empty field, as the site already contained elements of cultivated landscape and architectural heritage. In the Romantic period, trees and a few cottages had been placed on this spot; whereas in the last third of the nineteenth century water cisterns to supply the city were built on top of the hill as well as a quaint Russian orthodox chapel, donated by Tsar Nicolas II, who had married princess Alexandra, the sister of the Grand Duke Ernst Ludwig. The latter, internationally renowned at the turn of the century as a generous art patron, was asked by some artists and city leaders to provide a new school or centre for modern art and crafts, complemented with an exhibition hall for the public to view the latest in architecture, interior design, etc. Ernst Ludwig seemed to be willing to do this and much more on the Mathildenhöhe and he soon started calling it *Künstlerkolonie*. The first leaders of that “colony of artists” would be two *art nouveau* celebrities, the German painter Hans Christiansen and the Vienna Secession architect Joseph Maria Olbrich, who were soon joined by the five other founding members: Peter Behrens, the sculptors Ludwig Habich and Rudolf Bosselt, as well as the painter and textile designer Paul Bürck and Patriz Huber, an architect, painter and sculptor.

Instead of a secluded community in a remote land, they were supposed to be looked up with pride by their fellow citizens, final beneficiaries of this project. I have already argued elsewhere that the Mathildenhöhe was for the city of Darmstadt a cultural *Stadtkrone* —crown of the city— restaging the classical Mouseion ideal not only in topographical terms, also because their residents were a community of *hoi olligoi*, uplifting the trivial life of the *polis*, of which they were a symbolic élite, almost like in the Art-State described by Jacob Burckhardt in his book

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<sup>7</sup> In fact, we only know Olbrich’s words indirectly through a report written by his colleague Hermann Bahr, a writer and art critic: Cf. Hermann Bahr, *Bildung: Essays*, Leipzig, Insel-Verlag, 1900, p. 45–46; reedited in Weimar by VDG, in 2010. Cf. Lawrence A. Scaff, “Social Theory, Rationalism and the Architecture of the City: Fin-de-Siècle Thematics”, *Theory, Culture & Society*, Vol.12 (1995), p. 63–85 (p. 72). The English translation would be: “The government should give us a field, in Hietzing or in the Hohe Warte and there we shall create a world. It is nothing to build a single house. How can it be beautiful if an ugly one stands next? What good are three, five, even ten houses if the street arrangement is not beautiful? What good is a beautiful street with beautiful houses if the armchairs inside are not beautiful? No—a field; nothing less will be enough. A broad, empty field; and then we shall show all we can do. From the overall design down to the last detail, all ruled by the same taste, the streets and the gardens and the palaces and the cottages and the tables and the armchairs and the lamps and the spoons. All emanating from the same sensibility, and in the middle, like a temple in a sacred groove, a house of labour, both artist’ studio and craftsman’s workshop, where the artist will always have the comforting and ordering crafts, and the craftsman the liberating and purifying arts about him, until the two finally merge into a single person.”

*The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, I would add now that this utopia matched very well an ideal known in German as *Künstlerstaat* or *Ästhetische Staat*.<sup>9</sup> In this cultural context has to be understood the esoteric ceremony of public inauguration, on 15 May 1901, devised by Georg Fuchs, one of the intellectual promoters of the colony. A theatre performance directed by Behrens as a Zarathustrian parable where the actors of a “Greek chorus”, dressed in white tunics, conversed with a man and a woman in black, the allegories of human-kind, clamouring for art’s healing redemption. In response to their invocations a bearded prophet in a scarlet cloak appeared and proclaimed that the place would become the temple of a priesthood of art. He then solemnly marched towards the Grand Duke and gave him something he had concealed in his hand, a crystal, the symbol of the artists’ alchemical work. Much has been speculated on the meaning of all of this and the enigmatic motto “*Seine Welt zeige der Künstler die niemals war noch jemals sein wird*” engraved in golden letters on the entrance of Ernst-Ludwig Haus.<sup>10</sup>

Open to the public on the occasion as an exhibition centre, that house was reached by crowds of visitors promenading through the terraced gardens inherited from the former rose garden of the Romantic park: a central axis aesthetically ornamented befitting the *art nouveau* yearning for integration of all arts (fig. 1).<sup>11</sup> Another public exhibition from 15 July to 10 October 1904 was the occasion for additional temporary constructions, new buildings and other artistic enhancements.<sup>12</sup> An architectural ornamental fountain designed by Olbrich –decorated with

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. J. Pedro Lorente, “The Mouseion ideal reinterpreted as art colony on the outskirts of Darmstadt and Hagen / El ideal del Mouseion reinterpetado como colonia artística en las afueras de Darmstadt y Hagen”, in: *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma. Serie VII, Historia del Arte, nueva época*, nº 1 (2013).

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Ulrich Raulff (ed.), *Vom Künstlerstaat. Ästhetische und politische Utopien*. Munich-Vienna, Carl Hanser Verlag, 2006.

<sup>10</sup> The notion of the artist as a being above the community is linked to Nietzsche’s *Übermensch* and to the concept Richard Wagner had of himself. The composer is usually referred to as having had an influence on Olbrich because their common longing to amalgamate all arts, or *Gesamtkunstwerk*; but it seems that Olbrich read the parable of the artist as a priest or as a performer of Beauty for mankind, in a text written in 1898 by Hermann Bahr, which provided him with the abstruse motto for the entrance, that could be translated as “Let the artist show his world, which never was, nor ever will be”. Cf. Oskar Bätschmann, *The Artist in the Modern World. A Conflict Between Market and Self-Expression*. Cologne, DuMont-Yale University Press, 1997, p. 160.

<sup>11</sup> The entrance of Ernst-Ludwig-Haus was flanked by goddesses of Victory, created by the sculptor Rudolf Bosselt, as well as two colossal statues of a naked man and woman representing Strength and Beauty by Ludwig Habich. The corner of the Olbrich-Haus along Mathildenhöheweg was decorated with the statue of a young man kneeling to drink, another work by sculptor Habich, who also made a monumental statue placed in the central street of the colony. Artistic decorations were carved in wood in a corner of the façade of the little house designed for sculptor Rudolf Bosselt. And the other houses were enhanced with intricate *art nouveau* wrought-iron railings, a porch with a painted floral ornament, etc. On the other hand, other ephemeral installations of “public art” were erected for the 1901 exhibition. For instance the access portal, decorated by Paul Bürck with allegoric mural paintings; or the Spielhaus-Theatre and the music bandstand, a restaurant pavilion decorated with stained glass windows designed by Christiansen, and of course, the Haus der Flächenkunst, an exhibition hall erected opposite Ernst-Ludwig Haus, for the temporary display of paintings, sculptures and decorative arts.

<sup>12</sup> The so-called Blue House featured a maiolica figure by Daniel Greiner in a niche by the garden gate; wood-engraved decoration adorned the roof of the Corner House, also known as the House of the

small figures of animals by Daniel Greiner and a bronze mask-fountain by Ludwig Habich— was erected in a public area between Sabaisplatz and the yard in front of the boulevard of plane trees. Four years later, the exhibition entitled *Hessische Landesausstellung für freie und angewandte Kunst*, showcased artists and artisans from Hesse in general, not just specifically from the Mathildenhöhe art colony, and this time the two main buildings inaugurated were for public use. On the one hand the Oberhessisches Ausstellungshaus, commissioned by an association created in 1907 to display industrial and decorative arts from the north of Hesse. On the other hand, the Corporation of Darmstadt ordered the construction of a panoramic tower on top of the hill and an adjacent building for exhibitions, which became Olbrich's last masterpieces, although decorated by ornaments of other authors.<sup>13</sup> A local art association, the Deutsche Künstlerbund Darmstadt took on the management of this pavilion and organized exhibitions each summer.

The urban planning and monumental ornamentation on the Mathildenhöhe came meanwhile in the hands of the painter and self-taught architect Albin Müller. Apart from more dwellings and workshops he also erected a pergola and a decorative kiosk—called the Temple of Swans—along Alexandraweg. He placed a bench under a mosaic-adorned canopy in an adjacent alleyway and an ornamental pond in front of the Russian chapel—known as the Iris Pond—with multi-coloured ceramic at the bottom, though its main ornamentation consists of the sitting statues of Saint Joseph and the Virgin with Child placed by sculptor Bernhard Hoetger on each side, as if resting by the water while fleeing to Egypt. Müller also built a monumental gateway, no longer in existence, on the Mathildenhöhe, the *Löwentor* or “Lions Gate”, so-called because of the six statues of stone lions, which surrounded it, also the work of Hoetger. That sculptor of masonic beliefs strove from 1911 to 1914 to decorate the Romantic boulevard of plane trees with monumental statues.<sup>14</sup> All these architectural and sculptural additions were inaugurated on 16 May 1914 when the last exhibition of the colony opened to the

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Wooden Gable; the Grey House boasted seraphs made by Greiner, who also made a statue, *Mother and Child*, placed on a pedestal in a garden area between the wrought-iron gate and the entrance door.

<sup>13</sup> The tower soon became the landmark of the city, known as *Fünffingerturm* –five finger tower– because of its five staggered crests, a distinctive silhouette of sculpture-like quality, also profusely decorated both inside and outside. The entrance, in particular, is adorned with allegoric reliefs by Heinrich Jobst representing Strength, Wisdom, Justice and Gentleness, to which a sundial and a clock were added in 1914, plus mosaics in the atrium and on the sundial by F.W. Kleuken. A part of the tower would be open to the public to enjoy the panoramic view over Darmstadt and its surroundings; but more specifically conceived for visitors was the attached exhibition hall, whose entrance at Sabaisplatz was later decorated with four expressionist allegoric figures—Wrath, Hatred, Revenge, Greed—made by sculptor Bernhard Hoetger.

<sup>14</sup> He decorated the entrance to the *Plantanenallee* with two bronze statues. The statue to the west represents a panther taking away the Spirit of the Night and to the east a silver lioness carrying the Spirit of the Day. A fountain was placed amongst the trees with three allegoric female figures representing the cycle of water plus a group of four monuments on the cycle of light and shadow in life with multi-coloured reliefs evoking Spring, Summer, Dreams and Resurrection. The iconographic agenda was rounded up with two curious statues, one of a sitting Buddha and the other of a dying mother holding her child

public. It was due to last until 11 October but had to be closed at the beginning of August after the outbreak of the Great War.

The world conflict did not bring about the definitive end of the colony on the Mathildenhöhe or its public activities. Art exhibitions were held every summer from 1917 onwards: the most renowned show took place in 1920, dedicated to German Expressionism. From a political point of view, radical changes came about with the revolution of November 1918, when Grand Duke Ernst-Ludwig was deposed by the Darmstadt Workers and Soldiers Council. In the absence of the promoter of this artistic estate, infrastructures deteriorated; nevertheless, exhibitions did continue to be held there, to maintain public use and access. The *museion*, in the etymological sense of the word, now became a museum.<sup>15</sup>

#### FROM VILLENKOLONIE TO GARDEN CITY: ARTS-LED UTOPIA ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF HAGEN

Perhaps this is one of the main peculiarities to be considered in its closer emulation, sponsored by Hagen banker and arts patron Karl Ernst Osthaus: the museum was present in his project from its very inception. The heir of a local family of bankers and industrialists no doubt knew Grand Duke Ernst Ludwig, shared his convictions that local socio-economic growth could be promoted through art and admired the artistic blend so beautifully planned on the Mathildenhöhe. Many parallels could be found, as Osthaus also aspired to a *Gesamtkunstwerk* mixing all the arts and combining private residential use with public open areas. But, there were significant differences, and in this case the story started precisely with a museum.

By 1902 Osthaus had already founded a new museum in Hagen offering to the public a peculiar combination of collections, which was given the enigmatic name of Museum Folkwang. In many ways, visiting his museum was like visiting him, as his family lived in the same building, which was too small for all of them, even after some extensions.<sup>16</sup> Hence he bought a vast suburban land on the wooded hill of the Emst district, where Henry van de Velde, the same architect who

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in her arms. Such cryptic symbolism is hard to puzzle out, as Hoetger used to synthesize different ideologies, religions and cultures worldwide. Cf. Ralf Beil & Philipp Gutbrod, (eds.), *Bernhard Hoetger - The Plane Tree Grove. A Total Artwork on the Mathildenhöhe*, Chicago, Univ. of Chicago Press, 2013.

<sup>15</sup> Some buildings and other elements were destroyed by bombing raids during World War II, but afterwards most of the complex was restored little by little. Ernst-Ludwig Haus, rebuilt from 1984 to 1990, houses the "Museum Künstlerkolonie", where visitors can see art, plans, photographs and information on the history of the artistic colony on the Mathildenhöhe. The Ausstellungshallen are also open to the public for temporary exhibitions as well as the Hochzeitsturm, used since 1993 to celebrate civil weddings. It can also be visited by the public to enjoy the panoramic views.

<sup>16</sup> The rooms he shared with his wife Gertrud and their five children were opened to the public on the occasion of concerts or other social events. Cf. Birgit Schulte, "Karl Ernst Osthaus, Folkwang and the 'Hagener Impuls'. Transcending the walls of the museum", *Journal of the History of Collections* vol. 21 no. 2 ( 2009 ) pp. 213-220 (see p. 216).

had designed the *art nouveau* interior of the Museum Folkwang, was commissioned to build a mansion amid gardens. It was significantly called *Hohenhof*, because Osthaus conceived it as a king's court, home of a new Apollo surrounded by artists and celebrities as his guests or personal retinue. Taking a step forward in this direction, in 1906 the tycoon, turned real estate entrepreneur, plotted the surrounding property, offering his friends the opportunity to install themselves in the neighbourhood: thus the estate would become a refined *Villenkolonie* which two kinds of residents. On the one hand, he built luxurious mansions to rent or to sell them to affluent dignitaries, as Ernst Ludwig had done on the Mathildenhöhe so it is hardly surprising that the person asked to design those houses was someone who had lived there: his protégé Peter Behrens. On the other hand, Osthaus asked Josef Hofmann, August Endell, Walter Gropius and Bruno Taut to design sixteen villas for his artist friends, none of which came to fruition. Thus the *Künstlerkolonie* did not materialize, although some artists would soon after take residence in the semi-detached houses along Stirnband, a winding road in the vicinity of Osthaus' villa, promoted by him as a different real estate investment targeting the middle-classes.<sup>17</sup>

From this emerged Osthaus's most ambitious project: to build around his Villa Hohenhof, a "garden city" called *Hohenhagen*. He had been one of the founders of the *Deutsche Gartenstadt-Gesellschaft* (DGG) and was one of its most active supporters.<sup>18</sup> This time the architect selected was his friend Walter Gropius, who designed a great urban complex with all sort of amenities, including a monumental building for the *Deutsche Museum für Kunst in Handel und Gewerbe*—a museum with no premises Osthaus had created in 1909 to promote exhibitions of industrial arts. It would had been the most ambitious realization of the scheme proposed by Ebenezer Howard, the great pontiff of the Garden City Movement, designing a central "crown" of public buildings, including a museum or art gallery (fig. 2).<sup>19</sup> But the Great War put an end to the

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<sup>17</sup> In 1910 Osthaus announced in the local press the offer of more modest affordable houses in this green suburban area to be linked by a tram line. The architect in charge was to be Dutchman J.-L. Mathieu Lauweriks, brought to Hagen through Behrens's mediation and who had become Osthaus' new protégé. His spiritual inclinations were in agreement with those of painter Jan Thorn Prikker, another of the patron's favourite artists. They were the leading residents of this new middle-class neighbourhood, which attracted many artists and intellectuals. Lauweriks based his design on the theosophical symbolism of mazes, which he evoked using recurring square geometrical patterns on the decoration of the buildings and gardens of each of these houses, all of them of the same height and made of identical materials and colours: brick, stone and wood. Some of the artists who lived in them, such as sculptor Milly Steger and painter Thorn Prikker, added decoration to their facades or gardens, partially visible from the street.

<sup>18</sup> Already by 1905 he had organized in Hague a conference on social housing where he even contributed his own thoughts, along with other specialists on the subject such as Hermann Muthesius. —who will publish in 1907 his seminal book *Landhaus und Garten—*, Karl Henrici, or Richard Riemerschmid. The latter had even received the commission, through Osthaus, to plan on the other side of the hill in Emst, known as Walddorf, a workers colony for the employees of the Elbers textile factory. But only six terraced houses were built in 1910-12 out of the 87 houses designed by Riemerschmid.

<sup>19</sup> This circular structure had already been put forward in his 1898 book entitled *Tomorrow, A Peaceful Path to Real Reform*, republished in 1902 under the title *Garden Cities of Tomorrow*, depicting a famous illustration of a central circular plaza surrounded by the City Hall, the hospital, a concert and conference hall, a theatre, a library as well as a museum or art gallery.



dream, and after the revolution of November 1918 Villa Hohenhof became the headquarters of the Hagen Workers and Soldiers Council. However, Osthaus then befriended architect and urban planner Bruno Taut, who was at the time the most fervent apostle of a spiritual return to nature, expressed in his 1918 book *Alpine Architektur*. Probably inspired by the crown of public buildings dreamed by Ebenezer Howard as the axis of expanding green belts, they envisioned a common utopian project to transform Villa Hohenhof into Hagen's cultural city-crown, a *Stadtkrone* around a central yard for the *Folkwang-Schule*, complemented by surrounding workshops, farms, houses, an astronomy observatory, a chapel, a meeting room, plus the exhibition halls and a museum with a permanent exhibition open to the public. In agreement with Taut's theosophical inclinations, the highest building was to be the *Haus der festlichen Andacht*, a tower for festive worship/meditation to be followed in height by a museum with the most spectacular façade.<sup>20</sup> Yet in 1921 Osthaus' untimely death put an end to these schemes.

#### TOWARDS THE MODERNIST PARADIGM OF MUSEUMS WITH SCULPTURE GARDENS ON SUBURBAN GREENS

If Darmstadt's Mathildenhöhe, had been the inspiration for Osthaus, the successive projects envisioned around his villa on the outskirts of Hagen fuelled the imagination of other idealists. For example Le Corbusier, who had been a very enthusiast guest at Hohenhof. Or Helène Kröller-Müller, a wealthy collector who, after consulting with Peter Behrens and Mies van der Rohe, commissioned Hendrik P. Berlage to erect a building in 1917 to house her modern art collection within a forest near the Dutch locality of Otterlo; although the museum finally opened to the public twenty-one years later was the work of Belgian Henry Van de Velde, set in a different location of the same estate. However, the most striking parallelism can be traced with other settlements developed by other industrialists engaged in the Garden City Movement. For example Hellerau, a garden city founded near Dresden by furniture manufacturer and philanthropist Karl Schmidt-Hellerau around his design company for interior decoration called *Deutschen Werkstätten*. Or Port Sunlight, a township created on the outskirts of Liverpool by William Hesketh Lever, a soap tycoon who became one of the most devoted followers

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<sup>20</sup> In order to publicise it and request support or donations, Osthaus published Taut's plans and explained the project in a famous paper, which was to be his last, published in 1920 in the 4<sup>th</sup> issue of Munich journal *Genius. Zeitschrift für werdende und alte Kunst*. Recent studies reproduce its entire contents: Cf. Rainer Stamm (ed.), *Karl Ernst Osthaus: Reden und Schriften. Folkwang Werkbund Arbeitsrat*, Cologne, Walther König, 2002, p. 261-263. Cf. also Birgit Schulte, *Auf dem Weg zu einer handgreiflichen Utopie. Die Folkwang-Projekte von Bruno Taut und Karl Ernst Osthaus*. Hagen, Neuer Folkwang Verlag im Karl-Ernst Osthaus Museum, 1994. Hartwig Fischer & Uwe Schneede, *"Das schönste Museum der Welt": Museum Folkwang bis 1933 : Essays zur Geschichte des Museum Folkwang*. Hagen, Edition Folkwang/Steidl, 2010.

of Ebenezer Howard: this suburb had over 800 houses as well as a school, a hospital, a concert hall, sports facilities, a church ... And eventually Lever also erected there a monumental art gallery for his collection of Georgian and Victorian art, which opened to the public in 1922 under the name Lady Lever Art Gallery, in memory of his deceased wife.<sup>21</sup>

Other re-enactments of Osthaus precedents would be some famous suburban private mansions surrounded by green areas with modern monuments. Like Villa Noailles, built in 1923-27 on a hill in the city of Hyères, on the French Riviera, for a sophisticated married couple who were keen patrons of Picasso, the surrealists and other avant-garde artists: they had the villa decorated with a so-called “Cubist garden” presided over by sculptures created by Jacques Lipchitz and Henri Laurens, outlined against views of the bay in the background. Terraced or hanging gardens ornamented with sculptures were then designed for luxurious villas by Forestier, Garnier, Guévrékian, Guínzburg, Le Corbusier, Mallet, Mies or Wright.<sup>22</sup>

In the United States of America, this blend of classical ideals and modern fashions reached momentum with the City Beautiful movement, which promoted cultural amenities in the suburban parks of North-American cities, often combining monuments, museums and colleges as symbols of the mythical ideal of a classical academy. These are remarkably represented by the candid Neo-Grecian buildings of five major museums surrounded by lawns—and by sculptures as the years went by: the Albright Art Gallery, inaugurated in 1905 between the University of Buffalo and Delaware Park; the Cleveland Museum of Art, between Wide Park and University Circle, on the outskirts of the city, soon to be decorated with a sculpture garden later to be expanded<sup>23</sup>; the Delgado Museum of Art opened in New Orleans City Park in 1911; the Philadelphia Museum of Art inaugurated in 1928 in Fairmount Parkway and the Baltimore Museum of Art, inaugurated in 1929 near the campus of John Hopkins University. Their respective sculpture gardens took decades to bloom; but American museology and urban planning theorists cheerfully assumed this stereotype, even a fervent detractor of elitist art amenities like John

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<sup>21</sup> Cf. J. Pedro Lorente, “Museos y utopías urbanas: un lugar para el arte moderno en el corazón de la ciudad jardín”, in *Actas de los XIV Cursos Monográficos sobre el Patrimonio Histórico*. Santander, Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Cantabria, 2004, p. 149-159.

<sup>22</sup> Illustrations of many of them were included in the book André Lurçat, *Terrasses et jardins*. Paris, Editions Moreau, 1929.

<sup>23</sup> Soon after the inauguration, with a version of Rodin’s *The Thinker* placed in front of the façade. In 1928 the sculpture garden was inaugurated with other bronze and marble monuments well documented in: <http://www.clevelandart.org/research/in-the-library/collection-in-focus/fine-arts-garden> (consulted on 17th February 2014). The feet and pedestal of Rodin’s sculpture were destroyed by a dynamite attack in 1970 but it continues to stand before the steps leading to the museum with no restoration of the missing parts as it is one of the few versions made by the artist himself: <http://www.clevelandart.org/research/in-the-library/collection-in-focus/rodins-thinker> (consulted on 17th February 2014).

Cotton Dana who had exchanged letters with Osthaus and backed his initiatives.<sup>24</sup>

Meanwhile, such combination of art and nature was gaining universal support. The architects of the Modern Movement abhorred the cramped disordered expansion of historical cities and proposed instead regular urban planning with isolated buildings which would sprout from the ground and rise in pure geometrical forms, surrounded by calming green areas. This ideal served both to erect *machines à vivre* in the shape of beehive-towers and to envisage *machines à exposer* of unlimited growth and undefined contents. The latter, in particular, would pursue the attractive idea of integrating all arts: the modernity of their architecture would be enriched by collections of paintings and sculptures or other equally modern works appropriately displayed inside and outside.

Le Corbusier himself, who was a visual artist as well as an architect, always advocated the integration of all arts, preferably enhanced by natural rural settings. Back in 1930, when he had described his project for a museum of modern art in the journal *Cahiers d'Art*, he proposed placing it on the periphery of Paris, even in the middle of a potato or beetroot field, as long as it was near a railway or tram line: he would erect there as humble a building as a Carthusian monastery in a vast enclosed site where visitors could also walk on the grass and enjoy the surroundings full of flowers, bushes, trees and sculptures in the open air.<sup>25</sup> Eventually, he was commissioned to build it in Nanterre, out of the French capital, but his death aborted the project. Also, the cultural complex he designed in India on commission from the municipality of Ahmedabad was never completed: a civic area by the river Sabarmati where only the building of the museum Sanskar Kendra was erected in 1954 and later some of the monuments were added, but not the other structures or sculptures on high pedestals which were to adorn the gardens—regularly flooded during the monsoon season. Likewise, he never built his ambitious 1962 project for an International Art Centre in Erlenbach, Germany, which included a section he expressly called *jardin des sculptures*. Nonetheless, thanks to his world acclaimed publications and oratory, the Swiss architect managed to disseminate this type of natural-artistic shrubbery, consistently devised in a monastic manner, as an open air space within an enclosed perimeter: natural and monumental amenities would show the spiritual path to be followed by visitors towards a variety of intimately introvert constructions—a polyvalent space for performing arts he chose to call *Boite à miracles*, or other buildings isolated from the outside by

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<sup>24</sup> Osthaus had approached John Cotton Dana in the Autumn 1920 to start organizing a Werkbund exhibition at the Newark Museum: Carol G. Duncan, *A Matter of Class. John Cotton Dana, Progressive Reform and the Newark Museum*. Pittsburgh, Periscope Publishing, 2009, p. 147-148.

<sup>25</sup> Letter from Le Corbusier to Christian Zervos, director of the journal *Cahiers d'Art*, dated to 8 December 1930.

surrounding walls.<sup>26</sup>

Mies van der Rohe's museum buildings were much more extrovert. Thanks to his free-plan architecture and transparent walls visitors could freely view the interior and exterior and enjoy the works of art against the beautiful background of the surrounding natural settings. In some of his famous buildings for exhibitions<sup>27</sup> and specially in his well-known article of 1945 titled 'Museum for a small town' Mies had defended a visual continuity of display inside/ outside museums relating art with nature: the first illustration accompanying this essay showed a sculpture on a pedestal surrounded by grass in the foreground, a museum behind and mountains in the background.<sup>28</sup> That sculpture drawn by Mies looks like a recumbent woman, redolent of some of Henry Moore's figures. In any event, the rounded amoebic forms of this modern sculptor or of others such as Calder, Lipchitz or Arp, would be present in innumerable projects seeking to install art in public areas around Modern Movement buildings, whose architects have always felt lured to contrasting dynamic curved and orthogonal lines.

#### LANDMARKS OF TRIUMPHANT MODERNISM: MUSEUMS AND PUBLIC ART IN GREEN FIELDS

After World War II the utopias of the Modern Movement became dominant paradigms. A new architecture/urban model of modernist buildings surrounded by flowerbeds and outdoor sculptures constituted the new canon all over the world. Generally, the International Style architecture prevailed on both sides of the Iron Curtain though some external details revealed significant differences: public statues in communist regimes predominantly followed socialist realism while the new buildings of Western corporations or institutions were surrounded by figurative or abstract statues whose significance rested not on their iconography but on the fact that they represented the most reputed avant-garde art. A milestone was the new modern façade of the Walker Art Center with a sculpture by Lipchitz presiding over the flowerbeds by the entrance, inaugurated in 1944 in lieu of the original historicist building, at the junction between Minneapolis Downtown and the Uptown orthogonal enlargement.<sup>29</sup> Likewise this happened in the brand new museum buildings flourishing in new districts of buoyant North-American cities. In Europe too, some early instances of museums built during the expansion of cities were surrounded by gardens, particularly in the Federal Republic of Germany, like the Museum am Ostwall of Dortmund, built in 1947 on the boundaries of the historical city centre. Another

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<sup>26</sup> All the museum projects designed by Le Corbusier, whether or not they were executed, are listed at the webpage of Le Corbusier Foundation and are studied in Willy Boesinger & Oscar Stonorov (eds.), *Le Corbusier et Pierre Jeanneret. Oeuvre Complète*, Zürich, Girsberger, 1969, 8 vols.

<sup>27</sup> His Barcelona Pavilion of 1929 was already complemented by an exterior sculpture by George Kolbe, a female figure whose curved lines contrast with the orthogonal structure of the architecture though they are not in competition. The classic nude highlights the formal quality and value of new architecture.

<sup>28</sup> L. Mies van der Rohe "A museum for a small city", *Architectural Forum*, vol. 78, 5, 1945, p. 84-85.

<sup>29</sup> In 1971 this building was replaced by a new edifice. Calder's mobile was then installed in front of the façade and sculptures were placed on several terraces on top of the building where the urban skyline is the background for Lipchitz's sculpture and for others by David Smith, Robert Morris, etc.

remarkable case was that of Moderna Galerija of Ljubljana opened to the public in 1948 in the diplomatic quarter of the Slovenian capital under the non-aligned communist regime of the Yugoslav Marshal Tito.<sup>30</sup>

This form of approaching passers-by with avant-garde pieces placed in nearby gardens gradually became widespread for many museums, particularly those specialising in modern art. It was not infrequent to resort to posthumous casts of Rodin's bronze statues or to later enlargements of small sized originals by renowned modern pioneers initially intended for indoor display in homes or galleries: they could well be considered 'trophy' proudly presented as a public endorsement of artists who had become consolidated by triumphal modernism.

Pursuing this trail, number of museums with sculpture gardens would proliferate in suburban areas. In the autumn of 1951 Lode Craeybeckx, the mayor of Antwerp opened to the public an outdoor collection of sculptures in Park Middelheim on the southern outskirts of the city, by the campus of the Universiteit Antwerpen. Thanks to the purchase of some works and to loans from Antwerp's Museum of Fine Arts, a collection was put together representing pioneering artists of the twentieth century from the Paris School—Rodin, Marini, Bourdelle, Maillol, Renoir, Gargallo, Manzù—or their Belgian counterparts, Constantin Meunier, Constant Permeke or Rik Wouters. The following year saw the incorporation of the sculpture *King and Queen* by Henry Moore who, along with Ossip Zadkine, became one of the main advisors to the museum. Following their recommendations, subsequent purchases concentrated more on living artists who invited to take part in biennial exhibitions where their works could be examined and judged *in situ*, in contact with nature; though there was also a greenhouse where more delicate or smaller sculptures were placed.<sup>31</sup> The most original feature, however, was unquestionably the name *Open Lucht Museum*. But no entrance control or fees were required –even during sculpture biennial exhibitions– as the park was to be used by citizens as a public space: to this day it can still be freely visited by anyone who wishes to admire the constant change of nature varying the colours and light of this 'museography' (fig. 3).<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Regarding political dialectic in public statues of the communist and capitalist blocks see S. Michalski, *Public Monuments. Art in Political Bondage*, London, Reaktion Books, 1998, pp. 107-171.

<sup>31</sup> The biennial exhibitions were held on uneven years from 1953 to 1989, when it was decided to use the entire park to display the permanent collection. The curator of the biennial exhibitions and museum was art historian Frans Baudouin, with his assistant Marie-Rose Bentein, who was the actual person in charge from 1962 onwards. For security reasons some works needed to be kept indoors. Due to this, they were installed in the orangerie or in non-permanent pavilions until a pavilion was inaugurated in 1971 designed by architect Renaat Braemen. Cf. J. Pas, "Museum without walls. Middelheim Open Air Museum for Sculpture, Past and Present", in *The Middelheim Collection*, Antwerp, Ludion, 2010, pp. 12-35.

<sup>32</sup> Artists usually choose the location of their pieces or have even created them for some specific place. But the curators' criteria are also taken into consideration, seeking rapports between artists and artworks sharing features and even changing the location of some from time to time.

The successful interaction between Rodin's modern sculptures and later abstract works amidst a changing natural environment also inspired another nearby endeavour, on the outskirts of a small Dutch town, Otterlo, where the aforementioned Museum Kröller-Müller had been built in 1938 in the forest of Hoge Veluwe. The building, designed by Henry van der Velde, exclusively housed the collection of the founders, mostly consisting of paintings of artists ranging from Van Gogh to De Stijl. This ensemble was considered as a closed collection, like a historical testimony, but in the 1950's it was complemented by a sculpture park, devised by its director Abraham Hammacher and landscape architect Jan Bijhouwer, opened to the public in 1961. Four years later came the addition of a pavilion, designed by Gerrit Rietveld, with transparent walls for displaying smaller sculptures. At this point, the garden continued to inspire the acquisitions made by the museum to show the evolution of art; putting on display in the green area surrounding the museum the works of Rodin, Bourdelle and Maillol or Lipchitz, Arp, Barbara Hepworth or other pioneering artists, while the works of later artists tend to be placed farther away, even deep within the forest.

Similar modern sculptures on green fields complemented the architectural circuit built by the Danish magnate Knud W. Jensen from the historical building of Villa Louisiana, a manor house in Humlebaek, to the north of Copenhagen, opened to the public as a museum in 1958 to display his collection of international modern art. Once more, the chosen stars were Arp, Calder, Max Ernst, Henri Laurens, Miró and Henry Moore (fig. 5). The same modern narrative of progress, from Parisian avant-garde to North-American Abstract Expressionism and their European counterparts, would be found in sculpture parks all over the Western world. Abiding by this historical-artistic canon and implementing it on green suburban meadows, so closely linked to the North-American imaginary of the colonization of nature, was an option loaded with political significance at the time of the Cold War.

#### COLONIZING NATURE, EXPORTING CULTURAL EMBLEMS OF AMERICAN LIFESTYLE

When in 1960 composer and impresario Billy Rose inaugurated the Billy Rose sculpture garden between the Israel Museum and the Hebrew University in the new districts in Western Jerusalem, he was asked what ought to be done in case of war with those modern and mostly abstract works located in the gardens designed by Isamu Noguchi. He is said to have sternly replied: 'Melt them down for bullets'. Whether true or not, it is unquestionable that Western champions who publicly promoted modern art also followed an ideological strategy. The inauguration of the Museum of Art of the Twentieth Century in the *Schweizer Garten* of Vienna in 1962 or the opening of the Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian in 1969 in a suburban estate in Lisbon set new landmarks in the expansion of the American way of life around Europe in terms of museums.

Much has been said about how European allies imported white cube museography, yet there is also another idiosyncratically North-American prototype in terms of location for experiencing art: set in beautiful natural scenery colonised by modern sculptures and architecture where staff and visitors resembling brave settlers could travel from the city in conquest of the land.

It is quite curious that one of the finest analysts of this modern colonization of natural landscape was Marxist French intellectual Henri Lefebvre. He pointed out that the proliferation of infrastructures and lifestyles in the country had nothing to do with rural traditions but were post-industrial urban behaviours instead.<sup>33</sup> Two of the most outstanding French instances of this cultural conquest of rural territory were inaugurated by Gaullist minister André Malraux on the Côte d'Azur. On the one hand, the Foundation Fernand Léger, created by the artist and his wife to display his multi-coloured sculptures in the open air and his paintings in a building located on the estate called 'Mas Saint-André' near Biot, opened as a museum in 1960 and donated to the State seven years later.<sup>34</sup> On the other hand, the foundation set up by art dealer and editor Aimé Maeght, who bought an estate on the outskirts of Saint-Paul de Vence where—despite the opposition and obstruction of suspicious locals— he had a series of lodgings and workshops built for his favourite artists, erecting a sculpture park amongst pine and olive trees surrounding a museum and exhibition hall designed by Josep Maria Sert and inaugurated in 1964 (fig. 6).<sup>35</sup>

Following suit, in 1965 Museum Pagani was opened to the public in the rural estate of Castellanza, near Milan, by artist and dealer Enzo Pagani, native of neighbouring Legnano. The collection consisted of works by the versatile founder, who was a painter, a sculptor and a mosaicist, as well as works by like-minded artists, including marble pieces by Jean Arp or Alexander Archipenko and mosaics by Nadia and Fernand Léger, Gaston Chaissac, Sonia Delaunay, Man Ray or Ettore Falchi, and works made of all types of materials donated by artist friends or even created *in situ* during a stay on the estate, surrounded by beautiful meadows and woods where buildings for a museum, exhibition hall, theatre and other structures had been erected. This instance is closely related to the aforementioned in Louisiana or to the North-American models not only because of the size of the sculpture park but also because it is private property—ever since the founder died in 1993 it has been managed as a foundation by his heirs—though determinedly public orientated: to the point that access has always been free.

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<sup>33</sup> Henri Lefebvre, *La révolution urbaine*, Paris, Gallimard, 1970.

<sup>34</sup> Thus, the official inauguration corresponded to the politician who had written a famous best-seller on an imaginary museum of sculptures.

<sup>35</sup> Jan Kenneth Birksted, *Modernism and the Mediterranean: the Maeght Foundation*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2004.

Generally speaking, North-American museum models set the standard at the time for all Western culture. Perhaps more remarkably so in Latin-American countries, geographically and politically closer to the USA, albeit often such projects met with uneven results. In Brazil a great disciple of Le Corbusier, Oscar Niemeyer, would design the newest capital, Brasilia, with vast green areas. However, the best instance of the colonization of suburban lawns with modern art rose in Rio de Janeiro, the former capital, where the urban expansion towards the sea featured a milestone of modernity in Parque do Flamengo, with the geometrical garden of Roberto Burle Marx in front of the Museum of Modern Art. Meanwhile the Sao Paulo Museum of Modern Art founded on the initiative of New York's MoMA was transferred in 1959 to suburban Parque Ibirapuera and surrounded by abstract sculptures. Other allies of the USA followed suit with green suburban locations for their newest art museums. Bosque de Chapultepec, at the time on the outskirts of Mexico City, was the chosen stage to build the Rationalist building of the Museo de Arte Moderno solemnly inaugurated in 1964, when the gardens planned by landscape artist Matsumoto were still unfinished, and it took many years to complete the existing park of modern sculptures surrounding the area. In the 1970s many other South-American museums would imitate North-American models both indoors and outdoors.

Hence, the final period of the Modern Movement standardized the urban paradigm of museums of art isolated from the hustle and bustle of city life, surrounded by modern sculptures or art installations located in gardens, squares, fountains or ponds. This political-cultural model of modernity reached its peak when it was also taken on by distant nations in the process of fast Westernization, such as Japan. A pioneering and politically-significant landmark had been the inauguration in 1959 of the National Museum of Western Art built, by Le Corbusier and his Japanese followers, in Ueno park in Tokyo, surrounded by trees and flowerbeds as well as monumental sculptures: Bourdelle's *Hercules the Archer* and Rodin's *The Thinker*, *Adam and Eve*, *The Burghers of Calais* and *The Gates of Hell*. Then, the most relevant milestone in peripheral parks was the opening to the public of the Open Air Museum of Hakone, a town in the mountains renowned for its hot springs and fertile volcanic countryside. The habitual statues by Rodin, Bourdelle or Miró and one of the world's biggest collections of sculptures by Henry Moore, constituted in 1969 the typical start of this great museum (fig. 6), managed by the powerful media group Fujisankei, which also boasts over 300 works by Picasso displayed in a pavilion dedicated to his ceramic work. Other successful Japanese and South-Korean examples are testimony to the keen cultural disposition of these countries in the Far East towards the confluence of modern art and natural parks. This stereotype also reached the Middle East. In 1977 the Shah of Persia ordered the construction of a Museum of Contemporary Art in Park Laleh, at the time a suburban zone near the University in the northwest of Teheran. Indoors the museum housed both Impressionist and great Abstract Expressionist artworks, while outdoors



the concrete and glass building was surrounded by sculptures by Magritte, Max Ernst, Alexander Calder, Giacometti, Marino Marini, Henry Moore, etc. (fig. 7).

None of these items involved any form of political commitment, of course, yet this varied ensemble of the most modern authors of international sculpture was not only used as a bridgehead in the conquest of expanding urban modernity, but also as evidence of liberalism in official taste and of kinship with Western culture: a common cultural policy in those decades of military dictatorships backed by Washington. For example the Regime of the Colonels in Greece, where in 1968 started the construction of the new National Art Gallery and the Alexander Soutzos Museum, to be surrounded by green areas with modern sculptures, next to Illisia Park, in the eastern part of the city of Athens. Spain can be a good final instance: one of General Franco's last public events was the inauguration on 11 July 1975 of the Museo Español de Arte Contemporáneo (MEAC), a building in the International Style erected outside the historical centre of Madrid, whose gardens held a large outdoor collection of sculptures, mostly abstract (fig. 8). Meanwhile, symposia of modern sculptures and open-air museums became then fashionable in remote deserts or mountains, where artists and visitors would arrive in their brand new cars, perhaps intending to escape from urban civilization, but actually expanding its realm deep into nature.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Michele Costanzo, *Museo fuori dal museo. Nuovi luoghi e nuovi spazi per l'arte contemporanea*, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 2007.



Fig. 1

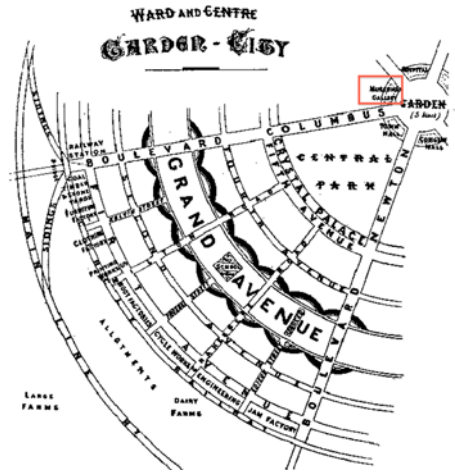


Fig. 2



Fig. 4



Fig. 3



Fig. 5



Fig. 6



Fig. 7



Fig. 8

ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig. 1. Mathildenhöhe in Darmstadt: Entrance of Ernst-Ludwig Haus by Olbrich, ornamented with sculptures by Rudolf Bosselt representing goddesses of Victory, and the allegories of Strength and Beauty by Ludwig Habich. Photo: J. Pedro Lorente.

Fig. 2. Illustration representing the ideal plan of circular belts around a central plaza. In: Ebenezer Howard, *Garden Cities of Tomorrow*, 1902, p. 22.

Fig. 3. Entrance to the Open Air Museum of Park Middelheim, in the suburbs of Antwerp. Photo: J. Pedro Lorente.

Fig. 4. View of the sculpture garden at Louisiana, in Humlebaek, to the north of Copenhagen. Photo: J. Pedro Lorente.

Fig. 5. View of the sculpture garden at Fondation Maeght, a estate in Saint-Paul de Vence- Source: <http://artctualite.com/2014/05/06/au-coeur-de-la-fondation-maeght/>.

Fig. 6. Open Air Museum on the hills of Hakone. Source: <http://www.ausbonsai.com.au/blog/cj/?cat=1>.

Fig. 7. View of the sculpture garden at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Park Laleh, Teheran. Source: <http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2014/04/28/360408/tehrans-museum-of-contemporary-arts/>.

Fig. 8. View of the Museo Español de Arte Contemporáneo with his sculpture garden. Photo: J. Pedro Lorente.