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CRITICAL REGIONALISM ABROAD

ARIS KONSTANTINIDIS WITHOUT GREECE

Since the 1980s, critical regionalism has been globally celebrated for imbuing modern architecture with local sensibilities. After rising to international stardom, however, several critical regionalists soon began to erect distinctive albeit "placeless" buildings around the world. Aris Konstantinidis (1913–1993), a Greek architect less well known outside of his home country, instead propagated his vision of regional modernism to global audiences on his own terms through his publishing and teaching beyond national borders. This operative history of his life and work outside Greece unveils the potential for alternative practices of critical regionalism abroad.

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INTRODUCTION: AGAINST THE 'PLACELESS' NORM

Critical regionalism emerged as a theory from the work of Greek architects in Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre's 1981 essay 'The Grid and the Pathway'.[1] Soon afterwards, when Kenneth Frampton recapitulated their terminology to advance his ideas about the future of modern architecture in a postmodern age, critical regionalism was expanded to include more local practices, ranging from Mario Botta in Ticino to Tadao Ando in Osaka.[2] Promoting these figures and their projects was then conceived as a way to resist the commodifying reduction of architecture to a photogenic icon saturated by its media exposure. The related discourse foregrounded the work of individual architects or groups who represented a broadly defined territory, after painstakingly cultivating their ties with local communities and their specific cultures. Addressing questions of belonging and cultural identity in the context of a region, rather than that of a nation, the theorists of critical regionalism also denationalized these architectural debates. The buildings that they highlighted retained close ties not only with the spirit but also with the matter of the place. Through their engagement with locally sourced materials and the regional climate, landscape, and topography, their architects addressed the history, identity, and culture of regional communities.

When these projects were widely publicized in North American and Western European media, however, their architects became engulfed in another 'alternative', yet still globalized, 'star system' of practitioners whose work became iconically celebrated worldwide. By the late 1980s, Botta had already been commissioned to build in Seoul, while Ando was teaching at Ivy League institutions in the United States.[3]

1 Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre, 'The Grid and the Pathway: An Introduction to the Work of Dimitris and Suzana Antonakakis, with Prolegomena to a History of the Culture of Modern Greek Architecture', *Architecture in Greece* 15 (1981), 164–78.

2 Kenneth Frampton, 'Prospects for a Critical Regionalism', *Perspecta* 20 (1983), 147–62.

3 See Tadao Ando, *The Yale Studio and Current Works* (Rizzoli, 1989).

From the 1990s onwards, these architects, who became globally established by building their sophisticated projects exclusively in the insular territories of Ticino or Japan, ended up producing the same types of projects from Osaka to Manchester. As such, their practice beyond the borders of their homeland 'became an agent of the "placelessness" Frampton had lamented'.[4] This is how the worldwide celebration of critical regionalism as a response to the main question of the 1980s (namely, 'where should architecture be heading after modernism?') gave rise to the 1990s question of critical regionalism *abroad* (or 'how could architects make meaningful use of this modern and regionally specific design approach beyond its originary locus, in an increasingly globalized world?'). To address this question, from 1989 onwards Tzonis and Lefaivre repeatedly suggested that one does not need to be Catalan to build an architecture of critical regionalism in Barcelona, for example. The principles behind the critical regionalist mindset, they argued, belong to the universal skill set that any cultivated architect can develop.[5]

In the 2000s, Tzonis and Lefaivre cited prestigious projects such as the Jean-Marie Tjibaou Cultural Centre in Noumea, New Caledonia, by Renzo Piano Building Workshop (1991–98), as appropriate responses to the question of critical regionalism abroad, appreciating their sophisticated attempt to cultivate their ties with local cultures of building and dwelling.[6] Still, such projects form the exception to the prevailing 'placeless' norm of critical regionalism abroad, with critical regionalist architects' signature buildings spreading around the world. Unable to retain the approach that was evident in these architects' earlier projects, because their

4 Irina Davidovici, *The Autonomy of Theory: Ticino Architecture and Its Critical Reception* (gta, 2024), 88, https://doi.org/10.54872/gta/4708.

5 Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre, 'Critical Regionalism', in Spyros Amourgis, ed., *Critical Regionalism: The Pomona Meeting Proceedings* (California State Polytechnic University, 1991), 3–23, here 23.

6 Liane Lefaivre and Alexander Tzonis, *Critical Regionalism: Architecture and Identity in a Globalized World* (Prestel, 2003), 82–7.

practices have now become embedded in the global ecosystem of their 'star' peers, these figures can no longer serve as fruitful case studies in the context of critical regionalism abroad. The tight grip that the global capitalist production cycle and media complex hold over local practices does not leave sufficient room for the cultivation of roots and ties of resistance to it. American philosopher Fredric Jameson was therefore right to challenge this aspect of critical regionalism in the mid-1990s.[7] His words were immediately acknowledged by Frampton as a devastating critique to the political project behind his architectural theory. Despite the early recognition of these structural problems, however, the histories of critical regionalism that have been written so far have not attempted to retrieve different approaches to critical regionalism abroad.

To better understand both the original ways in which the architects of critical regionalism worked in the past and the other ways in which critical regionalism abroad could potentially develop in the future, one needs to move back in time. This slight temporal shift unsettles the distorting effects of the late-twentieth-century establishment of the global architectural star system and the expectation of iconic buildings to generate 'Bilbao effects', adding their previously indifferent locales to world tourist maps.[8] Several well-known architects, including Aris Konstantinidis (1913–1993), who was ambiguously associated with the early-1980s discourses of critical regionalism alongside his world-famous peers, did not become global superstars, after all. That is, the historically 'placeless' development of critical regionalism abroad is not a one-way street. As I show in this book, the Greek architect's different stance beyond the borders of his home

7 Fredric Jameson, *The Seeds of Time* (Columbia University Press, 1994), 189–205.

8 See Gerardo del Cerro Santamaría, 'The Fading Away of the *Bilbao Effect*: Bilbao, Denver, Helsinki, Abu Dhabi', *Athens Journal of Architecture* 6, no. 1 (2020), 25–52.

country indicates constructive paths not taken for another critical regionalism abroad.

Today, the digitally facilitated networking of globally mobile architectural practices is no longer the sole reason to discuss critical regionalism abroad. In the twenty-first-century context of climate emergency, in which the very concept of region is destabilized, the sophisticated ways in which one could transpose the long-standing architectural wisdom of a 'tropical' region to another place whose climate is gradually 'tropicalized', for example, becomes even more pertinent. In the 2020s, when a summer in Athens feels like a summer in Singapore, the previously static understanding of climatic regions is unsettled, since the practices of 'tropical architecture' start to appear more relevant to practitioners in the Mediterranean basin. Hence, the architectural debates of this century are already inextricably embedded in an overarching framework of regionalism abroad.

In this context, some of the Greek architect's most characteristic ideas from the 1960s, such as his conviction that industrialization is not a prerequisite for building modern architecture,[9] can be reappraised as equally critical and pertinent today. Such a response to the crisis of modern architecture is nowhere to be found in the alternative star system that gradually developed around critical regionalism after the 1980s. This is why I adopt an operative approach to history writing in this book. In what follows, I scrutinize my historic case study to retrieve constructive threads for rethinking critical regionalism abroad in architectural historiography and practice. For this reason, I do not challenge the discourse of critical regionalism by Frampton, Tzonis, and Lefaivre from the vantage point of the actual practices of the architects that it is supposed to represent, as other scholars and I have done in our historical studies of the Greek and

9 See Elisabeth Landgraf, 'Interview mit Aris Konstantinidis', *md moebel interior design* 7 (1965), 25.

Swiss contexts.[10] Instead, I work within the boundaries of this discourse, whose international popularity serves as a springboard for my work on critical regionalism abroad. This is the context in which I reappraise crucial features of Konstantinidis's thinking and practice beyond the Greek borders, which have so far remained inaccessible behind language barriers. As such, this book is addressed to a global audience interested in critical regionalism but not familiar with the output of the Greek architect and its potential contribution to the related twenty-first-century debates.

KONSTANTINIDIS WITHOUT GREECE

Alongside Dimitris Pikionis (1887–1968), Suzana Antonakaki (1935–2020), and Dimitris Antonakakis (b. 1933), Konstantinidis is one of the Greek critical regionalist architects who became well-known internationally, without having built a single project beyond the borders of their home country (his 1950 commission for a single-family house in Cyprus was not realized, and his 1960 refurbishment of the Greek National Tourism Organization office in Rome was limited to interior design).[11] As such, his work has been discussed either in terms of 'Greekness' or as a unique synthesis of modernism with the local cultural identity. Konstantinidis's generation believed it was the first to define a national architecture for Greece after the German occupation and ensuing civil war in the 1940s. This long period of warfare and turmoil ushered

10 See Stylianos Giamarelos, *Resisting Postmodern Architecture: Critical Regionalism Before Globalisation* (UCL Press, 2022), 189–336, https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv1v090hv; Davidovici, *The Autonomy of Theory*; Paolo Fumagalli, 'Europäische Zivilisation und örtliche Kultur am Beispiel Tessin', *disP—The Planning Review* 2, no. 103 (January 1990), 3–7; Frank Werner, 'Der nebulöse Begriff der "Tessiner Schule" oder wie ein Mythos entsteht', in Frank Werner and Sabine Schneider, eds., *Neue Tessiner Architektur: Perspektiven einer Utopie* (Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1989), 9–85.

11 See Aris Konstantinidis, *Projects + Buildings* (Agra, 1981), 34, 106–7; Aris Konstantinidis, 'Office of the Greek Tourist Organisation in Rome, at Via L. Bissolati, 78–80', *Αρχιτεκτονική* 25, no. 1–2 (January–February 1961), 76–82.

in Greeks' suspicion of anything foreign—especially if it originated in Germany.[12] As such, this generation insisted on the 'aesthetic nationalism' of building their homeland based on their own cultural resources, in order to resist Westernization.[13] Konstantinidis stands out as the first architect of post-WWII Greece to organize his modern conception of architecture into a rational 'system' that could be followed easily and reapplied by his peers.[14] For these reasons, however, the study of his work has also remained inward-looking, both in Greece and abroad, as that of a 'non-standard Modernist … exceptionally rooted in his native place'; alongside Pikionis, he is now regarded as one of the two 'most important figures in the 20th century discussion of *topos* in Greek architecture'.[15] As a result, the outward-facing aspects of Konstantinidis's publishing and teaching practices beyond Greek borders have been historically overshadowed.

Konstantinidis is simultaneously heralded as 'the most original' or 'the most important Greek architect of the 20th century' and 'one of the most internationally significant [architects] in the field of 1960s modern regionalism'.[16] Almost single-handedly, he reportedly managed to 'literally alter the

12 Cf. Dimitris Philippidis, *Νεοελληνική αρχιτεκτονική: Αρχιτεκτονική θεωρία και πράξη (1830–1980) σαν αντανάκλαση των ιδεολογικών επιλογών της νεοελληνικής κουλτούρας* (Melissa, 1984), 259, 262–4.

13 See Jilly Traganou, 'Shades of Blue: Debating Greek Identity Through Santiago Calatrava's Design for the Athens Olympic Stadium', *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, 26 (2008), 185–214, here 204; Artemis Leontis, *Topographies of Hellenism* (Cornell University Press, 1995), 78–9, 85–6.

14 Philippidis, *Νεοελληνική αρχιτεκτονική*, 289, 373. Unless otherwise noted, all translations from the original Greek, German, Italian, and French are by Stylianos Giamarelos.

15 Robert Harbison, 'Lost in a Maze—*Uncommon Ground: Architecture, Technology, and Topography*', *Architects' Journal* 213 (2001), 54; Panayotis Tournikiotis, 'Dwelling Is a Place for Language: Nature and Artefact in 20th Century Greek Architecture', in Gro Lauvland, Karl Otto Ellefsen and Mari Hvattum, eds., *An Eye for Place: Christian Norberg-Schulz: Architect, Historian and Editor* (Akademisk publisering, 2009), 44–61, here 47.

16 Alexander Koutamanis, 'Konstantinidis, Aris', *Grove Art Online*, 2003, https://doi.org/10.1093/gao/9781884446054.article.T047329; Andreas Giacumacatos, *Ιστορία της ελληνικής αρχιτεκτονικής: 20ός αιώνας*, 2nd, rev. ed. (Nefeli, 2004), 91.

course of Greek architecture',[17] not only through the 'robust skeletal structure and ingenious interpretations of site conditions' of his projects but also as an 'architect-civil servant [who] managed to construct so much in such a brief time and of such a high standard within the context of a Greece still struggling to become a developed modern state'.[18] Konstantinidis's work stood out for its rejection of scenographic copies of precedent forms in favour of long-standing spatial configurations in the Greek landscape. In his national pavilion designs of the 1950s,[19] he moved away from the capitals and pediments that had denoted Greekness in world's fairs until then. In their place, he foregrounded the austere minimalism of bare structures and the subtle symbolism of wooden ploughs and birdcages.[20] He continued to work in this vein during his most prolific period as 'a devoted public sector worker' and a 'definite political designer'.[21] From the mid-1950s to the late 1960s, he both conceived and realized his architecture as an act of resistance to the false commodified needs promoted by the modern Greek elite and the equally one-sided dictates of the global tourism industry.

In this context, 'Konstantinidis without Greece' has so far been mainly discussed in terms of the references and associations of his projects and ideas with those of his international peers (Adolf Loos, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, August Perret, Louis Sullivan, Egon Eierman, Le Corbusier, Alvar Aalto, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Ando) and wider movements (brutalism, Mediterranean rationalism, and critical regionalism).[22] Such approaches logically culminate in assertions that the roots

17 Philippidis, *Νεοελληνική αρχιτεκτονική*, 284.

18 Alexander Tzonis and Alcestis P. Rodi, *Greece: Modern Architectures in History* (Reaktion, 2013), 178–9.

19 See Konstantinidis, *Projects + Buildings*, 44–5, 49, 92–6.

20 Philippidis, *Νεοελληνική αρχιτεκτονική*, 391, 397.

21 Platon Issaias and Alexandra Vougia, 'The Constant Typologist: The Notion of Type in the Work of Aris Konstantinidis', *Burning Farm* 13 (October 2024), https://burning.farm/essays/the-constant-typologist.

22 Philippidis, *Νεοελληνική αρχιτεκτονική*, 29, 39, 40, 279, 373; Andreas Giacumacatos, *Η αρχιτεκτονική και η κριτική*, vol. 2 (Nefeli, 2022), 386; Kenneth Frampton, 'Πρόλογος του Kenneth Frampton για την ελληνική έκδοση', in Kenneth

of Konstantinidis's 'indigenous' work 'were not necessarily native or regional'.[23] Still, these cross-cultural roots cannot be elucidated when scholars repeatedly focus on the Greek context. Konstantinidis's formative years at the Technical University of Munich (1931–36) when Adolf Hitler rose to power, for example, certainly complicate the picture.

Architectural historian Sokratis Georgiadis first noted how Konstantinidis's studies in Munich decisively shaped his now globally renowned approach to modern architecture.[24] For Georgiadis, the Greek architect's reading of vernacular structures in his homeland is subtly coloured by the related discussions of interwar German traditionalists,[25] in which Konstantinidis's mentor, Adolf Abel (1882–1968), also participated. As such, the Greek architect's interest in the early nineteenth-century architecture of the 'old Athenian houses'[26] reflects Paul Schmitthenner's focus on the same century to trace the authentic German *Wohnhaus*.[27] Inspired by Georgiadis's work, a new generation of scholars has now further highlighted the echoes of nineteenth-century discourses in Konstantinidis's texts and the significance of his formative years in Munich for his conception of 'modern true architecture'.[28] At the same time, critical scholarship

Frampton, *Μοντέρνα αρχιτεκτονική: Ιστορία και κριτική*, trans. by Theodoros Androulakis and Maria Pangalou (Themelio, 1987), 14–16, here 15; Jilly Traganou, 'Aris Konstantinidis, Tadao Ando: A Comparative Study', *Technika chronika—A. Greece* 14, no. 4 (1994), 301–36.

23 Kostas Tsiambaos, 'An Identity Crisis of Architectural Critique', *Architectural Histories* 2, no. 1 (2014), Art. 6, here 3, https://doi.org10.5334/ah.bi.

24 Sokratis Georgiadis, '"... die schönen, einfachen Werte der Architektur": Nachruf auf Aris Konstantinidis', *Werk, Bauen + Wohnen* 81, no. 1/2 (1994), 64–8.

25 See Paul Schultze-Naumburg, *Das Gesicht des deutschen Hauses* (Callwey, 1929).

26 Aris Konstantinidis, *Τα παλιά αθηναϊκά σπίτια* (self-published, 1950).

27 Sokratis Georgiadis, 'Συζήτηση Γεωργιάδη-Τουρνικιώτη', 64-page transcript of a postgraduate seminar session at the National Technical University of Athens, 1999, Suzana and Dimitris Antonakakis private archive, 18–29. See Paul Schmitthenner, *Das deutsche Wohnhaus* (Wittwer, 1932).

28 See Costandis Kizis, 'Modern Greek Myths' (PhD diss., Architectural Association, 2015), 49–78; Eleni Livani, 'Τύπος και τόπος στη σκέψη και το έργο του Άρη Κωνσταντινίδη: Η αληθινή μοντέρνα αρχιτεκτονική' (PhD diss., National Technical University of Athens, 2023).

has underscored his misinterpretations of common Ottoman features of the 'old Athenian houses', situating his practice within the modern nationalist context of typological studies of vernacular architecture in the Balkans since the eighteenth century.[29]

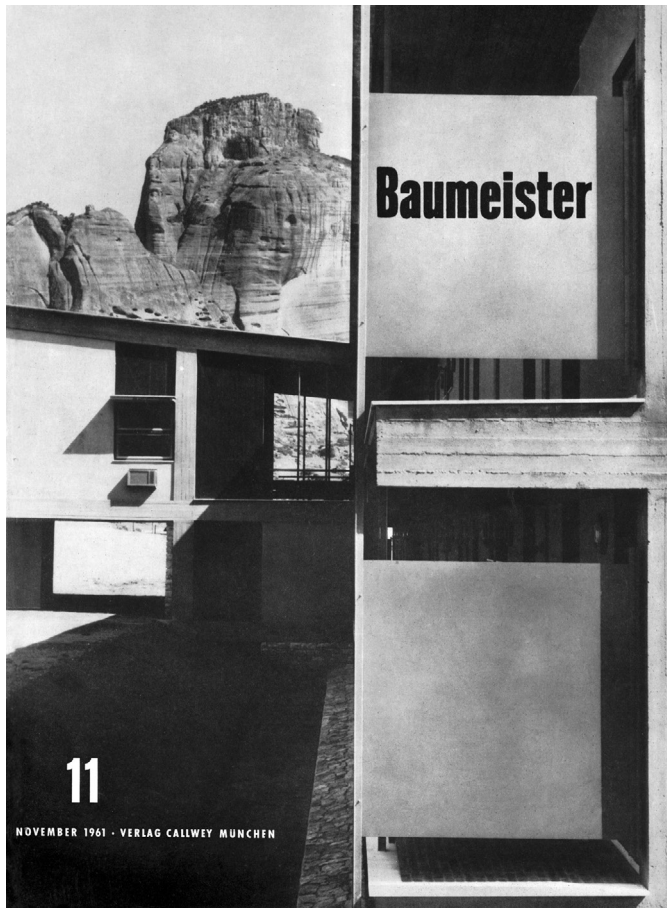
Yet, this focus on the Greek architect's formative years has left his engagement with the European scene from the late 1950s onwards largely unexplored. Despite the global exposure of his work in the architectural press of the period, Konstantinidis remained 'very much an architects' architect rather than a media celebrity', as Tzonis and Alcestis P. Rodi rightly note to explain his limited impact on the wider local scene in the 1960s.[30] Scholars such as Helen Fessas-Emmanouil also believe that Konstantinidis's work deserves wider institutional recognition within Greece and an even higher place in the global history of architecture.[31] I argue that this dissonant recognition of his work by insider and outsider audiences can only be elucidated by the architect's underexplored presence beyond Greek borders. Starting from his German-language publications of the 1960s (fig. 1), his work became further known to European architects and publishers, such as the Hungarian Akadémiai Kiadó and Máté Major, who decide to include Konstantinidis in their book series on modern architects in the late 1970s.[32] Konstantinidis personally sought to retain his ties with the German-speaking world and Europe at large, even amid the most productive years of his career. Greek scholars such as

29 See Yannis Kizis, 'Πικιώνης, Κωνσταντινίδης και νεοελληνική αρχιτεκτονική παράδοση', *Επίλογος* 27 (2018), 329–42; Tchavdar Marinov, 'The "Balkan House": Interpretations and Symbolic Appropriations of the Ottoman-Era Vernacular Architecture of the Balkans', in Roumen Daskalov et al., eds., *Entangled Histories of the Balkans*, vol. 4: *Concepts, Approaches and (Self-)Representations* (Brill, 2017), 440–593.

30 Tzonis and Rodi, *Greece*, 184.

31 Helen Fessas-Emmanouil, 'Άρης Κωνσταντινίδης (1913–1993): Ένας μεγάλος αρχιτέκτων του 20ού αιώνα', *Architektones, Journal of the Association of Greek Architects*, cycle b', no. 9 (October–December 1993), 50–9, here 50, 58.

32 István Szilágyi to Aris Konstantinidis, 21 October 1977, Aris Konstantinidis private archive.



1 Aris Konstantinidis's Motel in Kalambaka (1959–60) on the cover of *Baumeister* 58, no. 11 (November 1961)

Andreas Giacumacatos have acknowledged the architect's 'systematic … personal effort for his work to be promoted and valued abroad'. But they have also stopped short of exploring his global editorship skills, which rendered him an 'especially important *locomotiva*' for the international recognition of modern architecture in Greece from the 1960s onwards. Only Konstantinidis's activity beyond the borders of his homeland, however, can sufficiently explain how he became 'possibly the first Greek architect for whom an exclusive monograph was published abroad', by a Hungarian peer in 1982.[33] The same goes for Konstantinidis's ability to retain his strong, critical voice as 'a lone wolf against cynicism' without being recuperated by the architectural media complex of the late 1980s, despite the global celebration of his work by then.[34]

This book highlights the multifarious ways in which the Greek architect registered a strong presence on the international plane in his own terms. The extent to which European scholars, such as the Hungarian István Szilágyi (1938–2005), have followed his lead in interpreting his work as 'aris[ing] from construction forms', whilst appraising its 'unity' of 'space and building design, structure and form' as a rare feat in the history of architecture 'since the Renaissance', is indeed astonishing.[35] Flagship projects of the Greek architect's critical regionalist approach to dwelling in a pristine landscape, such as the Weekend House in Anavyssos (1962–1964),[36] are now regarded as emblematic because Konstantinidis himself instructed the audience of his publications to see his work through his own eyes, as I argue in the second chapter. This fact alone is impressive in the context of critical regionalism

33 Giacumacatos, *Η αρχιτεκτονική και η κριτική*, 376.

34 Giacumacatos, *Η αρχιτεκτονική και η κριτική*, 379; Bruno Zevi, 'Un lupo solitario contro il cinismo', *L'Espresso*, 7 May 1989.

35 István Szilágyi, *Aris Konstantinidis*, trans. Renate Messing (Akadémiai Kiadó, 1990), 21.

36 Liane Lefaivre and Alexander Tzonis, *Architecture of Regionalism in the Age of Globalization: Peaks and Valleys in the Flat World*, 2nd, rev. ed. (Routledge, 2021), 191–2; Kenneth Frampton, *Modern Architecture: A Critical History*, 5th, rev. and enl. ed. (Thames and Hudson, 2020), 574.

abroad. By working individually as the global editor and curator of his work, the Greek architect also escaped the clutches of the rising media complex of the late twentieth century.

Konstantinidis's approach to this global media complex is not easily discernible; it is visible only when an informed insider of Greek culture looks at the architect's work from a vantage point outside his home country. Konstantinidis devoted the fifteen years of his retirement from professional practice to writing books, organizing his archive, and curating a retrospective exhibition of his oeuvre. The resulting 2,350 pages of his books in Greek render him as one of the most prolific writers in the global field of practising architects. His self-portrayal as an inward-looking recluse in these books, however, obstructs the view of Konstantinidis's outward-facing side from native scholars, as I argue in the first chapter. His combined presence in both local and global fora is effectively articulated in the terms of his own editorial stratagems, as I further show in the second chapter. And when he is invited to teach in Zurich from 1967 to 1970, he begs to differ from his Swiss peers' approach until he overstays his welcome, as I discuss in the third chapter. Throughout this book, the architect therefore emerges as an ethically committed agent who stays true to his own terms of practice, unencumbered by his media exposure. In so doing, he also embodies an exemplary, albeit overlooked, alternative response to the question of critical regionalism abroad.

CRITICAL REGIONALIST AMBIVALENCES

Konstantinidis represents an intriguing case study in the context of critical regionalism. From the outset, he was included in both Tzonis and Lefaivre's and Frampton's developing theorizations. For Tzonis and Lefaivre, Konstantinidis's work exemplifies the design pattern of the 'grid' (defined as

'the discipline which is imposed on every space element').[37] The two theorists argue that this 'grid' pattern is especially significant in Greece, because this was the only modern European state where neoclassicism was interpreted not as a foreign imperialist imposition but as a desirable return of autochthonous values to their democratic motherland. Because neoclassical grids were culturally regarded as the opposite of the long-standing Ottoman rulers of the country before the nineteenth century, they were also rendered as 'a collective representation of the freedom and unity of the social group'.[38] Hence, Konstantinidis's use of the grid in projects such as the Archaeological Museum in Ioannina (1964–1966) is only the last link in a historical chain that extends from the neoclassical grids of the German architects who built the modern Athens of the nineteenth century[39] to Mies van der Rohe's modernist grids of the twentieth century. In addition, Konstantinidis's use of the grid followed the lead of the local 'Generation of the 1930s', which also included Pikionis, in revisiting Greekness through the lenses of the modern movement.[40] In the context of the mid-twentieth century, however, Konstantinidis's utilization of the grid in his 'austere, rough, uncompromising structures' also formed part of his 'protest against the suffocating, mindless affluence of the post-Marshall Plan Western world'.[41] This is why Tzonis and Lefaivre describe his work in terms of critical regionalism.

A similarly strong political undertone is evident throughout Frampton's related texts. These customarily foreground the Greek architect's 'ethical sense in the name of society as a whole, when clients, builders and architect are equally

37 Tzonis and Lefaivre, 'The Grid and the Pathway' (1981), 164.

38 Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre, 'The Grid and the Pathway: An Introduction to the Work of Dimitris and Suzana Antonakakis in the Context of Greek Architectural Culture', in Kenneth Frampton, ed., *Atelier 66: The Architecture of Dimitris and Suzana Antonakakis* (Rizzoli, 1985), 14–25, here 17.

39 See Hans Hermann Russack, *Deutsche Bauen in Athen* (Limpert, 1942).

40 Tzonis and Lefaivre, 'The Grid and the Pathway' (1985), 20.

41 Tzonis and Lefaivre, 'The Grid and the Pathway' (1985), 18.

involved in the realization of a project'.[42] In the early 1980s, Frampton resorts to Tzonis and Lefaivre's critical regionalism to recalibrate his own earlier focus on the dynamics between place and production and the ways in which these are expressed in tectonic form.[43] Expanding philosopher Paul Ricoeur's distinction between universal civilization and rooted cultures,[44] the British historian argues that a pursuit of regionalism in the modern age is not a given but a conscious endeavour. Since modernity separates life from culture, he explains, regionalism is no longer a matter of spontaneous creation, following the age-long myths and building practices of a specific place; it can be reflectively cultivated only within the tensions between modernity and tradition. The critical regionalist aspect of Konstantinidis's work, for example, is materially expressed in the tension 'between the universal rationality of the trabeated reinforced concrete frame and the autochthonous tactility of the native stone and blockwork which is used as infill'.[45] The architect indeed treats concrete frames and load-bearing stone walls as equally apposite and timeless structural logics for the Greek landscape, chiming with the vernacular structures that still stand in it without clearly indicating their age. Frampton also interprets Konstantinidis's work afresh. When he discusses the Archaeological Museum of Ioannina, for example, which Tzonis and Lefaivre foreground as an exemplar of the 'grid' pattern, the British historian underscores the architect's placement of the building within the landscape; that is, its topographically sensitive 'pathway' aspects.[46] Frampton's

42 Kenneth Frampton, 'L'opera di Aris Konstantinidis', in Paola Cofano with Dimitris Konstantinidis, *Aris Konstantinidis, 1913–1993* (Electa, 2010), 8–15, here 15.

43 See Kenneth Frampton, 'Production, Place and Reality', *Architecture in Greece* 11 (1977), 102–10.

44 See Paul Ricoeur, 'Universal Civilisation and National Cultures' (1961), in Paul Ricoeur, *History and Truth*, trans. Charles A. Kelbley (Northwestern University Press, 1965), 271–84.

45 Kenneth Frampton, *Modern Architecture: A Critical History*, 2nd, rev. ed. (Thames and Hudson, 1985), 325.

46 Frampton, 'L'opera di Aris Konstantinidis', 12–14.

account therefore enriches the critical regionalist interpretation of Konstantinidis's work as a combination of both 'the grid' and 'the pathway'.

Although the Greek architect personally rejected the label of critical regionalism for his practice, his work does satisfy Frampton's related theoretical points. These include:

1. Konstantinidis's focus on 'the small rather than the big plan' and his belief in the capacity of architecture to sustain a way of life attuned to the pristine landscape, away from the false 'lifestyle' needs of consumer culture;
2. the capacity of buildings to define a specific territory, instead of being conceived as autonomous and indifferent 'free-standing objects' with no ties to their surrounding environment;
3. his rejection of 'scenographic' readings of vernacular architecture in favour of a deeper understanding of its spatial logic of gradual transitions from open-air to semi-enclosed to interior spaces;
4. the resulting treatment of 'all openings as delicate transitional zones' in response to 'specific conditions imposed by the site, the climate and the light', instead of relying on artificial lighting and air conditioning;
5. his foregrounding of tactile qualities and embodied practices of dwelling beyond visually impressive forms; and
6. his reinterpretation of the regional vernacular through modern means.[47]

In addition, the concrete slabs that, rather unexpectedly, stand on load-bearing stone walls in Konstantinidis's signature projects exemplify Tzonis and Lefaivre's later theoriza-

47 Cf. Frampton, *Modern Architecture*, 2nd ed., 327.

tion of critical regionalism in terms of 'defamiliarization';[48] by combining familiar vernacular and modern tropes in unexpected ways, his buildings trigger one's critical capacities. In short, the Greek architect's work can be so readily interpreted through the lenses of critical regionalism that his resistance to the term seems futile. Nonetheless, his reluctance to endorse it is crucial for his self-understanding and the interpretation of his own discourse, which emerged from within his own practice.

To begin with, Konstantinidis would have rejected Tzonis and Lefaivre's association of his work with the neoclassical grids of the Bavarian architects of nineteenth-century Athens. His unveiling of the foreign baggage of allegedly 'autochthonous' neoclassicism through his study of the 'old houses' of the people (see fig. 2) was his main contribution to the 1950s debates around Greekness. Furthermore, Konstantinidis's purview of architectural history was far wider than that suggested by Tzonis and Lefaivre. His references to vernacular architecture included buildings that had stood on the Greek landscape from antiquity to the periods of Ottoman rule and modernity.[49] For him, however, the main problem lies in Tzonis and Lefaivre's interpretation of his role as a 'connective link'[50] with Pikionis in the later work of Suzana Antonakaki and Dimitris Antonakakis.

Konstantinidis was unwillingly associated with Pikionis within and beyond the canon of critical regionalism.[51] The work of these two architects is frequently interpreted as united in its attempt 'to temper the homogenizing vocabulary of international modernism with specific references to Greek

48 Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre, 'Why Critical Regionalism Today?' (1990), in Kate Nesbitt, ed., *Theorizing a New Agenda for Architecture: An Anthology of Architectural Theory 1965–1995* (Princeton Architectural Press, 1996), 484–92, here 489.

49 Cf. Philippidis, *Νεοελληνική αρχιτεκτονική*, 325.

50 Dimitris Konstantinidis, 'Γράμματα του Άρη Κωνσταντινίδη στον γιο του', in Dina Vaiou, ed., *Άρης Κωνσταντινίδης* (Hellenic Parliament Foundation, 2019), 187–200, here 187.

51 Fessas-Emmanouil, 'Άρης Κωνσταντινίδης (1913–1993)', 52.

building traditions and history'.[52] But this coupling of the two architects' work could not be further from Konstantinidis's lifelong intentions. As early as in 1947, the young architect published an extensive critique of Pikionis, the self-appointed 'lover' of the surface of vernacular architecture. For Konstantinidis, such a skin-deep approach could lead only to false, 'scenographic' building.[53] The young architect's critique only intensified in the decades that followed: in 1988, Konstantinidis retrospectively portrayed Pikionis, who had died in 1968, as a 'prophet, at a global scale, of the hurricane of "post-modernism"'.[54] Like the 'imported' neoclassicism of the nineteenth century, Konstantinidis argued, the postmodern classicism of the 1980s also masked the people's true needs behind a false decorative dress that would have fascinated Pikionis.

As European scholars continue to allude interchangeably to the 'contemporary Greek Regionalism' of Pikionis and Konstantinidis,[55] a sophisticated understanding of the work of both is therefore obstructed. This is simultaneously the result of the celebrated reception of critical regionalism and the language barriers that have prevented global audiences from grappling with local nuances. Because the 'grid and pathway' account became so culturally pervasive,[56] Greek architecture as a whole is still understood in terms of a combination of Konstantinidis with Pikionis.[57] Immediately after

52 Eleni Bastéa, 'Beyond the Debt to Antiquity: Constructing a National Architecture for Modern Greece', in Sofia Voutsaki and Paul Cartledge, eds., *Ancient Monuments and Modern Identities: A Critical History of Archaeology in 19th and 20th Century Greece* (Routledge, 2017), 164–85, here 178, 174.

53 Aris Konstantinidis, *Δυο 'χωριά' απ' τη Μύκονο* (self-published, 1947), 28–32.

54 Aris Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής: Ημερολογιακά σημειώματα* (Agra, 1992), 300–1 (20 May 1988).

55 Vladimir Kulić, 'Edvard Ravnikar's Eclecticism of Taste and the Politics of Appropriation', in Amanda Reeser Lawrence and Ana Miljački, eds., *Terms of Appropriation: Modern Architecture and Global Exchange* (Routledge, 2017), 75–93, here 83; Dietrich Neumann with David Caralt, *An Accidental Masterpiece: Mies van der Rohe's Barcelona Pavilion* (Birkhäuser, 2020), 178.

56 See Giamarelos, *Resisting Postmodern Architecture*, 221–53.

57 See the 2013 cover of Tzonis and Rodi, *Greece*.

2 Old Athenian house, 32 Tripodon Street

the publication of 'The Grid and the Pathway' in 1981, however, Konstantinidis expressed his dissatisfaction with this account of his work. In the same year, he also refused to participate in an architectural exhibition at the Greek Festival in Delft, whose curation was based on the 'grid and pathway' narrative.[58] For the same reason, Konstantinidis's presence in Tzonis and Lefaivre's texts on critical regionalism of the last four decades is erratic. Whilst his projects are more frequently described as 'an intriguing amalgam of several tendencies', Pikionis's work is consistently heralded as 'the pure expression' and 'most central representative' of critical regionalism.[59]

Konstantinidis was equally dismissive of the work of his European critical regionalist peers. For example, he regarded Botta's claim that architects do not build *on* a site but *build the site*,[60] a phrase that Frampton frequently quotes to epitomize the critical regionalist approach, as representing a 'neo-post-modern' statement of 'criminal' proportions. The Greek architect argued that building the site essentially means building nature itself, which is always a 'given'. Since it is organically bound with a specific place, he explained, nature can only be *complemented* by architects who render it amenable to human inhabitation and understanding.[61] Konstantinidis intended to write a whole book on *building with the ground*. This formed the core of his architectural approach from the outset, when he designed his first project in Elefsina (1938–39) in conjunction with its surrounding garden (fig. 3). Konstantinidis posited that the natural topography of a site

58 Suzana Antonakaki and Dimitris Antonakakis, interview by Stylianos Giamarelos, 23 June 2013; cf. Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre, 'Het raster en het pad', *Wonen-TA/BK* 20–1 (1981), 31–42.

59 Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre, 'A Critical Introduction to Greek Architecture Since the Second World War', in Orestis Doumanis, ed., *Post-war Architecture in Greece* (Architecture in Greece Press, 1984), 16–23, here 19–20, 22.

60 Mario Botta, 'Academic High School in Morbio Inferiore: Intervention Criteria and Design Objectives', in Martin Steinmann and Thomas Boga, eds., *Tendenzen: Neuere Architektur im Tessin*, 3rd ed. (gta, 1977; repr., Birkhäuser, 2010), 160.

61 Aris Konstantinidis, *Αμαρτωλοί και κλέφτες, ή η απογείωση της αρχιτεκτονικής* (Agra, 1987), 69.

3 Aris Konstantinidis, Eftaxias house in Elefsina (1938–39)

enables architects to envision spaces of different heights, with the floor of each room corresponding to the inclination of the ground under the same horizontal roof. He explored this idea in well-known projects such as the 'Xenia' motel in Kalambaka (1959–60; see fig. 1), the locker rooms and guest houses in Epidavros (1958–62), the 'Xenia' hotels on Mykonos (1960; see fig. 9) and Poros (1964), and two houses on Spetses (1963 and 1966–67).[62] Although Frampton especially appreciated the motel in Kalambaka for similar reasons, Konstantinidis understood his own approach as far removed from any critical regionalist notion of 'building the site'.

GREEK BORDER CROSSING

Despite his personal reservations, Konstantinidis holds a unique place within the history of critical regionalism. He is the only architect in this context who stands at the crossroads of the two overlapping, but distinct, developing strands of this discourse: the one that ensues from Tzonis and Lefaivre's account of Greek architectural culture (1981); and that which originates from Frampton's study of the School of the Ticino in Switzerland (1978).[63] When Tzonis and Lefaivre were discussing their work-in-progress essay with Suzana Antonakaki and Dimitris Antonakakis in 1980, they reportedly mentioned the School of the Ticino as an example of the collective account that they also intended to construct for architecture in Greece, instead of solely focusing on the work of the couple. Because they remained unconvinced by the Antonakakises' suggestions of contemporary Greek architectural practices, however, Tzonis and Lefaivre preferred to look towards the past to formulate an intergenerational account that led from Pikionis and

62 Aris Konstantinidis, *Τα προλεγόμενα από βιβλία που βρίσκονται στα σκαριά* (Agra, 1989), 15–19.

63 Kenneth Frampton, 'Mario Botta and the School of the Ticino', *Oppositions* 14 (1978), 1–25.

Konstantinidis to the Antonakakises.[64] Conversely, Frampton had not used the term *critical regionalism* in his discourse before the publication of 'The Grid and the Pathway'. Konstantinidis was active not only in both the Greek and Swiss contexts in the key decades of the 1960s and the 1970s; he was also the only architect of the critical regionalist canon to be present in the thinking of all authors more than a decade before they wrote a single line on the subject. Greek-born Tzonis was intimately familiar with his work, while Frampton had edited a monographic feature on Konstantinidis as technical editor of *Architectural Design* in 1964.[65]

Unlike the other Greek architects of critical regionalism, Konstantinidis did not have to wait for the writings of globally renowned critics to become internationally famous in the 1980s. By 1967, architect and academic Dimitris Fatouros (1928–2020) readily referred to him as 'a leading figure in Greek architecture, whose work has been praised internationally'.[66] In the 1960s, Konstantinidis's 'surprisingly good work' was included in US-authored guidebooks such as *The New Architecture of Europe* (1962), while his working details were frequently anthologized in the United Kingdom.[67] This was not the contingent result of Anglophone authors' chance encounter with the Greek architect's projects. As I show in the first two chapters, Konstantinidis played his own significant role in building the worldwide reception of his oeuvre. He was effectively the global editor of his public profile both within and without Greece. His consistent editorial practices over the course of several decades show that he wanted to remain in control of his publications to clearly convey his

64 Dimitris Antonakakis, interview by Stylianos Giamarelos, Athens, 18 July 2022.

65 See *Architectural Design* 34, no. 5 (May 1964), 212–35.

66 Dimitris Fatouros, 'Greek Art and Architecture 1945–1967: A Brief Survey', *Balkan Studies* 8, no. 2 (1967), 421–35, here 432.

67 See George Everard Kidder Smith, *The New Architecture of Europe: An Illustrated Guidebook and Appraisal with Photographs of 225 Postwar Buildings of Europe* (Penguin, 1962), 145, 151–2; Colin Boyne, ed., *Architects' Working Details: Foreign Examples*, vol. 10 (Architectural Press, 1964), 16–17, 22–3, 112–13.

vision. His work indeed became known first and foremost on his own terms and from the vantage point of his own strong gaze. As such, it has been doubly built, both on the ground and on paper, by an architectural persona that also emerges in an idealized form from the pages of his books.

Konstantinidis's global editorship created a long-lasting hermetic zone around his work, which has only recently been transgressed by a new generation of architectural historians. Over the last decade, these scholars have revisited his oeuvre not in the abstract, idealized terms of his own polemics but in the specific terms of his numerous clashes and oppositions as these unfolded in their specific historical context. Recent studies focus on various aspects of Konstantinidis's practice, including the politics of his designs, his disagreements with his clients, and the contradictions embedded in the relationship that the architect attempts to re-establish with 'the people' through his commissions for private and public projects.[68] The book at hand forms part of this body of scholarship, focusing on his hitherto overshadowed practices outside Greece.

More than thirty years after he died by suicide in 1993, Konstantinidis is still difficult to discern beyond the materials that he curated for his architectural audiences in the fifteen years of his retirement, after 1978. Even today, reconstructing his biography remains a difficult task. This is why I attempt to do something more modest, whilst working in this wider framework. My main aim is to juxtapose the inward-looking self-portrait that emerges from the architect's autobiography

68 See Myrto Kiourti with Kostas Tsiambaos, 'The Architect, the Resident, and a Murder: The Case of a House by Aris Konstantinidis', *arq* 24, no. 1 (2020), 83–94, https://doi.org/10.1017/S1359135520000093; Kostas Tsiambaos, 'Τόπος, λαός και κτίσμα: Όροι και όρια μιας "κοινής" αρχιτεκτονικής', in Kostas Tsiambaos, *Αμφίθυμη νεωτερικότητα: 9+1 κείμενα για τη μοντέρνα αρχιτεκτονική στην Ελλάδα* (Epikentro, 2017), 205–19; Ioanna Theocharopoulou, 'Nature and *the People*: The Vernacular and the Search for a *True* Greek Architecture', in Jean-François Lejeune and Michelangelo Sabatino, eds., *Modern Architecture and the Mediterranean: Vernacular Dialogues and Contested Identities* (Routledge, 2010), 111–29; Issaias and Vougia, 'The Constant Typologist'.

and other published texts from the late period of his life in Greece with the outward-facing picture that I retrieve from Konstantinidis's earlier publications in European journals. This younger image, which resurfaces only when one considers his publications without Greece, is more relevant than the old Greek architect's self-portrait for discussing the challenges of critical regionalism abroad today. As such, it becomes an ideal entry point for the discussions that follow in this book.

Successively focusing on Konstantinidis's life, work, and teaching, the three main chapters discuss the multiple ways in which his two faces, within and without Greece, were frequently pitted against each other. For, in his attempt to creatively engage with the historically defined horizon of possibilities of his age, the architect also embodied the contradictions of his time. As such, both sides of Konstantinidis need to be elucidated in equal measure; the lonely recluse of Greece found his intellectual peers when he published, lectured, or exhibited his work in Europe. Conversely, the relative scarcity of comprehensive publications in English, when compared to Konstantinidis's prolific textual production in Greek, has historically functioned as an insurmountable language barrier for global audiences. As a result, the nuances of the architect's sophisticated thinking have remained inaccessible to the wider English-speaking public. In this context, this small book also serves as the lengthiest study of the Greek architect's oeuvre to be published in English to date, as it combines oral history interviews and original research in the architect's private archive and other institutional collections with recontextualizations of his published writings.

Reconstructing the portrait of Konstantinidis without Greece by returning to the publications of his work in their original global context of the 1960s, the first chapter shows how the outward-facing global aspect of the architect's practice, whose roots lie in his formative years in 1930s Munich, clashes with the inward-looking self-image of the sullen

hermit that he created for himself during his retirement in 1980s Athens. At the same time, as I show by following the published life of his emblematic Weekend House in Anavyssos over the course of six decades in the second chapter, Konstantinidis established the global reception of his work as canonical on his own terms. Nonetheless, the Greek architect did not want to build anywhere else in the world. If he had to do so, however, he believed that he could 'come up with something else, which would have to stand' in a new, different landscape.[69] As such, the Swiss, German, Austrian, and Scandinavian students' projects from the Greek architect's three-year teaching stint at ETH Zurich (1967–1970), which are discussed in the third chapter, show how Konstantinidis's critical regionalist approach became applicable abroad, beyond the cultural context that originally gave rise to it, through his emphasis on tectonics. This in turn unveils its limits and the missed opportunities for richer cross-cultural developments of critical regionalism abroad in architectural historiography and practice, which are discussed in the epilogue.

Moving to the main chapters of the book, the tone of my prose shifts to the biographical present. This forms part of my commitment to writing an operative history of a twentieth-century architect that enables readers to relate and empathise with Konstantinidis's lived experience and the worldview that ensued from it. Reproducing the effect that the Greek architect's untranslated writings evidently had on local audiences may in the end be another way in which his critical regionalism can be more effectively conveyed abroad.

69 Konstantinos Themelis, *Ο λόγος του αρχιμάστορα: Μια συνομιλία με τον Άρη Κωνσταντινίδη* (Indiktos, 2000), 67.

LOCAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY

TRAPPED INWARDS

From 1931 to 1936, Aris Konstantinidis studies architecture under the mentorship of Adolf Abel in interwar Munich. This formative experience shapes the young Greek architect's whole personality. The 'more open' and 'more progressive' world of Munich, as he writes in his autobiography, enables him to 'discover in myself capacities which I had not imagined that I could have'.[70] Admiring the use of colour in the architecture of German and Dutch cities, he also becomes familiar with the modern artworks of Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse, and Giorgio de Chirico.[71] In addition, his relationship with his professors is no longer based on the fear of authority but on a sense of 'fatherly' care and support.[72] In Munich, the Bavarian capital, Konstantinidis recognizes the 'provincialism' of Athens and of the architectural pedagogy on offer in his home country.[73]

With Adolf Hitler's rise to power in 1933 and the political transition from the Weimar Republic to National Socialism, Konstantinidis also witnesses the demonization of modern art and architecture by the fascist state.[74] He finds himself at the epicentre of the political clash between the progressive modernism of *Neues Bauen*, with its internationalist 'self-referential emphasis on structure, function, and materials', and the state-led conservative *Heimatstil* traditionalism. While this ideological division was not as clear-cut as Konstantinidis's autobiography suggests, it was effectively imposed in schools of architecture; for example, in 1934, the Nazi Party appointed reactionary polemicists such as Alexander von Senger (1880–1968) to teach architectural

70 Aris Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά: Μία αυτοβιογραφική διήγηση*, 3 vols. (Estia, 1992), vol. 1, 41.

71 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 26 (25 April 1937), 32–33 (13 February 1938).

72 Themelis, *Ο λόγος του αρχιμάστορα*, 46.

73 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 1, 41, 53, 59.

74 Themelis, *Ο λόγος του αρχιμάστορα*, 19.

history at the Technical University of Munich.[75] Architect Eleni Livani's research documents how such disruptions specifically affected Konstantinidis's studies after 1933. These included the marginalization of Abel, which stripped the young Greek student of the opportunity for an internship in Abel's office; the dismissal of the alleged 'Bolshevik' professor Robert Vorhoelzer (1884–1954), which obstructed the adoption of modern design principles in the school; and the closure of the Bauhaus school before Konstantinidis could witness its experimental pedagogies in practice when he visited Dessau in April 1933.[76] During his studies, Konstantinidis's Greek sensibility is reportedly challenged even by his beloved mentor Abel,[77] who also supported Hitler's plans in the late 1930s.[78] Livani concludes that such disappointing experiences ushered in the young Greek student's personal pursuit of (modern) architecture. Konstantinidis organized several trips to European cities to visit recently erected buildings by the well-known protagonists of *Neues Bauen* with his peers. These are possibly the origins of his lifelong emphasis on the significance of an architect's 'self-education'.[79]

The subtle message of these negative formative experiences—namely, that one needs to personally fight for modern architecture—also stays with Konstantinidis. Decades later, he even portrays Hitler as a forerunner of postmodern architecture in order to defend the historic significance of the

75 Dietrich Neumann, 'Teaching the History of Architecture in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland: "Architekturgeschichte" vs. "Bauforschung"', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 61, no. 3 (September 2002), 370–80, here 371; Winfried Nerdinger and Katharina Blom, eds., *Architekturschule München 1868–1993: 125 Jahre Technische Universität München* (Klinkhardt & Biermann, 1993), 93–4. Cf. Alexander von Senger, *Krisis der Architektur* (Rascher, 1928); Alexander von Senger, *Die Brandfackel Moskaus* (Kaufhaus, 1931).

76 Livani, 'Τύπος και τόπος', 65–9, 74–5, 126, 170. Cf. Barbara Miller-Lane, *Architecture and Politics in Germany 1918–1945* (Harvard University Press, 1968), 172; Winfried Nerdinger, 'Architektenausbildung in München: Von der Stil- zur Konstruktionsschule', in Nerdinger and Blom, *Architekturschule München*, 9–23, here 18.

77 Konstantinidis, *Τα προλεγόμενα*, 27–9; cf. 42–3.

78 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 1, 49.

79 Livani, 'Τύπος και τόπος', 126. Cf. Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 42 (1 January 1939).

modern movement as an architecture of 'human (-and humane) society' that gives shape to 'real functions of life' and builds 'that which would be necessary and truly needed for all'.[80] Before 1936, the young Greek student travels to Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, and Italy to witness the pioneering works of Walter Gropius, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Le Corbusier, Adolf Loos, Erich Mendelsohn, and Jacobus Johannes Pieter Oud. While these projects 'impress' him, they also 'baffle' him,[81] especially concerning their appropriateness for the Greek landscape.[82]

Meanwhile, several of these protagonists of the modern movement arrive in Greece for the Fourth International Congress of Modern Architecture (CIAM IV) in August 1933. The interwar buildings that they visit in Athens (by Stamo Papadaki, Patroklos Karantinos, and Ioannis Despotopoulos) soon find their place in Alberto Sartoris's global 'panorama' of functionalist architecture, in 1935.[83] When Konstantinidis returns to Greece upon completing his studies in 1936, he clearly intends to apply the principles of the modern architecture he has studied abroad to the specificities of his homeland. His gaze is now that of an outsider who attempts to reconsider his native insider's view of his home country. Following Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, he, too, believes that 'whoever speaks foreign languages also gets to know his mother tongue better'.[84] But Konstantinidis does not look at the already realized examples of modern architecture by eponymous Greek architects, as his international peers did in 1933. He believes that these projects uncritically follow the design principles that he had witnessed as inappropriate

80 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 293–4 (3 June 1987); Konstantinidis, *Αμαρτωλοί και κλέφτες*, 18.

81 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 1, 42–56; Themelis, *Ο λόγος του αρχιμάστορα*, 42–3.

82 Aris Konstantinidis, *Σύγχρονη αληθινή αρχιτεκτονική* (self-published, 1978), 45–6.

83 Alberto Sartoris, *Gli elementi dell'architettura funzionale: Sintesi panoramica dell'architettura moderna*, 2nd, rev. ed. (Hoepli, 1935), 289–99.

84 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 1, 42.

for the Greek climate and way of life during his student travels.[85] Instead, he turns his attention to the 'still smoking' ruins of the successive battles that ravaged the landscape of his homeland, from the Greek-Italian war (1940–41) and the ensuing German occupation (1941–44) to the Greek Civil War (1946–49).[86] Combined with his personal experience from mandatory military service alongside the Greek troops against the Italians on the Albanian front in the winter of 1940–41, these ruins sow the seeds of his anti-Western sentiments,[87] despite his lifelong appreciation of German high culture.[88]

Konstantinidis then looks at anonymous Greek architecture, including the so-called neoclassical buildings of Athens. Because their design principles were re-imported to Greece through Bavaria, however, he does not regard them as genuine expressions of local culture.[89] As such, he is more interested in learning from the architecture of the 'old Athenian houses' of the people (see fig. 2) and the chapels of Mykonos.[90] Yet again, his way of looking differs from that of the international protagonists of modern architecture, who publish similar chapels from Santorini in the same period—not so much for the allegedly 'Cubist' volumes and their austere forms, but to juxtapose them with the monolithic concrete structures of Robert Maillart (1872–1940).[91] Konstantinidis reads the same buildings,

85 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 44 (10 January 1939).

86 Aris Konstantinidis, 'Αρχιτεκτονημένη ανοικοδόμηση', *Η Καθημερινή*, 24–26 July 1947, in Aris Konstantinidis, *Για την αρχιτεκτονική: Δημοσιεύματα σε εφημερίδες, σε περιοδικά και σε βιβλία 1940–1982, Βιβλιογραφία* (Agra, 1987), 66–79, here 66.

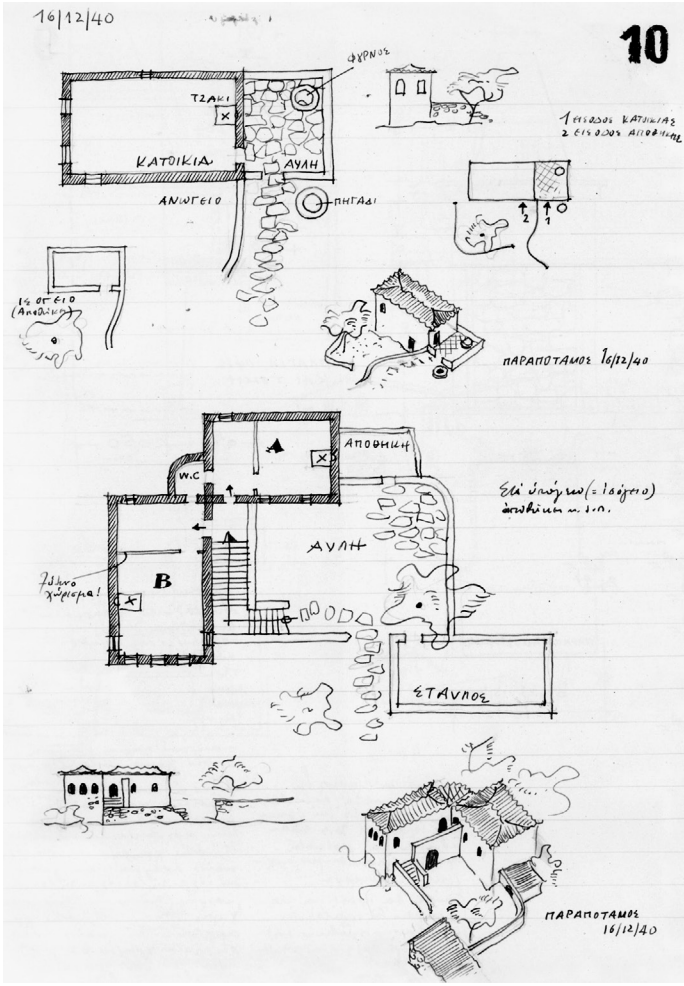
87 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 128–9 (9 March 1980).

88 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 2, 113.

89 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 45 (6 March 1939).

90 See Konstantinidis, *Δυο 'χωριά' απ' τη Μύκονο*; Konstantinidis, *Τα παλιά αθηναϊκά σπίτια*; Aris Konstantinidis, *Ξωκλήσια της Μυκόνου* (self-published, 1953).

91 See Tina Karali, 'Μοντερνισμός και ελληνικότητα στα *Cahiers d'Art*', in Andreas Giacumacatos, ed., *Ελληνική αρχιτεκτονική στον 20ό και 21ο αιώνα: Ιστορία—Θεωρία—Κριτική* (Gutenberg, 2016), 115–26, esp. 123–5.



4 Sketches of vernacular architecture in Parapotamos (16 December 1940), in Aris Konstantinidis's notebook from the Albanian front, page 10

instead, as authentic expressions of the timeless human spirit of dwelling in the landscape and climate of a specific place. The years from Ioannis Metaxas's dictatorship (1936–40) to the Greek Civil War (1946–49) become for him a long period of self-education in the vernacular architecture of his homeland (fig. 4).[92] Surveying these buildings, he repeatedly notes the timeless 'trilogy' of their relationship with the Greek landscape through the spatial succession of 'enclosed room, veranda, courtyard, as in the ancient *megaron*'.[93] Konstantinidis's interest in anonymous architecture is neither historical nor academic but operative; it feeds into his endeavour 'to find that which I wanted to create today, myself'.[94]

In Greece, Konstantinidis inevitably works with the available technological means of his age. At the same time, however, he wants his architecture to become a 'true' expression of humanity beyond any specific place or historical period.[95] He aims for the harmonious human dwelling that spontaneously emerges from the specific, but essentially timeless, landscape.[96] Upon his return from Germany, his architectural gaze remains dual; it is a modern gaze that has been shaped abroad but also further cultivated within the Greek borders, as Konstantinidis sees and experiences his native place 'in a new and different way'. Through his engagement 'with the people and their tradition in building' in this landscape, he eventually forms 'the right conception about that which [he] needed to become as an architect working in our modern times'; that is, he aspires to achieve the same long-standing spatial qualities with the technical and cultural means of his own age.[97] This long process of

92 Also see Helen Fessas-Emmanouil, 'Il mondo di Aris Konstantinidis', in Cofano with Konstantinidis, *Aris Konstantinidis*, 54–69.

93 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 1, 82, 117–18.

94 Konstantinidis, *Projects + Buildings*, 277.

95 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 200 (7 August 1984).

96 Also see Dimitris Philippidis, 'Το αρχιτεκτονικό έργο αντιμέτωπο με τη φύση: Ο Άρης Κωνσταντινίδης και η παράδοση', in Dimitris Philippidis, *Πέντε δοκίμια για τον Άρη Κωνσταντινίδη* (Libro, 1997), 11–29.

97 Konstantinidis, *Τα παλιά σθηναϊκά σπίτια*, 9.

self-education within and without the Greek borders leads Konstantinidis to conclude that 'you can build [in a] modern [spirit] with anything' you have at hand,[98] even with the limited means available in a developing country such as postwar Greece. Modern architecture, that is, is neither necessarily nor exclusively tied to European industrialization, standardization, and the related technological advancements.

But Konstantinidis, who in March 1937 was already wondering whether he would ever be able to build a single apartment building, cannot build as much as he would like as a freelance architect in his war-torn homeland in the 1940s.[99] Despite his appointments at the Ministry of Public Works and other civil posts after 1942, he reasonably fears that he might be spending his most productive years in a place that will not enable him to further cultivate his skills by testing his ideas in built form.[100] Because he regards building as his only way towards the essence of architecture,[101] the implications go beyond his capacity to sustain his freelance practice. In his autobiography, the spectre of not being commissioned to build constantly returns as a recurring nightmare.[102] On the other hand, in these quiet years for his private practice, he systematically explores the 'types' of his architecture on paper. Through a series of ideal villas he designs, Konstantinidis refines his design principles. Specifically, he focuses on the spatial options that are afforded by rectangular structural grids of 2.00, 2.50, or 3.00 meters. Less than a decade later, this research ushers in his built work.[103] His successive appointments at the Workers' Housing Organization (WHO) in 1955 and the Greek National Tourism Organization (GNTO) in 1957 definitively exorcize his freelancer demons.

98 Landgraf, 'Interview mit Aris Konstantinidis'.

99 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 25 (14 March 1937).

100 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 79 (20 May 1947).

101 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 43 (10 January 1939).

102 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 1, 117, 138.

103 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 2, 21, 27; cf. Issaias and Vougia, 'The Constant Typologist'.

After building only ten small-scale projects (including two weekend houses and two exhibition pavilions) in eighteen years (1938–55), he realizes seven large-scale workers' housing projects across Greece within two years (1955–57; see fig. 5) and twenty-four more projects (including ten hotels and two archaeological museums) within the next ten years (1958–67). In these large-scale projects, whose planning is clearly predicated on standardization of construction, Konstantinidis's education in an industrialized context shines through. His prestigious posts also allow him to be more selective with commissions in his private practice.[104]

In this prolific period, Konstantinidis fights for his aspired 'modern true architecture' from his various public posts.[105] Uncompromisingly critical, he soon acquires the reputation of the architect who says 'no' to all.[106] When he is in serious disagreement, he drives his clashes with his opponents to the extremes; he even resigns from high-profile appointments, including at the GNTO. His autobiography reinforces this self-image by constantly referring to similar clashes and oppositions throughout his career. Even while he rebels against this reputation, however, the old architect-author of his autobiography also seems to indulge in it. That is, Konstantinidis retains a dual relationship with his own myth. Although he partially writes to counter it, the content he selects to include in his autobiography reinforces this allegedly repulsive myth. But his self-image eventually becomes so pervasive that it also entraps him.

In the early 1960s, communication breaks down between Konstantinidis and the client who commissioned him to design his first villa in Elefsina in 1938 (see fig. 3), symptomatizing the architect's main problem. While the wishes and

104 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 2, 11.

105 See Konstantinidis, *Σύγχρονη αληθινή αρχιτεκτονική*.

106 Konstantinidis, *Projects + Buildings*, 275, 276; Aris Konstantinidis, *Η άθλια επικαιρότητα: Η Χρυσή Ολυμπιάδα—Το Μουσείο της Ακρόπολης* (Agra, 1991), 30, 38; Themelis, *Ο λόγος του αρχιμάστορα*, 94.

5 Aris Konstantinidis, workers' housing in Nea Philadelphia, Athens (1955–57)

desires of the local circles shift, he refuses to change.[107] Because Konstantinidis can only build his aspired architecture later than he desires, he also interprets the emerging social trends as a rejection of his, still unfulfilled, vision. When actually built from the late 1950s to the mid-1960s, the 'vessels of life' he has envisioned since the late 1930s sustain a lifestyle of 'organic' dwelling in the Greek landscape,[108] whose allure has by then been outlived by the rise of urbanized consumer culture. As such, when he retires in 1978, Konstantinidis also seems to exit social time.[109] His late writings come across as an uneven battle with growing external forces that leave him increasingly alone. In 1988, he characteristically notes that he has begun to write his autobiography in a state of 'ostracism'.[110] This disappointed version of himself, the 75-year-old author of his autobiography, entraps Konstantinidis within its frustrated writings.

Hence, the fifteen years of Konstantinidis's retirement from 1978 to 1993, which enable him to organize his archive, his texts, and his retrospective exhibition at the National Gallery of Athens (see fig. 6) also culminate in a period of unrelenting writing in the late 1980s. Fearing that his close circle would stop him from displaying his 'unprocessed great anger' in public, he produces his later books in a 'conspiracy of silence' with his publisher.[111] To cite just one example, his book *Sinners and Thieves* (1987) comprises a ninety-page essay followed by 140 pages titled 'Notes', relentless critique of almost everybody.[112] On these pages, the Greek architect's blacklist of forerunners of postmodernism

107 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 2, 17, 28–9.

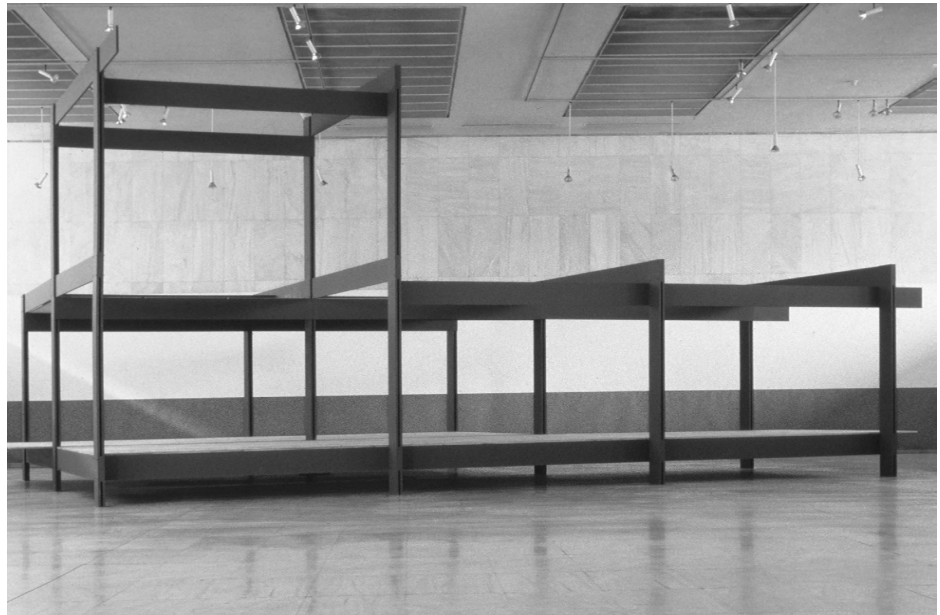
108 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 45 (19 July 1939); Konstantinidis, *Δυο 'χωριά' απ' τη Μύκονο*, 15.

109 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 116 (19 December 1979); cf. Philippidis, 'Η μεγαλοφυία αντιμέτωπη με μια σκληρή εποχή: Σε ποια εποχή έζησε ο Άρης Κωνσταντινίδης;', in Philippidis, *Πέντε δοκίμια*, 81–92.

110 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 1, 11–12.

111 Stavros Petsopoulos, 'Ο Άρης Κωνσταντινίδης στις Εκδόσεις Άγρα: Δώδεκα χρόνια εκδοτικής συνεργασίας: Τα βιβλία του Άρη Κωνσταντινίδη ως συνέχεια του αρχιτεκτονικού του έργου', in Vaiou, *Άρης Κωνσταντινίδης*, 19–34, here 28.

112 Konstantinidis, *Αμαρτωλοί και κλέφτες*.



6 The wooden structure demonstrating the significance of ‘the visible skeleton’ in Aris Konstantinidis’s architecture at the entrance of his monographic exhibition at the National Gallery in Athens (February 1989)

expands to include not only the usual 'eclecticist' suspects (James Stirling, Philip Johnson, Ricardo Bofill), but also modernist 'masters' (Le Corbusier, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Adolf Loos, Frank Lloyd Wright, Oscar Niemeyer) and even eighteenth- and nineteenth-century figures (Étienne-Louis Boullée, Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, Jean-Jacques Lequeu). The lukewarm reception of these books, in which their reviewers witness the 'fanaticism and hostility' of a 'Knight of the Apocalypse',[113] both frustrate and reinforce Konstantinidis's sense of self-righteousness.[114] Through his books of the late 1980s, the Greek architect increasingly comes across as a recalcitrant hermit who speaks to imaginary audiences against fantastical foes.

By 1989, Konstantinidis is ready to devote entire books to his worst obsessions, such as his constant disappointment with his clients and their bad taste.[115] Comparing his drafts of 1989 with the respective list of books that he aimed to write in 1951 illustrates how his later obsessions derail his more consequential original intentions to discuss the art and craft of building in the Greek landscape.[116] By then, Konstantinidis is effectively entrapped in the self-image he has moulded for himself within the increasing isolation of the last years of his life. His last interviews, in the early 1990s, convey his strong sense of disappointment and abandonment, loneliness, anger, and futility.[117]

However, the self-image of Konstantinidis that arises from the torrential, lonely writing of the last years of his life is not only misleading; it also does not do him justice. The main

113 Dimitris Philippidis, 'Ιππότης της Αποκάλυψης', *Η Καθημερινή*, 25 February 1988; also see Andreas Kourkoulas and Maria Kokkinou, 'Αμαρτίες γονέων;', *Ο Πολίτης* 88–9 (1988), 87–9; Andreas Kourkoulas and Maria Kokkinou, 'Ο Πύργος της Βαβέλ', *Το Βήμα*, 15 May 1988.

114 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 2, 111–12.

115 Konstantinidis, *Τα προλεγόμενα*, see esp. 53–63.

116 See Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 87 (2 December 1951).

117 Themelis, *Ο λόγος του αρχιμάστορα*, 91 (also see 97–103, 106–11, 123); cf. Giannis Kiosoglou, ed., *Άρης Κωνσταντινίδης, Η κοιλιά του αρχιτέκτονα: Μια σειρά διαλόγων του μεγάλου αρχιτέκτονα με τον Θανάση Λάλα* (GEKAT, 1994).

problem is that his texts usually serve as the starting point for those who are interested in his thinking.[118] Rather unfortunately, his late writings outnumber his early publications; the decade 1980–90 alone covers almost 70 percent of his published diary entries from 1937 to 1990.[119] This asphyxiating framework of the resigned self-image that entraps its creator towards the end of his life needs to be reconsidered today. To begin with, it strangles the fresh, optimistic tone of his early prose. More manifesto-sounding, the 1940s and 1950s texts by the young Greek architect convey his enthusiasm about the future of his approach to practice. In addition, the stereotypical strokes of the later texts overshadow young Konstantinidis's wholesome dives into vernacular architecture, including the people and the local culture that produce and sustain it.[120] His old resentful self also tends to quote only the negative aspects of his discussions of Pikionis's 'scenographic' approach to vernacular structures, ignoring his younger self's simultaneous acknowledgement of Pikionis's 'wondrous offering' as a positive first step in escaping the 'dry' rationality of modern architecture, in 1947.[121] Lastly, his only published list of works of 'true architecture' (fifteen in total) by (exclusively non-Greek) architects and theorists whom he appreciates is drowned in the sea of negative comments that surrounds it. Wright 'almost' emerges as his favourite architect from this selective list that also includes Auguste Perret, Johannes Duiker (fig. 7), Walter Gropius, Richard Neutra, Rudolph M. Schindler, Evan O. Williams, Egon Eiermann, Eero Saarinen, and Gordon Drake.[122]

118 See, for instance, Nikolaos-Ion Terzoglou, 'Η "βούληση για ζωή" ως αρχιτεκτονική: Υποθέσεις σχετικά με το φιλοσοφικό υπόβαθρο της σκέψης του Άρη Κωνσταντινίδη', in Giacumacatos, *Ελληνική αρχιτεκτονική στον 20ό και 21ο αιώνα*, 586–95.

119 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 116–345.

120 See Konstantinidis, *Δυο 'χωριά' απ' τη Μύκονο*, 34–6.

121 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 301 (20 May 1988); Konstantinidis, *Δυο 'χωριά' απ' τη Μύκονο*, 28–33.

122 Konstantinidis, *Αμαρτωλοί και κλέφτες*, 86–90, 166; Themelis, *Ο λόγος του αρχιμάστορα*, 71–4.

7 Johannes Duiker, open-air school in Amsterdam, 1930

Konstantinidis might appear as a harsh critic of several contemporary architects, but he is evidently not a snob intellectual. After his three-year teaching stint in Zurich, in 1970 he had returned to Greece with the approximately three hundred books he had bought during his tenure there.[123] Despite the dogmatic tone of his late writings in the 1980s and 1990s, he desires to keep abreast of current developments in his field, no matter how strongly he eventually disagrees with them. This is also evident in the lists of buildings he had selected to visit with his ETH Zurich students in their field trips outside Switzerland in 1969–70. Standing by his theory of architects' self-education, he wanted his students to see for themselves different kinds of buildings, whether he personally agreed with their proposed solutions to urban and structural problems or not. These lists also indicate Konstantinidis's additional personal preferences for specific projects by renowned architects and engineers (Pier Luigi Nervi, Denys Lasdun, Arne Jacobsen, Jørn Utzon) and less-well-known peers in Italy, Denmark, and the United Kingdom.[124] Removing the distorting veil of the old author of the autobiography is therefore the only way to approach the version of Konstantinidis that still awaits to be reappraised in the twenty-first century.

FACING OUTWARDS

Back in 1968, Konstantinidis for the first time records his feeling of loneliness as his bitter 'reward for the pursuit of truth' in his diary entries.[125] Two years earlier, both of his parents passed away, and he resigned from his directorial post

123 Consul Général de Gréce à Zurich, 'Βεβαίωσις', 7 July 1970, ETH Folder, Aris Konstantinidis private archive.

124 'Exkursion nach Daenemark, 8.–15. Juni 1969', ETH Folder 'SS 69 Entwurf V, Exkursion London: 1–2'; ETH Folder 'WS 69–70 Entwurf VII, SS 70 Entwurf VIII, Venedig-Ravenna, Milano-Ivrea-Turin: 3–4', Aris Konstantinidis private archive.

125 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 93 (10 March 1968).

at the GNTO in 1967. In 1968 Konstantinidis teaches as a guest professor at ETH Zurich, away from his wife, Natalia Mela (1923–2019), and their two adolescent children. He feels that he cannot communicate with the Swiss student cohort and doubts whether this entirely different world is at all interested in his architecture. More than three decades after the completion of his studies in Germany, he experiences the same feeling of being the alien not only in a place where his work is not understood but also in a place that he does not understand.[126] Similar references to a 'bitter loneliness' recur more frequently in the late 1970s, after his divorce and his definitive retirement from professional practice.[127] Young architects, such as Giorgos Triantafyllou, who visit him in the early 1980s, recall the 'melancholic atmosphere' of his 'depressing' empty office in Athens.[128]

But the publications of his work and his lectures, mainly outside Greece, transgress his disappointment that he speaks alone, only to himself.[129] The version of Konstantinidis that hides between the lines of the old author of his autobiography is to be found in texts that were first published in widely circulating journals such as the French newspaper *Le Monde* or the British periodical *Architectural Design*. Situated in their original global context, the Greek architect's international exhibitions, lectures, and publications resurface as events that create, sustain, and reinforce links and communication networks.[130] As such, they also advance

126 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 2, 93, 104.

127 See, characteristically, Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 114 (27 November 1979), 116 (19 December 1979), 120 (11 February 1980), 138 (22 August 1980), 146 (11 October 1980), 157 (4 May 1983), 164 (16 August 1983), 171 (1 November 1983), 178 (30 January 1984), 183 (28 March 1984), 214 (3 November 1984), 234 (10 July 1985), 283–84 (8 January 1987), 320 (5 May 1989), 323 (29 September 1989).

128 Giorgos Triantafyllou, 'Η γοητεία του "σοβατεπιού" στην αρχιτεκτονική', *Τα Νέα*, 17–18 February 2024, 12.

129 See Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 2, 154–5.

130 See Konstantinidis, *Projects + Buildings*, 280–4; Konstantinidis, *Για την αρχιτεκτονική*, 329–52.

sophisticated architectural debates within and without Greece.[131]

The list of European publications of Greek architecture before the military coup of 1967 leaves no room for doubt: the 1960s belong to Konstantinidis. In this period, even the work of the globally celebrated protagonist of the Greek architectural scene, Constantinos A. Doxiadis (1913–1975), receives almost four times less coverage than that of Konstantinidis in the European architectural press.[132] Passing references to his projects in non-Greek journal articles further attest to global audiences' familiarity with his work by then.[133]

These European publications of the 1960s significantly maintain the international portrait of the Greek architect at the peak of his career. This younger and less sullen Konstantinidis designs and builds more than he writes, as documented by the notable fourteen-year silence in his diary entries, from 1951 to 1965.[134] His work is then also intertwined with that of a group of young Greek architects (including Philippos Vokos, Ioannis Triantafyllidis, Georgios Nikoletopoulos, Kostas Stamatis, Dionysis Zivas, and Katerina Dialeisma) that he coordinates in his capacity as director of the Architectural Projects Sector at the GNTO from 1957 to 1967—in a decade of 'rapid', unprecedented state investment in tourism infrastructure.[135] His projects from this decade alone—including the hotels 'Triton' on Andros (1958; see

131 See, for instance, Dimitris Philippidis, 'Ο αρχιτέκτων Άρης Κωνσταντινίδης: Μικρό αφιέρωμα με την ευκαιρία της αναδρομικής του έκθεσης στην Εθνική Πινακοθήκη', *Αντί* 395 (1989), 50–2; Nikos Th. Holevas, 'Άρης Κωνσταντινίδης', *Κατοικία* 37 (March–May 1989), 100–3; Helen Fessas-Emmanouil, 'Ο Άρης Κωνσταντινίδης στην Αμερική', *Architektones, Journal of the Association of Greek Architects*, cycle b', no. 11 (September–October 1998), 20–3.

132 Cf. Maria-Louisa Danezis, 'Le jugement des revues internationales sur l'architecture grecque de 1950 à 1967' (master's thesis, Université de Sciences Humaines, Strasbourg, 1994), 244–5, 249–57.

133 Klaus E. Müller, 'Hotelbau und moderne Architektur', *Bauen + Wohnen* 19, no. 6 (1965), 1–4, here 1.

134 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 86–7 (2 December 1951, 10 May 1965); cf. Konstantinidis, *Για την αρχιτεκτονική*, 329–52.

135 Themelis, *Ο λόγος του αρχιμάστορα*, 93; cf. Stavros Alifragkis and Emilia Athanassiou, 'Educating Greece in Modernity: Post-war Tourism and Western Politics',

fig. 8) and 'Xenia' on Mykonos (1959; see fig. 9), and the 'Xenia' motels in Larissa (1959), Paliouri (1962), and Olympia (1963; see fig. 10)—constitute two-thirds of his oeuvre.

By the mid-1960s, extensive monographic features on the work of Konstantinidis have already been published in English, Spanish, and Hungarian periodicals.[136] In the same period, the Greek architect's projects are published next to the buildings of renowned peers from thirty countries in the annual volumes of *World Architecture* from 1964 to 1967. On their pages, Konstantinidis's work features next to that of Le Corbusier, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Louis Kahn, Kenzō Tange, Stirling, Sverre Fehn, or Balkrishna Vithaldas Doshi.[137] The publication of his projects in this context accomplishes the dual programmatic goals of the series editor, John Donat; namely, to pass the baton from the modernist masters to the next generation of practitioners, who explore how 'modern architecture can [also] produce places for people'.[138] Especially in the third volume of the series, which discusses the possibility of reconciling art with science, Konstantinidis's hotel projects stand out for their combination of standardization and sensitivity to each specific landscape.[139] In 1961, the well-known journal *Detail* opens with Konstantinidis. The Greek architect's projects (motels 'Xenia' in Igoumenitsa and Larissa, 1959) are the first to be published in the widely circulating German journal of reference.[140] Sliding doors, balcony partitions, and other details from Konstantinidis's well-known 'Xenia' projects also feature frequently in the 'Information Library' section of the British *Architects' Journal*.[141] The external louvre blinds of 'Xenia' Mykonos are especially praised, in

Journal of Architecture 23, no. 4 (2018), 595–616, https://doi.org/10.1080/13602365.2018.1479229.

136 See *Architectural Design* 34, no. 5 (May 1964), 212–35; *Arquitectura* 10 (1965), 25–50; *Domow* 1 (1966), 1–7.

137 John Donat, ed., *World Architecture*, vols. 1–4 (Studio Vista, 1964–1967).

138 Donat, *World Architecture*, vol. 1 (1964), 8–9; vol. 4 (1967), 9.

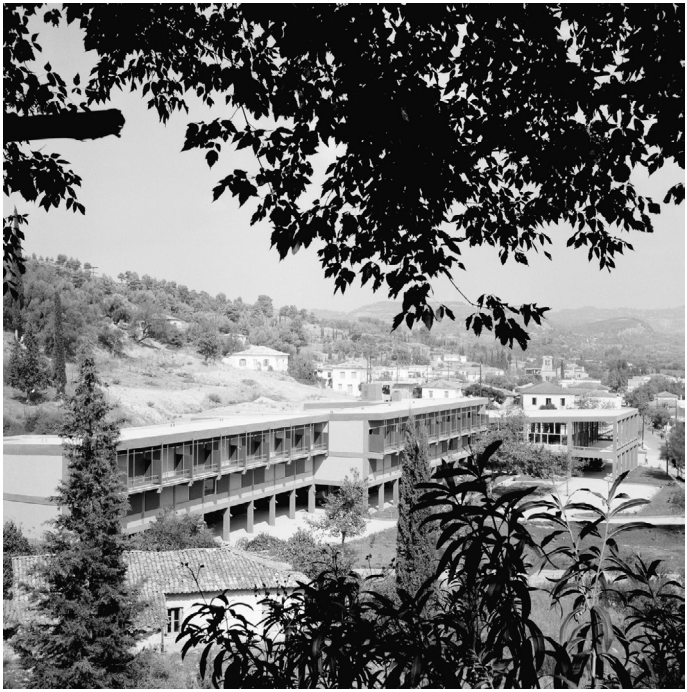
139 Donat, *World Architecture*, vol. 3 (1966), 9.

140 See *Detail* 1 (1961), 9–10.

141 See, for example, 'Working Detail 101: Sliding Doors: Motel Xenia,

8 Aris Konstantinidis, hotel ‘Triton’ on Andros (1958)

9 Aris Konstantinidis, hotel 'Xenia' on Mykonos (1959)



10 Aris Konstantinidis, motel ‘Xenia’ in Olympia (1963)

a colonial undertone, as 'a robust and simple window screening device suitable in tropical and subtropical areas' of the British Empire, 'where more sophisticated devices are hard to obtain and difficult to maintain'.[142] At the same time, buildings designed by Konstantinidis continue to be anthologized internationally, mainly in German, Austrian, and Swiss edited volumes on villa or hotel designs.[143]

The architect personally endeavours to showcase his work abroad from the very first steps of his professional life. After his graduation in 1936, he sustains his lifelong ties with Germany, which enables him to publish his first building in Greece, the Eftaxias house in Elefsina (1938; see fig. 3), soon after its completion, in *Bauwelt*, in 1939; by contrast, it takes him twenty-three more years to publish the same project in Greece for the first time, in 1962.[144] In addition, throughout his career Konstantinidis does not miss opportunities to publicize his opinion in the German-speaking architectural press. In 1966, he is one of the few selected architects who respond to *Baumeister*'s open call to discuss the work of Mies van der Rohe and its significance in an international debate that also includes Hans Scharoun, Yona Friedman, and Walter Gropius, among others.[145]

A large share of the texts that Konstantinidis publishes in European magazines are his replies to open questions posed by the journals' editors. The Greek architect's outward-

Kalambaka, Greece', *Architects' Journal* 138, no. 24 (1963), 1249–50; 'Working Detail 102: Balcony Partitions: Motel Xenia, Kalambaka, Greece', *Architects' Journal* 138, no. 25 (1963), 1309–10.

142 'Working Detail 109: External Louvre Blinds: Hotel Xenia, Mykonos, Greece', *Architects' Journal* 139, no. 7 (1964), 365–6, here 365.

143 See, for instance, Otto Mayr and Fritz Hierl, eds., *Hotelbau: Handbuch für den Hotelbau* (Callwey, 1962); Adolf Pfau and Ernst Zietzschmann, eds., *33 Architekten, 33 Einfamilienhäuser* (Bauen + Wohnen, 1964); *Architektur und Wohnform*: *Jahresband 1969* (Koch, 1969).

144 See Aris Konstantinidis, 'Eutaxias Haus', *Bauwelt*, 31 August 1939, 7–8; *Ζυγός* 82–3 (July–August 1962), 28.

145 See *Baumeister* 63, no. 2 (February 1966), 113; *Baumeister* 63, no. 3 (March 1966), 223–5; *Baumeister* 63, no. 4 (April 1966), 360–1; *Baumeister* 63, no. 5 (May 1966), 505.

facing voice then participates in wider debates with his international peers, such as the future of the profession in the age of mass standardization.[146] In some cases, magazines such as the Swiss *Bauen + Wohnen* target their questions to 'architects who are connected with the magazine', such as Konstantinidis.[147] When he offers his opinion on Mies van der Rohe's legacy next to that of celebrated figures—such as Johnson, Peter Smithson, Jaap Bakema, and Neutra—the Greek architect's words retain a critical edge that is missing from the more hagiographic opinions of other contributors. Despite the virtues that Konstantinidis also notes, Mies's buildings frequently look bland to him. Because their transparent elevations do not express but only expose their inner world, these buildings become 'glass boxes' exclusively associated with the age that produces them; they are unable to adapt to the climatic conditions of specific places.[148] Editors seem to appreciate Konstantinidis's critical views, as they continue to send him questions about other architectural issues in the same period.

Reproduced for an architectural audience that transgresses the borders of his home country, Konstantinidis's beliefs are also amplified. Trusting his judgement about the state of architecture in Greece, German-language magazines almost serve as echo chambers for it. When their editors write about modern Greek architecture, for instance, their words chime with Konstantinidis's characteristic tropes and battles within and without the GNTO. In his introductory note for an extensive feature on modern Greek architecture in 1967,[149] *Baumeister* editor-in-chief Paulhans Peters refers to the Hilton Athens hotel and the sharp contrast of its scale

146 See *Detail* 5 (1961), 354–60.

147 For this example, see Jürgen Joedicke, 'Zu diesem Heft', *Bauen + Wohnen* 5 (May 1966), 181.

148 See *Bauen + Wohnen* 5 (May 1966), 193.

149 See *Baumeister* 64, no. 2 (February 1967), 140–96. In addition to Konstantinidis's projects, the issue features architectural works by Thymio Papayannis and Katerina Giamalaki, Takis Zenetos, Prokopis Vasiliadis, Spyros Amourgis, Nikos Kalogeras and Panos Koulermos, Nikos Valsamakis, Georgios Nikoletopoulos,

with the existing urban fabric. He also stresses the need to return to anonymous—rather than neoclassical—architecture to restore continuity in modern Greek architecture. These are effectively the ideas of Konstantinidis and Nikitas Patellis, who sign the co-authored introduction to the section on vernacular architecture in the Greek landscape, in the same issue.[150]

Konstantinidis's ties with Peters are so strong that the magazine does not 'leave any of [his] buildings unpublished'.[151] The Archaeological Museum in Ioannina (1964–66) is the only project from the 1967 feature on Greek architecture that Peters personally presents to the German-speaking audience.[152] Following the exhibition of Konstantinidis's work in Stuttgart in 1967, his friend Hans Eckstein goes one step further: he recommends the publication of a monograph on the Greek architect to Callwey, *Baumeister*'s publishing house. Although the German architectural historian's proposal does not eventually materialize as a book, after his retirement the architect recalls this incident as a token of the appreciation that was not accorded to him in his home country.[153] This may be why, in the last years of his life, Konstantinidis regards his German-speaking peers who continue to discuss his work outside Greece—such as Josef Krawina, Ellen Keckeis-Tobler, Jakob Zweifel, and Hans Dreher—as some of his few remaining friends.[154] The same is the case for architects such as Ernst Zietzschmann, who continues to review

Konstantinos Dekavallas, Vassilis Bogakos, Savas Condaratos, Nikos Sapountzis, Sigrid Patellis and Nikitas Patellis, Georgios Skiadaresis, and John G. Koutsis.

150 Cf. Paulhans Peters, '... der verdient zehn Jahre', *Baumeister* 64, no. 2 (February 1967), 134–5; Aris Konstantinidis and Nikitas Patellis, 'Anonyme Architektur—Die griechische Bautradition', *Baumeister* 64, no. 2 (February 1967), 181.

151 See Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 2, 154–5; also see vol. 3, 258–64; Themelis, *Ο λόγος του αρχιμάστορα*, 21.

152 See Paulhans Peters, 'Museum in Jannina', *Baumeister* 64, no. 2 (February 1967), 141–7.

153 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 3, 256–8.

154 See *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 3, 232; 'Elements for Self-Knowledge: Towards to a True Architecture. Aris Konstantinidis, 1975, Athen', *Bauen +*

Konstantinidis's books well into the 1980s after having also presented his renowned tourism projects to the German-speaking world earlier in the 1960s.[155] In the lonely years of his retirement, Konstantinidis both finds solace and takes pride in the German-speaking press's positive comments on his buildings, which reportedly 'stand in the Greek landscape as if they had always been there'.[156] By contrast, he has only a few remaining friends in Greece, such as Dimitris Fatouros,[157] who is the driving force behind Konstantinidis's honorary doctorate at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki in 1978—the only significant academic recognition of his work in his homeland.

But not only the personal ties with the German-speaking world reinforce Konstantinidis's bonds with architectural audiences beyond the Greek borders. His work also reaches the Anglophone world through several channels, including a collaboration of the Greek magazine *Αρχιτεκτονική* with *Architectural Review*, in 1961; Greek-Cypriot architect Panos Koulermos (1933–1999), who advises Kenneth Frampton on the monographic feature in *Architectural Design*, in 1964;[158] Greek publisher Orestis Doumanis (1929–2013), who systematically anthologizes Konstantinidis for the *World Architecture* series; and Aristidis Romanos (1937–2020) and Paul Oliver (1927–2017), who invite him to exhibit his work at the Architectural Association, in 1968. In the French-speaking world, Konstantinidis's work starts to be published in *L'architecture d'aujourd'hui* in 1956, when the magazine's

Wohnen 30, no. 1 (1976), 3; Josef Krawina, 'Ausstellung: Aris Konstantinidis, Athen, Gesamtwerkausstellung in der Nationalgalerie', *Werk, Bauen + Wohnen* 76, no. 10 (1989), 82–4.

155 Ernst Zietzschmann, 'Hotel Xenia auf Mykonos', *Bauen + Wohnen* 16, no. 6 (1962), 240–5; Ernst Zietzschmann, 'Motel "Xenia" in Kalambaka, Griechenland', *Bauen + Wohnen* 17, no. 6 (1963), 269–77; Ernst Zietzschmann, 'Ferien- und Hoteldorf in Paliouri auf Chalkidike, Nordgriechenland', *Bauen + Wohnen* 19, no. 6 (1965), 220–5; Ernst Zietzschmann, 'Neue Bücher: *Aris Konstantinidis, Projects + Buildings*', *Werk, Bauen + Wohnen* 69, no. 10 (1982), 68.

156 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 2, 94.

157 Themelis, *Ο λόγος του αρχιμάστορα*, 121.

158 See Giamarelos, *Resisting Postmodern Architecture*, 205.

Greek corespondent is Charalambos Sfaellos (1914–2004), his predecessor at the GNTO. Lastly, Greek architect Yannos Politis (1934–1994), who teaches in Aarhus in the late 1960s, establishes Konstantinidis's Scandinavian links in 1969.[159] Thus, the insular, inward-looking figure who writes alone in 1980s Athens has nothing in common with the globally networked Konstantinidis of the 1960s. The other side of his late-1960s stay in Zurich that the old author describes as lonely is that, within three years, he had the opportunity to activate his European networks and exhibit his work in five countries: at the University of Stuttgart and Zurich Polytechnic (1967), at the Architectural Association in London and the Bauzentrum in Vienna (1968), and at the School of Architecture in Aarhus and the Art Academy of Copenhagen (1969).

This is how the inflexible, mythical self-image, which also entraps the old Konstantinidis in a heroically tragic fate, starts to reveal its cracks. The Greek architect shows a different face to European publishers and curators; he conforms to their wishes more dutifully than he does to those of their Greek peers, such as Doumanis. Instead of issuing complaints in the form of open letters to the editors, which become longer than the article that the architect originally wanted to publish, he does not restore the phrases that the European editors omit even when he republishes these texts unencumbered, in Greek.[160] In his correspondence with European peers, he also resorts to kind formalities, even when he disagrees or discusses sensitive issues, such as his decision to step down from teaching in Zurich in 1970. He reserves his ironic tone for Doumanis or Greek clients with whom he clashes, such as the so-called Victor of his autobiography.[161]

Konstantinidis's publications outside Greece in the 1960s therefore unveil a much more cooperative and generous architect, one who is consistently overshadowed

159 See Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 2, 183–5, 191–2.

160 See Konstantinidis, *Για την αρχιτεκτονική*, 246–70, 193.

161 Cf. Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 2, 105, 51–61; Konstantinidis, *Για την αρχιτεκτονική*, 246–70.

by the uncompromisingly idealist persona of the autobiography. Instead of being the recalcitrant critic of almost everything, Konstantinidis resurfaces as an architect who opens the way for others to move forward. In the 1960s, he not only orchestrates a group of notable peers, but he also utilizes the strong ties that he retains with the German-speaking world to promote Greek architecture beyond national borders. Konstantinidis not only shares the spotlight with his peers at the GNTO, such as Triantafyllidis;[162] he also introduces European audiences to the work of promising Greek architects such as Suzana Antonakaki and Dimitris Antonakakis (fig. 11) and Nikos Valsamakis (b. 1924; see fig. 12).[163] Hence, his proactive publishing practice is not limited to self-promotion; it also sustains and reinforces the ties of modern Greek architecture with the world. And this subverts yet another persistent myth of his autobiography; namely, that Konstantinidis does not appreciate the work of his local peers (to the extent that he avoids speaking about modern Greek architecture when he is invited to do so twice, by the Bavarian Architectural Chamber and the Technical University of Munich, in 1977).[164]

Konstantinidis's ties with European peers and editors in the 1960s work both ways: not only without but also within Greece. In his homeland, Konstantinidis can count on the positive international reception of his work to shift the internal dynamics at the GNTO.[165] Between the enemy lines that he draws in his autobiography, the organization's 'greatest moments' also unveil Konstantinidis's cooperative self.[166] In

162 See Aris Konstantinidis and Yannis Triantafilidis, 'The Motel Comes to Greece', *Architectural Review* 130, no. 778 (December 1961), 394–8; Aris Konstantinidis and Yannis Triantafilidis, 'On the Aegean Shore', *Architectural Review* 134, no. 799 (September 1963), 160–4.

163 Aris Konstantinidis, 'Ferienhaus in Anabussos bei Athen', *md moebel interior design* 8 (August 1964), 387–9; Aris Konstantinidis, 'Schulmöbel für zurückgebliebene Kinder', *md moebel interior design* 6 (June 1967), 72–4.

164 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 2, 156; Themelis, *Ο λόγος του αρχιμάστορα*, 34–5.

165 See, for example, Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 1, 147.

166 See Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 1, 138–298, esp. 'Στον

md design

Für das Institut «Theotokos» in Athen – eine Schule für geistig zurückgebliebene Kinder – entwarfen die Architekten Dimitris und Susanne Antonakakis und Prof. D. Fatouros in Zusammenarbeit mit dem Psychiater P. Sakellaropoulos Möbel für Klassen- und Bastelräume, Ess- und Schlafzimmer. Da sie «Geräte» sein sollten, dem speziellen Training und der Therapie angepasst, arbeitete das Team eng mit den Wissenschaftlern des Instituts zusammen. Die Schwierigkeit des Entwurfs bestand darin, dass die Möbel aussergewöhnlich variabel sein mussten, denn die Kinder sind nicht ihrer Altersstufe entsprechend, sondern nach dem Stand ihrer geistigen Entwicklung eingeteilt. Hinzu kommt, dass diese Kinder im allgemeinen überaktiv sind; deshalb bedurfte es auch besonders stabiler, abgerundeter Möbel. Im Kindergarten können Bank und Hocker ihrem Zweck entsprechend, aber auch als Spielzeug benutzt werden. Ein Spezialfall ist «die Architektur in der Architektur» im Spielzimmer, flexible Elemente als Puppentheater, kleine «Häuser» und «Läden», ein- oder zweigeschossig verwendbar. Alle Möbel sind aus Buche, Verkleidungen aus Linoleum oder Formica.

Aris Konstantinidis

Schulmöbel für geistig zurückgebliebene Kinder

SCHULMÖBELDESIGN

Architects Dimitris and Susanne Antonakakis and Prof. D. Fatouros, together with psychiatrist P. Sakellaropoulos, designed furniture for the class- and workrooms, the dining and bedrooms of the «Theotokos» institute in Athens – a school for maladjusted children. As these had to be «tools», adapted to the special training and the therapy, the team worked in close cooperation with the institute's scientists. The difficulties of the design consisted of the fact that the furniture had to be exceptionally variable, for the children are not grouped according to their age levels, but in accordance with the level of their mental development. In addition, these children are generally over-active, so that the furniture had to be especially stable and smoothly-edged. In the kindergarten, the bench and stool can be used as such, but also as toys. A special case is the «architecture within the architecture» in the playroom, flexible elements as puppet-theatre, small «houses» and «shops», usable one- or two-storeyed. All the furniture is of beech, finishes are of linoleum or formica.

Aris Konstantinidis

Les architectes Dimitris et Susanne Antonakakis et le professeur D. Fatouros ont créé en coopération avec le psychiâtre P. Sakellaropoulos, pour l'Institut «Theotokos» à Athènes – une école pour enfants atteints de déficience mentale – des meubles pour classes et salles de bricolage, salles à manger et chambres à coucher. Comme il s'agissait de les concevoir comme des «appareils» pour exercices spéciaux et thérapie, l'équipe a coopéré étroitement avec les hommes de science de l'institut. La difficulté de

11 Aris Konstantinidis's publication of Suzana and Dimitris Antonakakis, 'Schulmöbel für zurückgebliebene Kinder', *md moebel interior design* 6 (June 1967), 72

Ferienhaus in Anabussos bei Athen

Dieses grosse Sommerhaus für eine fünfköpfige Familie liegt 47 km von Athen entfernt auf einem Felsen über dem Meer, nach Südwesten. Der grosse Dachüberstand vor dem Wohn-Essraum bietet Sonnenschutz, ohne den Ausblick zu beeinträchtigen. Die Schlafräume liegen einige Stufen tiefer in einem eigenen Flügel nach Osten. Das Skelett des Hauses besteht aus Stahlbeton, nur das Dach des Wohnraumes aus grossen Betonplatten, die Zwischenstützen entbehrlich machen. Wie in griechischen Bauernhäusern üblich, wurden die Wände aus Stein und Ziegelstein mit Zement behandelt und geschlämmt. Den Fussboden bedecken graublaue Keramikplatten. Aris Konstantinidis

12 Aris Konstantinidis's publication of Nikos Valsamakis, 'Ferienhaus in Anabussos bei Athen', *md moebel interior design* 8 (August 1964), 387

his own words, the team he orchestrates there works as 'an exemplary architectural office'.[167] Young Konstantinidis also seems to collaborate better with individuals with whom he does not always agree, such as Nikos Fokas. Even the old author of the autobiography admits that Fokas 'was the most competent General Secretary of the National Tourism Organization ever … he never wanted to obstruct me from building the architecture that I believed I should be making … he seemed to recognize in me skills that others could not see with their own eyes'.[168]

HISTORY IS A RELATIONSHIP

Behind the Greek architect's imposing presence in his numerous books, Konstantinidis himself remains an open-ended riddle. His recurring portrayal as a recluse idealist with a 'severely judgemental and often aggressive'[169] attitude to his fellow citizens' way of life effectively manifests his enduring hold over the imagination of architectural historians today. But this image of the stubborn polemicist who refuses to compromise and collaborate is hardly consistent with his numerous appointments in public posts and his commissions for large-scale projects. Konstantinidis could not have commanded such authority in Greek cultural life if he had been merely a lonely polemicist. This is why the crystallized persona of his late writings needs to be further opened up, contextualized, and interpreted in the historically grounded terms of its gradual formation. The historical thread that leads from his work at the GNTO, which also

Ελληνικό Οργανισμό Τουρισμού', 257.

167 Aris Konstantinidis, 'Τα νέα ξενοδοχεία του ΕΟΤ συνδυάζουν αρμονία με το τοπίο και τις κλιματολογικές συνθήκες', *Τουρισμός*, 1 May 1959, in Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 1, 258–60, here 258.

168 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 1, 150–1;also see vol. 1, 272–6, 294; Themelis, *Ο λόγος του αρχιμάστορα*, 93–6.

169 Nikos Magouliotis, 'Scary Architects and Scared Clients: A Portrait of Aris Konstantinidis', *San Rocco* 5 (2012), 157–64, here 157.

granted him access to international architectural publications, back to the native social circle that helped him to gain access to these state posts in the first place needs to be further unravelled.

Konstantinidis's parents had sufficient income to pay for his school education at Palladion, a private institution, and Varvakio, one of the best high schools in Greece. But they struggled to support his studies in 1930s Germany.[170] The architect's lower socio-economic background than that of his wife, with whom he wed in 1951, might have also ushered in his several disagreements with the wishes of clients who knocked on his door only after he had entered their upper-class circles through his marriage. A renowned sculptor in the history of Greek art, Mela was a rebellious woman whose parents belonged to the conservative elite of the country; they were closely associated with the royal family.[171] By contrast, towards the end of his life, Konstantinidis claimed that he had nothing in his name and even the apartment in which he spent his last years belonged to his by then ex-wife,[172] who still served as his safety net. This partially explains how Konstantinidis landed high-end commissions and prestigious public appointments from the 1950s onwards, whilst constantly disagreeing with his clients' bourgeois taste and worldviews. Their notable class divide in turn ushered in the notorious conflicts and clashes that prevail in his autobiography. Konstantinidis was therefore primarily oppositional to a privileged social circle,[173] from which he nonetheless also rose to key posts of influence and power. Operating from within this upper-class circle, the architect's practice also served as a cultural critique of the establishment. This is especially significant in the context of critical regionalism abroad today. Unlike his global 'superstar' peers,

170 See Livani, 'Τύπος και τόπος', 87–8, 94.

171 See Maria Koutsouri, dir., *Η γλύπτρια Ναταλία Μελά σήμερα*, Hellenic Public Radio and Television, 2006, https://archive.ert.gr/55886/.

172 Themelis, *Ο λόγος του αρχιμάστορα*, 97–8.

173 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 183 (28 March 1984).

Konstantinidis fulfilled the potential of remaining a critic from within, even when working from a privileged position entangled with the capitalist network of the global tourism industry.

Even the scholars who remain unconvinced by Konstantinidis's texts share the conviction that his built work has an autonomous value of its own.[174] His mute buildings could indeed speak volumes, expressing his ideas better than their creator's writings.[175] This is also testified by the positive reception of their repeated publication worldwide by audiences for whom the bulk of Konstantinidis's writings in Greek remained inaccessible. As such, any tension between the architect's words and projects also goes unnoticed by European scholars such as István Szilágyi, who asserts that the 'building practice of Konstantinidis is consistent with his theoretical maxims'.[176] Sadly, several of his most important works, such as the derelict hotel 'Triton' on Andros, now speak the cruel language of abandonment (see fig. 13). If these buildings could write, they would probably do so with the resentment of the old Konstantinidis in his loneliest hours. But, just like their architect in his old age, they would also be wrong to think that they are speaking alone, only to themselves.

During his graduate studies in Oxford in 2012, a young Greek architect, Konstantinos Papaoikonomou, roamed the country to record the current state of 'Xenia' hotels and motels. In the process, he also recorded anonymous vernacular structures similar to those that used to move Konstantinidis, as they still stand in the Greek landscape.[177] This young twenty-first-century architect found inspiration for his work not only in the ruins of his older peer's buildings but also in a ruin of the 2010s debt crisis: a concrete frame that still

174 See, for instance, Tsiambaos, 'Τόπος, λαός και κτίσμα', 218; Kizis, 'Modern Greek Myths', 261.

175 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 114 (3 Dec. 1979).

176 Szilágyi, *Aris Konstantinidis*, 20.

177 Konstantinos N. Papaoikonomou, 'XENIA ReLoaDed: A Travelogue in the Footsteps of Aris Konstantinidis' (MArchD thesis, Oxford Brookes University, 2013).

13 Aris Konstantinidis, hotel ‘Triton’ on Andros (1958) in 2016

anticipates its completion. Seven decades earlier, an equally young Konstantinidis did the same when looking at the 'still smoking' ruins of late-1940s Athens.[178] Evidently, the Greek architect never spoke only to himself, as he ended up thinking towards the end of his life. Several architects listened, even when he was relentlessly outpouring his most disappointed diatribes,[179] and others can still discern his most valuable architectural insights out of their own volition, in the terms of their own age. Some of them are even ready to save what remains of Konstantinidis's undeservedly dilapidated buildings in Greece today.[180]

As such, the fact that the old Greek architect left this world more than three decades ago does not obstruct one from carrying their own Konstantinidis within them today. A history that merits constant revisits is not a static object but a relationship that one personally cultivates, renews, and continuously develops. Like Konstantinidis, one always keeps from the past that which helps them to become what they want in the present. Still, if history is a relationship, then the current researcher of the Greek architect's work also needs to problematize their position within his own gaze. As I show in the next chapter, Konstantinidis's global editorship has not historically allowed his buildings to speak as autonomously as one might initially expect.

178 Konstantinidis, 'Αρχιτεκτονημένη ανοικοδόμηση', 66 .

179 See, for example, Takis Alexiou, '"Αμαρτωλοί και κλέφτες": 20 χρόνια μετά. Αφιέρωμα στον Άρη Κωνσταντινίδη', *Ενημερωτικό Δελτίο ΤΕΕ* 2478 (3 March 2008), 56–7.

180 Christos Ignatakis et al., 'Hotel "XENIA"—Paliouri, Chalkidiki, Greece: Evaluation—Assessment of the Structural System Alternative Proposals for Strengthening or Reconstruction', *3ο Πανελλήνιο Συνέδριο Αντισεισμικής Μηχανικής & Τεχνικής Σεισμολογίας* (2008), Article 2073.

GLOBAL EDITORSHIP

> "What is your favourite building and why?"
> "Weekend House at Anavyssos by Konstantinidis. The combination of the plan, the site and the tectonic is stunning."[181]

Irish architect Brendan Woods's spontaneous response to the *Architects' Journal* demonstrates the emblematic place that Aris Konstantinidis's Weekend House in Anavyssos (1962–64) holds within the Greek architect's oeuvre, for global audiences. This project is indeed frequently selected to exemplify his attempt not only 'to harness tradition, technology, and simplicity in his work, employing clear geometries', but also to 'suggest a life lived outdoors, Konstantinidis's beloved theme'.[182] With its semi-enclosed spaces forming a southwest-facing L-shape veranda adjacent to the enclosed living areas of the house, this is the building in which his conception of architecture reportedly 'comes into its own'.[183] Looking like a simple 3-meter-high oblong prism from a distance, the house is articulated around three parallel 18.50-meter-long stone walls, covered by a single concrete slab. Successive openings in these three parallel walls, which follow the 2-meter steps of their underlying grid, clearly demonstrate Konstantinidis's priorities: in a total area of 175 square meters, indoor living spaces cover a meagre 60 square meters, whilst the adjacent semi-enclosed areas that open up to the view of the Saronic Gulf become the main part of the house at 84 square meters (with the total area of the stone walls and their intermediate openings adding up to 31 square meters).

181 'Q&A: Brendan Woods, Brendan Woods Architects', *Architects' Journal* 219, no. 2 (2004), 26.

182 'Konstantinidis, Aris (1913–93) Greek Architect', in Susan Wilson and James Stevens Curl, eds., *The Oxford Dictionary of Architecture*, 3rd ed. (Oxford University Press, 2015); Tzonis and Rodi, *Greece*, 182.

183 Georgiadis, '"... die schönen, einfachen Werte"', 68.

Today, this small house also serves to epitomize a centuries-long history of Mediterranean architecture;[184] it has become so well known that it is even casually mentioned in passing in students' theses across the world.[185] But, as I argue in this chapter, this is only partly the result of global audiences' capacity to appreciate spatial qualities that speak for themselves. In the same way that twentieth-century architects utilized both architectural media and landmark buildings to project and disseminate the ideas of the modern movement,[186] the Weekend House conveys Konstantinidis's critical regionalism. The Greek architect's message for a regionally informed variant of modern architecture has been propagated not only through his project's inherent qualities or the simplicity of his architectural means but also through his close engagement with photography and publishing.

Interpreting his claim that he also approached his books, lectures, and exhibitions as architectural works at face value,[187] critic Yorgos Tzirtzilakis argues that Konstantinidis blurred the distinction between the means of producing and those of representing architecture; he showed that 'curatorial activity and writing are neither separable from nor independent of the architectural practice, but are integrated in its constructional core'.[188] This intense curatorial activity was not limited to the years of his retirement that I discussed in the previous chapter. Konstantinidis already engaged with

184 See, for example, Stefanos Antoniadis, 'La Tettonica Semantica: Aris Konstantinídis, Casa Papapanagiótou ad Anávyssos, Grecia, 1962–1963', in Paolo Carlotti, Dina Nencini, and Pisana Posocco, eds., *Mediterranei: Traduzioni della modernità* (Franco Angeli, 2014), 242–57; Vincenzo Moschetti, *Camere Azzurre: Costruzione di un' Antologia Mediterranea: Da Palladio a Peter Märkli* (Firenze University Press, 2020), 61, 86.

185 See Joana Marques Dias da Silva Vieira, 'Habitar o parque: Definição de uma identidade tipológica' (master's thesis, Universidade de Lisboa, 2013).

186 See Beatriz Colomina, *Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media* (MIT Press, 1994).

187 Konstantinidis, *Projects + Buildings*, 278.

188 Yorgos Tzirtzilakis, 'The Tectonic of Curating: The Ethnographic Imaginary of the Vernacular in the Architecture of Aris Konstantinidis', *South as a State of Mind* 3 (Fall–Winter 2013), 124–9, here 129.

such editorial practices to get his architectural message out to the world in the 1960s. Before the theorists of critical regionalism had written a single line on the subject, the Greek architect utilized architectural media to his advantage. Combined with the eventual abandonment of his buildings and the long-standing inaccessibility of his curated private archive, his editorial practices historically created a hermetic zone around his projects. With his view steadily imposed on the work, his overarching architectural vision was also amplified in a way that it could not, arguably, be recuperated by the rising media complex of the 1980s. As such, his case is perhaps unique in the context of critical regionalism abroad.

In this chapter, I examine Konstantinidis's editorial practices and their worldwide proliferation to show how the Greek architect also curated the very reception of his work by the international audiences that are now familiar with it. Konstantinidis's editorship was global in both senses of the term: leaving no aspect of his work to escape his controlling gaze, it also enabled his architectural vision to be internationally disseminated in his own terms. As his publisher Stavros Petsopoulos recalls, 'we had never allowed anybody else to design their books like this before', including their interior covers and the occasionally 'amazing hand-made collage of blown-up and scaled-down photographs', all of which were gathered in 'independently laid-out pages to be photographed' for publication.[189] Following the published life of the Weekend House in Anavyssos over six decades, I retrace the establishment of Konstantinidis's gaze; that is, the specific worldview that conditioned the global reception of this project. In his related publications, the combination of the printed word with the built work—personally photographed by the architect to be reproduced on paper—renders this project an embodiment of his architectural theory. Konstantinidis's global editorship of the Weekend House promoted it

189 Stavros Petsopoulos, email to Stylianos Giamarelos, 14 February 2014.

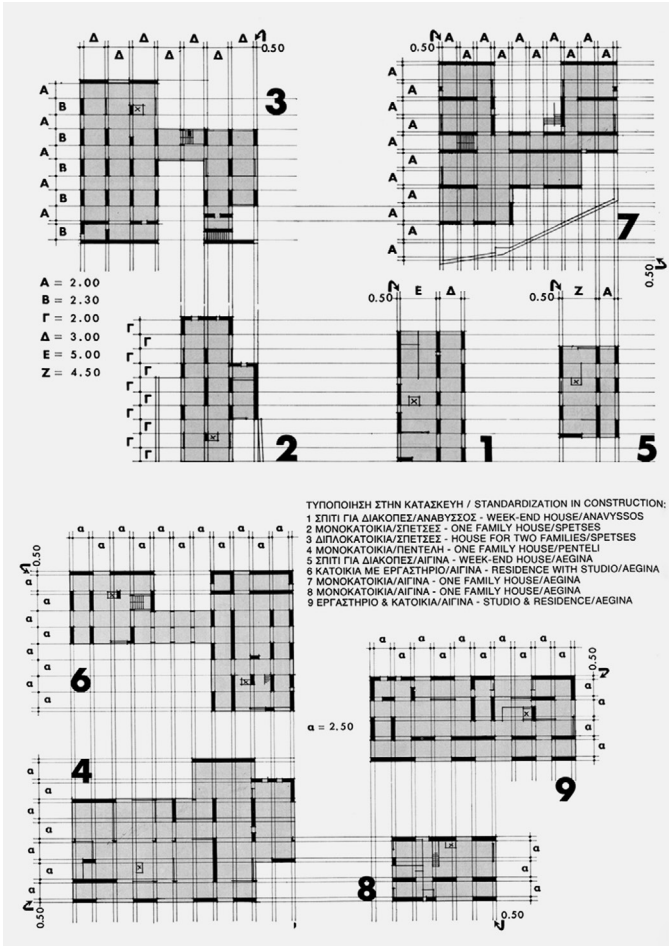
as an exemplary 'vessel of life', when historically the building hosted almost no life at all: it was barely inhabited by its original owner and his successors, who soon abandoned it. The rich life that the building enjoyed in architectural publications over the same six decades, by contrast, owes to its architect's editorial practices, through which he doubly built this work to be received as canonical.

1962–1983: A LIFE PUBLISHED BY KONSTANTINIDIS

The list of publications about the Weekend House in Anavyssos, as published by Konstantinidis in 1987,[190] shows that the rich life already enjoyed by this project in print, within and without Greece, was cautiously orchestrated by its architect. This is the house he chose to publish more than any other. Regarding it as especially significant, he also presented it as such. As a result, while some of his 'Xenia' hotel projects or the Archaeological Museum of Ioannina enjoyed similarly extensive press coverage, the small Weekend House constantly returns as a logotype of Konstantinidis's own creation or of Greek and Mediterranean regional architecture at large.

In his comprehensive monograph *Projects + Buildings* (1981), which was designed and edited by the retired Konstantinidis, the Weekend House holds the first place in the diagram that outlines its architect's approach to standardizing construction through nine house projects (see fig. 14). While the grid is not as pronounced in the three parallel load-bearing stone walls of the house in Anavyssos, it still defines the pace at which these walls are interrupted to open the main living areas up to the view. Serving as the culmination of his experimentations with the self-commissioned paper projects of the previous two decades, this is the first work in which the main house-type of his architecture is crystallized. Konstantinidis's diagram suggests that this basic model was

190 Konstantinidis, *Για την αρχιτεκτονική*, 343.



14 The Weekend House in Anavyssos presented as the initial generator of the architect's 'standardization in construction' model that was developed in eight more house projects, in Aris Konstantinidis, *Projects + Buildings* (Agra, 1981), 220–1

reworked with only slight adjustments in the steps of the grid and their combinations throughout his career. Referring to this diagram, architectural historian Panayotis Tournikiotis adds that it summarizes not only the use of the grid but also Konstantinidis's entire approach to building in the Greek context; repeated as a type 'with very few variations' throughout his career, the small house in Anavyssos therefore represents both 'the framework of a problem' and 'the final solution' to it.[191]

The architect always reserved a spot for characteristic images of the Weekend House, even in his largely unrelated publications—where it is still featured in inside covers.[192] The building is never absent from major moments in the life of its architect, who also kept its photograph pinned in his office. In one of his last interviews, Konstantinidis characteristically refers to this 'small house' as holding a special place in his heart. His choice of the diminutive term *σπιτάκι* (little house) instead of *σπίτι* (house) in the original Greek additionally indicates his affection for the project. Equally suggestive is his 'rage' against the original owner, who did not appreciate the house and abandoned it almost to ruination.[193] Even posthumously, the Weekend House is present as one of the nine selected buildings featured in the exhibition of Konstantinidis's work in the United States in 1998.[194]

This building, an architecture that Konstantinidis promotes as 'geographical' (i.e., organically connected with the Greek landscape and climate), is first published abroad, in Germany in 1964.[195] Practical issues aside, such as the availability of only two architectural periodicals in early-1960s Greece (as of 1962, both of them had extensively covered his

191 Tournikiotis, 'Dwelling Is a Place for Language', 49.

192 See, for instance, the inside covers of the three volumes of Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, and Konstantinidis, *Για την αρχιτεκτονική*.

193 Themelis, *Ο λόγος του αρχιμάστορα*, 92–3.

194 See Fessas-Emmanouil, 'Ο Άρης Κωνσταντινίδης στην Αμερική'.

195 See *Baumeister* 61, no. 12 (December 1964), 1395–7.

projects),[196] the publication of this work abroad first might also reflect Konstantinidis's conviction that his conception of human dwelling is ecumenical. His envisioned 'true architecture' can therefore be applied anywhere—but not as an international style; it is generalizable as an exportable 'type' only inasmuch as different places share similar conditions.[197] This is the core of Konstantinidis's critical regionalism abroad in practice, as he attempts to bring together ecumenically 'true' principles with local specificities.

Possibly the most important of Konstantinidis's initial attempts to communicate his work to a global audience is the first English-language publication of the Weekend House in *World Architecture 2*, in 1965. This is the second appearance of Konstantinidis's work in John Donat's annual series but the first time the Greek architect writes the text that introduces his work to his international peers. Effectively operating as 'a forum for ideas', the second volume of the series 'is more concerned with why we build and what we build than with how we build it … the real issues are philosophical, not technological; not how to build but what to build'.[198] Konstantinidis's first foray into this global forum is a two-page manifesto on dwelling, illustrated by his photographs and a plan drawing of the Weekend House. Notably, his text does not refer to them (see figs. 15, 16). The house that is supposedly presented on the same pages therefore serves as an emblem that has been selected to represent its architect's oeuvre. For both him and the global audiences of his work, this is literally Konstantinidis's 'built worldview', in the words of Austrian critic Friedrich Achleitner, that the architect approvingly cites in his autobiography.[199] This is how

196 See *Αρχιτεκτονική* 36, no. 11–12 (November–December 1962), 72–82; *Ζυγός* 82–3 (July–August 1962), 27–50.

197 Konstantinidis, *Σύγχρονη αληθινή αρχιτεκτονική*, 46–7, 10, 26–7, 29–30. Cf. Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 192 (21 June 1984), 226–7 (25 March 1985), 311–12 (30 June 1988).

198 Donat, *World Architecture*, vol. 2 (1965), 128–31. See also Donat, *World Architecture*, vol. 1 (1964), 119, 122–3.

199 Friedrich Achleitner, 'Vielfalt und Typus', *Die Presse*, 29/30 June 1968, 6.

the Weekend House in Anavyssos becomes his concrete manifesto on the primordial essence of architecture: austere dwelling in an unadulterated landscape. As a model for his overarching vision, this house is his already built response to Donat's philosophical question. Combined with Konstantinidis's general account of dwelling, the photographs of the Weekend House thus render it as iconic; it effectively stands for architecture itself.

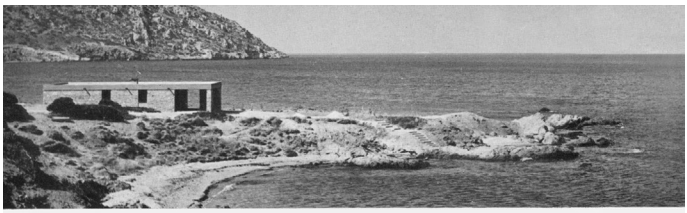
Only three years earlier, in 1962, Konstantinidis had employed a similar editorial stratagem for the first monographic presentation of his oeuvre in the Greek journal *Ζυγός* (Libra). To introduce his work, he shared his reflections on architecture in general, without referring to any of his buildings in particular.[200] His introductory text in Greek therefore has a lot in common with his text for the publication of the Weekend House in *World Architecture 2*; as alternative iterations of the same fundamental propositions, the two texts in Greek and English are essentially one and the same. Rendering this same text relevant both to the sum of his work and to a specific building of his, Konstantinidis also foregrounds the Weekend House as the quintessential embodiment of his architecture.

In his Greek text of 1962, the year in which he also completed his design for the Weekend House, Konstantinidis mentions that 'this publication does not include unrealized works and studies, nor projects that are currently under construction but have not yet been completed'.[201] Two years later, in 1964, the Weekend House has been built but is still missing from the monographic feature on the Greek architect's work in *Architectural Design*. That is, Konstantinidis's buildings do not start to exist at the end of the construction process but only when they are first photographed by their architect. Photographing completed projects forms part of

See also Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 2, 30.

200 Aris Konstantinidis, 'Άρης Κωνσταντινίδης', *Ζυγός* 82–3 (1962), 27.

201 Konstantinidis, 'Άρης Κωνσταντινίδης', 27.



SUMMER HOUSE, ANAVYSSO

Architect

Aris Konstantinidis

In the exercise of his profession the architect fulfils a mission that requires cultural and intellectual supremacy because his work reflects not only the techniques but also — and most pre-eminently so — the spirit, the social behaviour, the manners and customs and the deep roots of man's soul and sensitivity in any given period.

In this way, true architecture, standing above and beyond the ephemeral and the temporary, gives form to the functions of life according to the social conditions and the spiritual climate of each country.

The architect assigns himself the task of providing the framework for a comfortable and fruitful life within the community. The architect works, as it were, for a way of life suitable to all; his forms should be valid for all.

Sound construction is essential for sound architecture; without it there can be no architecture at all. Construction means to use each material according to its own static and morphological characteristics; stone, concrete, steel or glass cannot all be treated in one and the same way.

My opinion is that today we can use any materials for architectural purposes. It is true that economic or technical reasons often compel us to use one rather than another, but along with this, I believe that in some circumstances we will choose a material independently of financial or structural logic. We will choose one particular material because the site — the landscape — where we build will not allow us to comply with the precepts of pure logic or of finances alone; in such cases we will rather trust our feeling and our plastic imagination, because no work can succeed unless it integrates itself into the landscape.

We must admit that in certain cases the morphology of the landscape will impose the use of a particular material which would be excluded elsewhere, in a different environment.

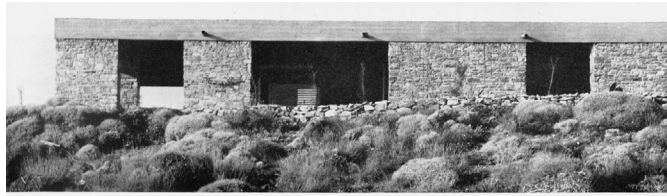
I believe that the landscape, even the climate and the disposition of physical space are decisive in determining the structural methods, the functional arrangement and, finally, the plastic form of architecture.

Without landscape, climate and soil — but also manners and customs — there can be no architecture. For architecture is *geographic*; it springs from the earth as the trees, the bushes and the flowers. Thus every building, big or small, grows on a particular site as a self-evident natural element, to co-exist there with man, yet on its own right to have stature, meaning and soul.

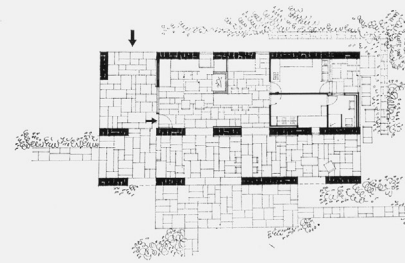
The architect works to portray the time in which he lives. What we build today is contemporary not simply because we are using contemporary materials and up-to-date structural possibilities, but because the spirit that animates our understanding is contemporary.

128

15 'Summer House in Anavysso' [The Weekend House in Anavyssos] as Aris Konstantinidis's architectural manifesto, in John Donat, ed., *World Architecture*, vol. 2 (Studio Vista, 1965), 128



Photos: Konstantinidis



These thoughts aim at stressing the point that there is little significance in originality for its own sake or for the sake of calling ourselves 'modern'. If we are presented today with the possibility of creating something new it is not because of the new materials — and the new methods of construction that encourage the most astonishing technical acrobatics (instead of forms we only make faces) — but because the spirit inhabiting our structures corresponds to the demands of time and place; in this way our work will be an achievement of the intellect, yet deeply rooted within, and representative, I should say, of a new way of integrating ourselves to our environment, nature and landscape.

And there is perhaps something else, new and peculiar to our times, compared with more remote periods; our conception of the environment has been altered because nature and landscape have ceased to be mere pictures, to become the *space in which we live*, in which we can find comfort, beauty and health. Thus we live *along with nature*. We rush, almost naked, to the mountains, the valleys and the seas — and to the athletic or sports grounds — and we live closer to the elements of the landscape in which we were born. We are therefore faced today, perhaps for the first time, with this possibility: we can build within the landscape and we can integrate the inside and the outside in a harmonious whole that will serve the purposes of a comfortable, functional life, on an essentially spiritual and artistic level.

With regard to this new spiritual *synthesis*, we cannot minimize the contribution of the more recent techniques, materials and ways of construction. Nevertheless my belief is that we owe this synthetic initiative to the more recent spiritual, artistic and humanistic ideals upon which our innermost desires feed when we strive today not only for materialistic comfort and ease, but also for a more spiritual way of living.

Today we are moulding spaces for living in which the building and the landscape function together as one organism — a synthetic and aesthetic whole — so that architecture can become a part of our lives — space for the human spirit.

Aris Konstantinidis

16 Konstantinidis, 'Summer House in Anavysso', in Donat, *World Architecture*, 129

a building process that follows his own pace. Even if the Weekend House was not yet completed when the Greek architect had to submit his publication materials to London, he could have still included his final construction drawings for it, but he chose not to do so. Under this light, his tirelessly repeated motto 'I find the solution in situ' and his claim that he does not iteratively develop his ideas on the drawing board (since each project is already conceived in its entirety during the site visit) acquire a very special meaning.[202] With his eye behind the camera, Konstantinidis literally 'builds' the photograph of his work on the site as a retrospective validation of his assertions. He is in absolute control of the game of publication, since its rules are set, defined, and defied at will, only by himself.

In the absence of published working drawings of the Weekend House, Konstantinidis does not expose the mechanisms that generate his project on the site, including its exact placement in the landscape. Staying true to his words in theory, he photographs his buildings as if they are naturally sprouting from the ground in practice. While Konstantinidis's photographs of his work are hardly unconventional for his time, they consistently propagate his architectural vision in conjunction with the manifesto-sounding words of his accompanying texts. Since there is no room for the backstage iterative drawing process in his publications of the Weekend House, the architect could even claim that these photographs are exactly the images that sprang to his mind during the site visit. And, paradoxically, he would not be lying. His photographs play the role of 'first sketches' in his publications; they are constructed to demonstrate the primary architectural qualities that interest him. Among others, these qualities include the atmosphere and the kind of dwelling encouraged by his spaces; the attempt to link indoor and outdoor space as a single 'organic entity';[203] the

202 See Konstantinidis, *Projects + Buildings*, 262–3.
203 Aris Konstantinidis, 'Architecture', *Architectural Design* 34, no. 5 (1964),

clear articulation of the building structure; and the rhythmic steps of the underlying grid in his elevations.

From his earliest diary entries to the writings and interviews of his retirement, Konstantinidis repeatedly asserts that the elevation 'comes forth in the most natural way' through the plan and section drawings.[204] On the rare occasions that he publishes final drawings of the Weekend House, however, the section does not unequivocally lead to a single elevation (e.g., the size of windows and other openings on the parallel walls could easily vary), unless his proposed grid for the standardization of construction has been crystallized in all three dimensions—and the architect's publications suggest that this first occurs in his design for the Weekend House in Anavyssos.[205] This is how Konstantinidis can 'see' the modules of the stone walls rising and creating their own rhythms in space when he works on the plan drawing. That is, he is simultaneously drawing in his mind, alongside the plan, not only the elevation but also the section; they all form part of a holistic conception of the project through the three-dimensional orthogonal grid in which the standardized dimensions of the building's constitutive elements are already integrated.

On the few occasions that Konstantinidis comments on the Weekend House in various publications, his account is minimal, almost downright descriptive. Instead of specifically presenting the building, his texts constantly reformulate his overarching manifesto. In so doing, they shape a framework for interpreting his images as he intends, without him referring directly to them. In the early 1960s, when the photograph is still widely regarded as an indisputable document that 'captures' but does not mediate the real, Konstantinidis

212; cf. Konstantinidis, *Σύγχρονη αληθινή αρχιτεκτονική*.

204 See Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 28–9 (9 January 1938); Konstantinidis, *Projects + Buildings*, 263; Themelis, *Ο λόγος του αρχιμάστορα*, 104.

205 See Bernard Wolgensinger and Jacques Debaigts, eds., *Ferienhäuser in Europa* (Callwey, 1968), 146–9.

insists on personally photographing his own buildings. This initiates the process of total control that historically has rendered his own gaze as dominant on his work. Publishers with limited access to his architecture in situ had only his photographs at their disposal. For practical reasons, his work therefore reached them already mediated by Konstantinidis. But through this photographic monopoly of a privileged moment in time, which can never be retrieved from a different aspect by the future historian, the architect's own testimony of the embryonic stage of the building becomes both historically unique and irrevocably exclusive. This is even more pronounced when Konstantinidis's buildings are eventually abandoned to ruination (see fig. 13). His photographs then remain the only documents of the architectural vision behind them.

All of the above constitute the Greek architect's global editorship, which influences the work of international scholars such as István Szilágyi, whose 1982 monograph is especially appreciated by Konstantinidis for the 'great understanding' and '*love*' with which it was written.[206] As the Hungarian architect discusses his Greek peer's built projects in succession, the Weekend House in Anavyssos stands out. It is the only project in Szilágyi's text that is directly associated with a quotation by Konstantinidis (who is cited only once more in the Hungarian scholar's concluding summation of the Greek architect's overarching vision). Once again, the impression that the Weekend House epitomizes Konstantinidis's 'design values' is subtly reinforced.[207] As such, this small house is always escorted by its creator in multiple ways. Repeatedly disseminated through his own photographs, it is also frequently accompanied by its architect's words, which reinforce his domineering gaze over the building. Unlike his projects, which could be irreversibly distorted over time, his

206 Aris Konstantinidis to István Szilágyi, 7 June 1990, Aris Konstantinidis private archive (emphasis in the original).

207 Szilágyi, *Aris Konstantinidis*, 13–14, 16.

words remain unchanged on the printed page. This is why, in addition to building, Konstantinidis regards writing as an extra 'weapon' in the multifarious battles that architects fight.[208] His tight control over every aspect of his built work does not go unnoticed by Szilágyi, who underscores its affinities with the 'ideal of total architecture', where even the minutest detail 'is part of the architect's work'. The project as a whole therefore 'corresponds to the purposes' that Konstantinidis both designs and defines in his publications.[209]

The Greek architect's visual monopoly over his work was long-lasting; it took two decades for the Weekend House to be photographed from other angles that offered different views. This time, the eye behind the camera belonged to Dimitris Philippidis, who was then writing his comprehensive history of architecture in modern Greece. In his book, Philippidis still follows Konstantinidis's lead in discussing the Weekend House in terms of 'dwelling in the pristine landscape' and the 'almost ascetic' austerity of the design that exemplifies the affinity of the architect's work with 'traditional building in the countryside'.[210] As such, the new photographs do not alter Philippidis's view of the building. But they might have instigated his later interest in Konstantinidis's photographic practices.

1984–2001: A PUBLISHED LIFE IN KONSTANTINIDIS'S SHADOW

In 1997, Philippidis analyzes the way in which Konstantinidis photographs his projects for his publications. Remarking that the Greek architect's work is known 'only through his own eyes', Philippidis observes that Konstantinidis's photographs are almost always frontal (indeed, they echo

208 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 139 (22 August 1980), 121 (20 February 1980).

209 Szilágyi, *Aris Konstantinidis*, 21.

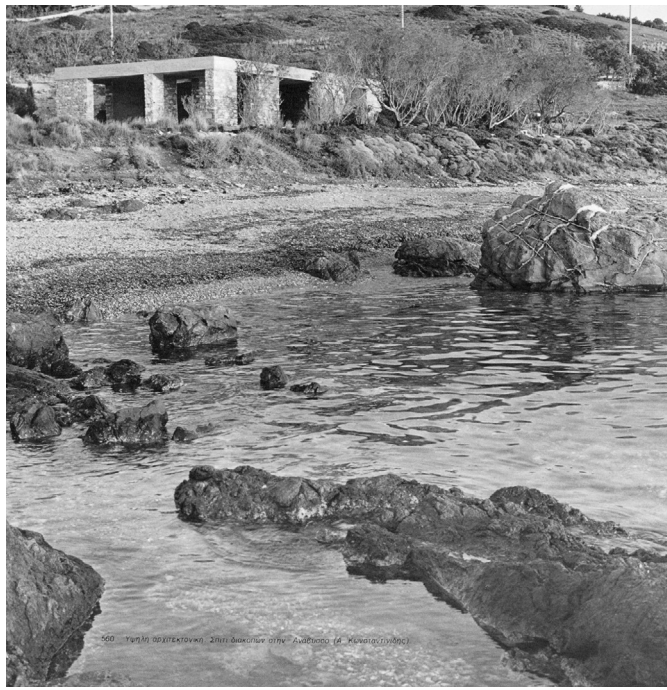
210 Philippidis, *Νεοελληνική αρχιτεκτονική*, 370–1.

elevation drawings); even on the rare occasions that they are not, they offer one-point perspectives. The historian also extrapolates the fundamental elements of Konstantinidis's architectural gaze from his photographic practices. These range from preferred viewing angles and framings to details that he chooses to isolate inside or outside of his buildings. Philippidis shows that, in Konstantinidis's photographs of indoor spaces, the architect pursues 'richness in oppositional elements' (i.e., both lightness and texture or volume) to produce a 'replete' image. For Philippidis, Konstantinidis thus emerges as unexpectedly 'sensitive' and 'earthly'; a 'luscious organizer of space'.[211]

Philippidis's choice to photograph the building afresh for his 1984 publication can therefore be read as an exercise in reception. Perhaps unconsciously, the historian then moves away from some features that he later foregrounds as constitutive of the architect's gaze. The photographs that Philippidis publishes are two-point perspectives, offering two framings that present novel aspects of the building. The view of the Weekend House from the seaside stands out, since it reveals the 'back side' of the most published photograph of the house (fig. 17).

Konstantinidis's original photograph accentuates how the Weekend House is 'macroscopically' inscribed in the landscape (as viewed from Athinon-Souniou Avenue). Conversely, Philippidis presents the 'microscopic' version of the same theme, revealing the minutiae of the building's relationship with its immediate environment. The historian's second photograph in turn echoes the architect's original framing of the side view of the building, from an angle that stresses its harmonic relation with the outline of the natural landscape. In Philippidis's photograph, however, the theme seems to be defined by its background. In the intervening decades between the two photographs, the hillside was covered with two-storey houses whose architecture is certainly not

211 Philippidis, *Πέντε δοκίμια*, 57–8.



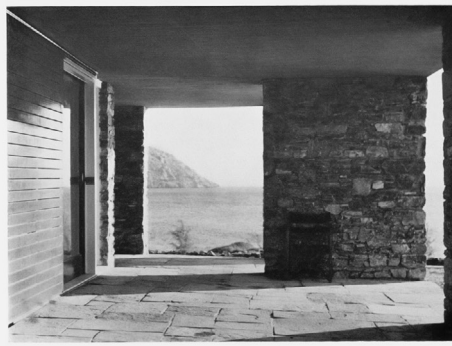
17 The Weekend House in Anavyssos, in Dimitris Philippidis, *Νεοελληνική αρχιτεκτονική: Αρχιτεκτονική θεωρία και πράξη (1830–1980) σαν αντανάκλαση των ιδεολογικών επιλογών της νεοελληνικής κουλτούρας* (Melissa, 1984), 424

aligned with Konstantinidis's conception of dwelling. The historian's early-1980s shot therefore testifies to the architect's polemical isolation from the construction boom of a rapidly modernizing country. This is when the retired Konstantinidis begins to believe that his vision for a 'true' architecture that sustains authentic dwelling is bound to remain in the realm of the ideal—only to be hinted at through his idyllic photographs.

Konstantinidis never photographs the same space twice. Slight modifications in the configuration of furniture and everyday objects that travel from one photograph of the Weekend House to the next, from one niche to another shelf on the stone walls, demonstrate his deliberate flexibility in the use of such details. Printed, large scale, as they immediately follow his short manifesto on dwelling in *World Architecture 2*,[212] these photographs narrate acts of Konstantinidean dwelling (see figs. 18, 19). The images are prescriptive: not limited to depicting, they are also intended to make something happen. On the pages of *World Architecture 2*, that is, the textual is immediately followed by a visual architectural manifesto. The combination of these two different sorts of manifestos renders this publication canonizing in the history of this building's reception as emblematic of Konstantinidis's overarching vision for architecture.

Rather significantly, the readers do not see the private spaces of the Weekend House behind the living room. Apparently, this darker sleeping zone, which forms the enclosed core of the house, has not been photographed precisely because the Weekend House is intended to narrate a different story. Despite its frequent description as a summer house, in Konstantinidis's mind (and possibly against the wishes of its original owner, Panayotis Papapanagiotou) this building is not intended to host idle vacationers and lavish dinner parties. In the sparse and minimal descriptions of the house

212 Donat, *World Architecture*, vol. 2 (1965), 130–1.



18 Aris Konstantinidis, 'Summer House in Anavysso' [The Weekend House in Anavyssos], in John Donat, ed., *World Architecture*, vol. 2 (Studio Vista, 1965), 130

Photos: Konstantinidis

This is a summer house, not for permanent residence. It has a large living-room with fireplace, and sofas also used for beds. The dining area is defined by a table next to the fireplace. There is a kitchenette and a small bedroom. In front of all these enclosed areas a deep covered verandah is ranged, so that one can sit in the shadow looking at the sea. The entire house is constructed with local stone masonry, and is roofed by a reinforced concrete slab.
The covered verandah is supported by walls designed to create shadowed areas when the sun sets.

19 Konstantinidis, 'Summer House in Anavysso', in Donat, *World Architecture*, 131

in his publications, the architect presents a vision of dwelling that is opposed to a quietist life of relaxing indoors: 'The interior furnishings were reduced to a minimum as life is primarily directed towards the sea'.[213] Indeed, Konstantinidis suggests that sleeping should also take place in the living room, especially since its 'sliding doors [can open] onto the verandah' and the 'sofas [can] also [be] used for beds'.[214] Because the Weekend House is designed to organize the landscape 'not as an image, but as a living space', 'as an architectural space … integrating the exterior and interior into one space',[215] his emphasis is always on the 'semi-open living area'. 'Protect[ing] the interior from the afternoon sun',[216] Konstantinidis envisions his architecture as enabling its residents to live with nature even in this 'arid and harsh landscape on the Athens to Sounion road'.[217] The Weekend House primarily celebrates human dwelling under a roof that is designed to enable its harmonious integration with the natural landscape during the course of the day: 'The covered verandah is supported by walls designed to create shadowed areas when the sun sets'.[218]

Owing to the limitations of the printing industry of the time, Konstantinidis is very selective in publishing colour photographs. Still, in the Greek National Gallery exhibition catalogue of 1989, the colour photograph of the Weekend House as it is harmoniously integrated into the landscape of Anavyssos is the only image spread over two pages.[219] As such, it also exemplifies Konstantinidis's holistic conception of colour in architecture:

213 Wolgensinger and Debaigts, *Ferienhäuser in Europa*, 146.

214 Donat, *World Architecture*, vol. 2 (1965), 131.

215 Konstantinidis, 'Architecture', 212.

216 Aris Konstantinidis, 'Summer House near Sounion', *Art + Design in Greece* 2 (1971), 34–8, here 34.

217 Wolgensinger and Debaigts, *Ferienhäuser in Europa*, 146.

218 Donat, *World Architecture*, vol. 2 (1965), 131.

219 Efi Agathonikou and Olga Mentzafou, eds., *Aris Konstantinidis*, exh. cat. (National Gallery, 1989), 56–7.

> The prevailing colors of a small or large structure are those of its stone walls and concrete parapet, both in their natural condition. In this case the colors are nearly identical to those of the natural environment surrounding the structure—rocks, stone and the earth of the neighbouring hills. It seems almost as if nature constructed this building all by itself, using its own materials. As a result, the sky above the building (man-made after all) becomes more brilliant, even more blue; the rocks and the stones and the earth surrounding the structure become radiant and more human; landscape and architectural creation approach each other and merge into a unity that truly moves us. In the end, then, true architecture embellishes nature and in so doing beautifies man's life while also providing for all his practical needs. Isn't this the duty of architecture?[220]

In Konstantinidis's publications of the Weekend House, the architect's photographs and words prevail over the single plan drawing. On the published page, this underplayed and subordinated plan effectively serves as a mental map for navigating the building through its photographs. Again, the photographs show a different arrangement of furnishings and other mobile objects than that which is proposed in the drawing. As such, when the architect photographs the building, he also proves that it is alive. If Konstantinidean dwelling is the main theme of the photographs, then there is no need to 'stage' the Weekend House in the same way that it is 'staged' in the plan drawing. If there is clearly enough space for a big table under the roof, then it does not need to also be present in the photographs: two chairs suffice for one to 'sit in the shadow looking at the sea'.[221]

Despite the architect's best efforts, however, the Weekend House effectively remained a 1:1 scale model that is

220 Konstantinidis, *Projects + Buildings*, 268.
221 Donat, *World Architecture*, vol. 2 (1965), 131.

now rooted in the natural landscape. Much to the chagrin of Konstantinidis, who claims that an 'architectural work begins to exist from the moment that it is inhabited', the Weekend House's residents do not adopt the way of life that the house is designed—let alone photographed—to project.[222] As the Italian architect Paola Cofano narrates, 'two years after it was completed it was sold to the scion of a family of ship owners and art collectors. It was downgraded to become a tool deposit for the large and ungainly villa that was built next to it and that now towers over it'.[223] Virtually inaccessible, the actual house is now reduced to serving as a distant, idealized model of Konstantinidis's architectural vision.

As a result, the architect's photographs now prevail over the actual building, at least for documenting its originally intended function. Avoiding photographing the house from dramatic or unusual viewing angles, Konstantinidis reinforces the impression that he retains the highest possible pictorial fidelity with the spatial reality before him. Without 'embellishment', his buildings are presented 'as they really stood on the real landscape'.[224] But the most-published photograph of the Weekend House now lends this perceived reality to an ideal way of life that has never existed in practice. It serves as a logotype for the Konstantinidean architecture of austere dwelling in the unadulterated Greek landscape. Condensing and refuting the actual tempo of human action, this photograph also renders the building and the inhabitation that it exemplifies as timeless.

Konstantinidis is proud of his photographs; alongside his drawings, texts, and buildings,[225] he regards them as integrated in his architectural worldview. As such, he also

222 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 2, 29–30; Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 179 (26 February 1984).

223 Paola Cofano, 'La casa di Anávyssos: Il rifugio di Poseidone', in Vincenzo Pavan, ed., *Glocal Stone: International Award Architecture in Stone*, 12th ed. (Arsenale, 2011), 116–29, here 121.

224 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 341–2 (24 Oct. 1990).

225 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 260 (14 June 1986).

understands the stakes of his photographic practice. By freezing the 'privileged' moment in the aspired life of his buildings, his photographs also ensure the perpetuation of his vision. Future researchers might be able to photograph his buildings only as ruins.[226] Or they might use those photographs to develop their architectural vision of their own present—in the same way that Konstantinidis captures the ignored 'true Greece' during his numerous photographic expeditions across the country.[227] Surviving through his own photographs, his vision for architecture in general and for his projects in particular will 'contaminate' any future gaze directed towards the ruin of his architecture. This is why his texts on photography effectively serve as an additional layer of mediation. Suggesting the intended interpretation of his own photographs, they form part of the global editorship that builds the reception of his work. Through these texts, the gaze of the architect is emphatically re-imposed upon the photograph that embodies, and has already recorded, his own gaze towards his building. This doubly imposed gaze is then promoted as Konstantinidis's 'true architecture'.

For the Greek architect, photography is an artistic composition: the product of a specific way of seeing and distinguishing certain qualities within the visual field. Still, he underscores that 'the photographic lens ... represents and records on pure film ... the objective image of the world, the true form of things'.[228] The vision of the photographer (e.g., Konstantinidis) merely speaks the truth that other people's eyes do not see. The crucial agent is the individual behind the photographic lens, which can only remain 'objective in recording reality'; this creative combination of subject and object produces an 'objectivity elevated to the status of art

226 See, for example, Papaoikonomou, 'XENIA ReLoaDed'.

227 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 194 (24 June 1984). See Aris Konstantinidis, *Elements for Self-Knowledge*, trans. Kay Cicellis (self-published, 1975); Aris Konstantinidis, *God-Built: Landscapes and Houses of Modern Greece*, trans. Kay Cicellis (Crete University Press, 1994).

228 Konstantinidis, *Για την αρχιτεκτονική*, 112.

and a photographic image that is rich in spiritual and artistic content'. This is how Konstantinidis's photographs, his own 'designs with light', also reveal the 'true' essence of his architecture.[229] By rendering himself an authority in a visual field with the latent potential to be photographed in his way, Konstantinidis simultaneously imposes his own gaze as objective *par excellence*. This is why, for him, photographing equals 'rebuilding', or reclaiming ownership of his projects.[230] In the photograph taken by the architect, his built work is inextricably imbued with his own theory (which literally means his 'way of seeing' in the original Greek). And this is also why the text that accompanies the publication need not directly refer to the building presented. The—only apparently missing—text is the photograph itself: the image-symbol that Konstantinidis personally builds as an architect of his own publications or as a global editor of his own reception.

Through their dual focus on the photograph-as-narrative and the text-as-architectural-manifesto, the standard publications on the Weekend House therefore render it as emblematic within Konstantinidis's oeuvre. This is why this building has been so widely celebrated over the decades, including its presentation in British architect Simon Unwin's popular textbook *Analysing Architecture* (1997), as a model for designing architecture using parallel walls.[231]

From this wide pool of the building's global reception, architectural theorist David Leatherbarrow's book *Uncommon Ground* (2000) stands out for including the most comprehensive account to date. The discussion of the Weekend House in this study spans twenty-five pages[232]—far more space than its architect ever devoted to the house in his own publications. As a philosophically predisposed architect, but also as a distant, outsider observer of architecture in modern

229 Konstantinidis, *Για την αρχιτεκτονική*, 299–300.
230 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 341–2 (24 Oct. 1990).
231 Simon Unwin, *Analysing Architecture* (Routledge, 1997), 145.
232 David Leatherbarrow, *Uncommon Ground: Architecture, Technology and Topography* (MIT Press, 2000), 203–27.

Greece, Leatherbarrow attempts to position himself within the Konstantinidean viewpoint without eradicating his distance from it altogether. His is a reading of the building in Konstantinidis's shadow.

In Leatherbarrow's book, the Greek architect's original photographs alternate with more recent ones by Marina Lathouri. This mix of old and new images reflects the fragile balance that Leatherbarrow's partially independent gaze intends to strike. Despite his best efforts to discern the significant phenomenological qualities of the building, however, Leatherbarrow's gaze is still guided by that of Konstantinidis. For instance, the theorist notes, 'the fireplace stands in the middle of the house's public spaces, dividing the kitchen from the living room, also anchoring the dining table'.[233] Through this analysis, the fireplace emerges as the main point of articulation, or the node, of the fundamental discontinuities and opposing forces that transverse the house—such as private-public, inside-outside, light-shadow, nature-artifice. In Leatherbarrow's account, the fireplace effectively condenses the building's total meaning. Yet even such an original insight does not break completely free from Konstantinidis's gaze. To start with, the fireplace had already been widely published by the architect himself—even in isolation from the rest of the building.[234] In addition, Leatherbarrow's 'microscopic' analysis draws its evidence, such as the alignment of the surface panel of the dining table with the lowermost and longest mark of the mantelpiece carvings, which also coincides with the height of the kitchen table, from Konstantinidis's own photograph of the living room (see fig. 20).[235] Meanwhile, Lathouri's photographs, which also indicate the abandonment of the building by foregrounding the grow-

233 Leatherbarrow, *Uncommon Ground*, 213.

234 See Horst Wanetschek, Hans Jürgen Meier-Menzel, and Fritz Hierl, eds., *Kamine und Kachelöfen*, Detail-Bücherei, Elemente der Architektur: Beispiele, Buch 9 (Callwey, 1967), 52; Fritz R. Barran, ed., *Der offene Kamin*, 3rd ed. (Hoffmann, 1976), 81.

235 Leatherbarrow, *Uncommon Ground*, 226.

ing wild plants (see fig. 21), are not commented upon in the main text.

Hence, repeated publications of the same photographs end up defining even the gaze of distant third parties. Each new observer's vision almost abandons perception in favour of the architect's original conception. This is especially evident in the early 1990s Hellenic Public Television series of architectural documentary films. Rather astonishingly, none of the featured short clips from the Weekend House in these films produce a different video-camera-enabled experience of the building, such as that of navigating the site in real time.[236] Instead, all clips of the house follow the static framing logic of an already published photograph. The camera remains stable, and the only sense of movement is provided by the mechanics of zooming in and out. The framing is thus essentially photographic rather than cinematic, and any sense of movement is only artificial. The camera is effectively recording the double return of Konstantinidis's gaze, which reduces the cinematic image to its photographic origin: The video footage is essentially a photograph squared. The Weekend House is filmed in the same way that it has already been photographed, by a director who, perhaps not coincidentally, is also an architect.

This is why the Hellenic Public Television documentary film of 2001 serves as a milestone in the history of the building's reception. It is the first time that those closest to the architect publicly speak about his work in their own voices.[237] Although they still try to link their words with the architect's original intentions, they also start to show the cards that Konstantinidis had held close to his chest

236 *Αρχιτεκτονικοί δρόμοι,* episode 3, 'Μνήμη και διαχρονικότητα—Δημήτρης Πικιώνης, Άρης Κωνσταντινίδης', directed by Giorgos Papakonstantinou and Thanos Anastopoulos, aired in 1990 on Hellenic Public Radio and Television, https://archive.ert.gr/7919/.

237 *Παρασκήνιο*, 'Με εργοδότη τη ζωή—Άρης Κωνσταντινίδης', directed by Apostolos Karakasis, aired in 2001 on Hellenic Public Radio and Television, https://archive.ert.gr/6595/.

20 Interior of the Weekend House in Anavyssos (1962–64)

21 The Weekend House in Anavyssos, photographed by Marina Lathouri. In David Leatherbarrow, *Uncommon Ground: Architecture, Technology and Topography* (MIT Press, 2000), 204

for decades. While the film does not provide any new video footage of the Weekend House, it does show some of the related archival photographs that the architect never published. Successively presented in the form of a slideshow, these photographs include views of the missing fourth elevation and artistic collage depictions of the building. The related voice-over includes not excerpts from Konstantinidis's own texts but numerous views on the building which do not necessarily correspond with that of the architect. As such, this film historically ignites the process of separating Konstantinidis's words from his photographs. Registering digressing voices in his buildings' historical reception is the first step towards arriving at new interpretations of his work that stray from the architect's dominant gaze. In this film, both the architect's sister, Elli Konstantinidi, and the owner of hotel 'Xenia' Mykonos guide viewers through Konstantinidis's buildings. They are followed by a camera that has finally abandoned the logic of a static photographic framing which reproduces the architect's gaze. Perhaps not coincidentally, this time the film director is also not an architect.

BEYOND 2001: A LIFE PUBLISHED WITHOUT KONSTANTINIDIS

New photographs of the Weekend House in Anavyssos have continued to appear in the twenty-first century, starting with those of the Danish architect Karin Skousbøll.[238] After Philippidis's early-1980s documentation of the urban sprawl on the hillside and Lathouri's 1990s close-ups of the abandoned building, in 2002 Skousbøll zooms out to recapture the building's original relationship with the landscape. Her framing filters out the non-descript apartment blocks and exuberant villas of the late twentieth century to restore Konstantinidis's original vision for this house in an age when his projects

238 See Karin Skousbøll, *Greek Architecture Now* (Studio, 2006), 128.

across Greece were falling into ruination. As such, Skousbøll's photographic lens works almost in terms of rescue archaeology. The same can be argued for Tournikiotis's published photographs of the house, from 2009, which also keep the urban sprawl and other changes around the site of the Weekend House out of the picture. Although they do not reproduce Konstantinidis's viewpoints, these photographs do re-capture the enduring spatial qualities of living outdoors, despite the abandonment of the building.[239] In Skousbøll's book, the Weekend House once again becomes an image that purportedly speaks for itself, standing as an emblem for Konstantinidis's architectural approach. After the decades-long celebration of the Greek architect's work across the globe, this was to be expected. Less expected is the digital presence of the Weekend House, whose history also remains under the gaze of its architect.

By 2008, a Google search for the Weekend House in Anavyssos would return the right results, along with the photographs that had been repeatedly reproduced by its architect. At the same time, when Google Books operated under different terms of service, one could browse, for free, the pages of Leatherbarrow's *Uncommon Ground*, for instance. Ironically, however, the complications of image copyrights meant that the only new photographs of the Weekend House included in the hard copy of the book were not digitally accessible. This in turn maintained Konstantinidis's gaze towards his own architectural work as the dominant one even in the age of digitally facilitated global distribution of images a whole fifteen years after his death. As this was all taking place in a medium that was entirely out of his historical league and over which he could scarcely have exerted any control, it is further proof of the impressive extent to which Konstantinidis personally succeeded in building the reception of his oeuvre in his own terms.

239 Tournikiotis, 'Dwelling Is a Place for Language', 48.

The fact that Konstantinidis's aspired life in the Weekend House has never actually been lived by anyone has not stopped this project from retaining its emblematic place within and without Greece. Relatedly, and ironically, the architect's photographs are now iconic for a way of life that has never actually been hosted in the 'vessel' that was built for it. Owing to his global editorship stratagems of combining narrativizing images with manifesto-like texts, not only his buildings but also his entire architectural vision are now rendered 'photogenic'. This is probably the most significant tension within Konstantinidis's work. Although he is often perceived as offering the most 'ascetic' or 'purist' version of modernism in Greek architecture,[240] his overarching vision might have failed to be more pervasive precisely because he was never absolutely modern himself. His constant return to rural folklore as a founding and legitimizing force for his proposed model of almost primitive life in the pristine Greek landscape indicates that he was not the modern man of the immediate present. He did not keep up with the expanding economy of a developing country and a society that was undergoing a significant process of modernized change, including the reshuffling of family structures, sexual orientations, and gender roles.[241] The long-forgotten authentic way of life in the Greek landscape that he sought had to be retrieved from essentially traditional forms of life—and then to be realigned with the modern but also timeless 'spirit of construction'.[242] The perceived archetypal timelessness of this spirit allowed Konstantinidis to combine both his modernist and his regional sensibilities in a single unified gaze.

By combining these sensibilities, however, Konstantinidis finds himself in the peculiar and isolating position of having to fight simultaneously on all fronts. His work can be attacked from all sides; it is open to critique from

240 Panos Tsakopoulos, *Reflections on Greek Postwar Architecture* (Kaleidoscope, 2014), 120, 185.

241 See Kiourti with Tsiambaos, 'The Architect, the Resident, and a Murder'.

242 Konstantinidis, 'Architecture', 212.

both forward-looking 'international-style' modernists and backward-looking regional 'traditionalists'. This bilateral hostility—and the architect's aggressively defensive stance in response—drives Konstantinidis to create this zone of non-intervention around his work through his global editorship.[243] Towards the end of his days, however, the 'elements for self-knowledge' that he derives from the regional vernacular to underpin his work appear as increasingly meaningful only to himself.[244] Cherished by him but abandoned to their ruination by the people and the state, his 'vessels of life' ironically end up as sites of architectural pilgrimage.

This obvious interest in visiting Konstantinidis's work for oneself, however, shows that the architect was wrong to think he was so alone. As the worldwide reception of his Weekend House in Anavyssos proves, he was a force to be reckoned with in the global architectural community. If architectural sociologist Garry Stevens is right to assert that the voluminous *Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects*, which includes an entry on Konstantinidis,[245] 'serves quite well to define the canon of the [global architectural] field as the field saw itself in the late 1970s',[246] then the Greek architect was already an established member of the canon around the moment of his retirement, well before his 1980s association with critical regionalism. As such, his work did not need to be 'rediscovered' in the future by another architect such as Pierluigi Serraino, who asserts that only photographs and their repeated publication ensure a building its place in architectural discourse and history. 'When architects try to bring their work to the attention of the large-scale community,' Serraino continues, 'their chances of leaving a permanent mark on the mind of

243 See his furious 'open letter' to publisher Orestis Doumanis from 1972, in Konstantinidis, *Για την αρχιτεκτονική*, 246–64.

244 See Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 116 (19 December 1979), 171 (1 November 1983), 234 (10 July 1985).

245 Adolf Placzek, ed., *Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects*, 4 vols. (Free Press, 1982), 578.

246 Garry Stevens, *The Favored Circle: The Social Foundations of Architectural Distinction* (MIT Press, 1998), 127.

the reader depend on: 1) Architectural Photographers; 2) Editorial Policy; 3) Mass-media Coverage'.[247] Konstantinidis was both an avid photographer and a diligent editor of his own published works; he fell short only in the category of mass-media coverage. This could be an additional reason why his overarching vision is not as pervasive outside expert architectural circles. Within these circles, however, the contemporary problem is precisely the opposite: His nearly ubiquitous presence amounts to the echoing sound of a lonely and polemic voice that cannot easily accommodate novel interpretations of his work.

In an age that Konstantinidis increasingly perceives as hostile, his last resort is to ensure at least the purity of his crystallized architectural vision through his global editorship.[248] If his buildings cannot survive the cruel world of post-war consumerism, then at least the principles and ideals behind them should endure. This is why Konstantinidis routinely discusses architecture and dwelling in general terms, even when he is supposed to be presenting a single project. He does not directly comment on accompanying photographs unless these are somehow related to the formation of his architectural worldview.[249] His 'extremely onerous attempt to re-establish the values' of architecture, including the global editorship of his work, indeed renders him eligible for 'a unique place' in the history of twentieth-century architecture in Greece and Europe.[250] On the other hand, the dominating presence and wide circulation of his own photographs, especially now that several of his milestone projects are in a ruinous state, imbues his work with 'a sense of monumentalization' or ossification, precisely when his 'untimely idealism' can arguably

247 Pierluigi Serraino and Julius Shulman, *Modernism Rediscovered* (Taschen, 2000), 6–7.

248 Magouliotis, 'Scary Architects and Scared Clients', 160.

249 See Konstantinidis, *Elements for Self-Knowledge*, 298–325.

250 Giacumacatos, *Η αρχιτεκτονική και η κριτική*, 381.

claim an 'archetypal pertinence in the 21st century' in Greece and abroad.[251]

Konstantinidis did not build a project outside of Greece from the ground up. As such, his critical regionalism never encountered circumstances that might have ushered in a more nuanced understanding of it. His main architectural convictions suggest that his being Greek was possibly enough to prevent him from building in Zurich. Yet, it was not enough to prevent him from teaching there for three consecutive academic years (1967–70). Since the specific extent to which the architect should remain sensitive to local specificities, from materials to climatic conditions, is not clearly defined in his texts, the projects of his students in Switzerland are especially significant for contemporary architectural historians. They might well offer the clearest insights into the specific features—and limits—of his critical regionalism abroad, in practice. Only after examining them can one further understand whether Konstantinidis himself, regardless of his writings, and especially in his post-1960s residential projects, gradually built his own version of a modernist *passe-partout* 'winebox'[252]—replicated, with minimum variation, not only within but also without Greece.

251 Giacumacatos, *Η αρχιτεκτονική και η κριτική*, 377.
252 See Konstantinidis, *Projects + Buildings*, 10–11.

FOREIGN TEACHING

Despite Aris Konstantinidis's international reputation, his academic career in Greece is limited to a short-lived teaching stint alongside Dimitris Pikionis at the National Technical University of Athens in 1948–49[253] and three invited lectures (in Athens in 1977 and in Thessaloniki in 1978 and 1990). Yet, Konstantinidis yearns for meaningful contact with young architects, especially during the lonely fifteen years of his retirement.[254] Writing his books in the hope of communicating with a wider audience is not the same as sharing the specificities of his long-standing professional experience through studio teaching. This is why he reportedly regards his three years of teaching at ETH Zurich from 1967 to 1970 'as a particular "stroke of luck"'.[255]

Owing to the combined efforts and recommendations of Ellen Keckeis-Tobler, Albert Heinrich Steiner, George Lavas, and Jakob Zweifel,[256] Konstantinidis is invited to teach at ETH Zurich only a few months after his resignation from the Greek National Tourism Organization (GNTO) in defiance of the military coup in his home country in April 1967. His appointment follows an institutional initiative to invite guest professors who can 'enrich the very attractive teaching' of the department in the advanced semesters. By then, the Greek architect is well known for 'a number of hotels and tourist centres that have attracted considerable attention', demonstrating his 'first-class' expertise in 'tourism planning and implementation'.[257] Keckeis-Tobler had contributed to German-speaking audiences' familiarity with Konstantinidis's work by publishing his hotel projects in the early 1960s.[258] A few years later,

253 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 1, 125–7.

254 Holevas, 'Άρης Κωνσταντινίδης'.

255 Georgiadis, '"... die schönen, einfachen Werte"', 64.

256 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 2, 65–8; Georgiadis, '"... die schönen, einfachen Werte"', 64.

257 ETH-Bibliothek, Hochschularchiv, ER1.1/1: Protokolle der Sitzungen des Schweizerischen Schulrats 1967, Sitzung Nr. 7 vom 30.09.1967, 774–5, https://doi.org/10.12683/eth-107884.

258 See Ellen Keckeis-Tobler, 'Moderne Architektur in Griechenland', *Schweizerische Bauzeitung* 77, no. 45 (1959), 737–9; Ellen Keckeis-Tobler, 'Neue Hotelbauten in Griechenland', *Werk* 47, no. 4 (1960), 138–41.

she personally described them to Steiner as 'something new' and 'so much more interesting' for Swiss students 'than our old hotel boxes'.[259]

Given the Swiss building industry's interest in 'spa town planning and tourist facilities' in the late 1960s, ETH Zurich President Hans Hauri invites Konstantinidis to teach fourth-year students. The Greek architect's studio follows a common brief with his peers Alberto Camenzind, Walter Werner Custer, and Charles-Edouard Geisendorf, who had formulated it and also supported Konstantinidis's invitation to the school.[260] The brief that these four architects shared addresses wider questions around tourism-related planning through specific building projects at four sites across Switzerland. In this context, Konstantinidis's hotel buildings in Olympia and Andros (see figs. 8 and 10) become two of the nineteen reference works for fourth-year students in 1967–68.[261]

Ensuring favourable conditions for the Greek architect, ETH Zurich offers him a salary well 'above the norm', even by the updated standards of the increases being implemented in 1969.[262] In addition, the institution financially supports a monographic retrospective exhibition of the Greek architect's work in its main building in December 1967.[263] When the Department of Architecture decides to renew Konstantinidis's contract in July 1968—to cover for the popular Jacques Schader's decision to step down from teaching in

259 Ellen Keckeis-Tobler to Aris Konstantinidis, 24 August 1967, 'ETH-Zürich 1967–1968' Folder, Aris Konstantinidis private archive.

260 Hans Hauri to Aris Konstantinidis, ETH Zurich, 4 October 1967, 'ETH-Zürich 1967–1968' Folder, Aris Konstantinidis private archive, 1; ETH-Bibliothek, Hochschularchiv, Sitzung Nr. 7 vom 30.09.1967, 775.

261 Hans Dreher, St. Zaugg, and J. Brühwiler, eds., 'TOURISMUS: Dokumentation als Arbeitshilfe fuer die Semesteraufgabe des 7. und 8. Sem. WS/SS 67/68', in *Dokumentationsverzeichnis* (ETH Zurich, 1967).

262 ETH-Bibliothek, Hochschularchiv, ER1.1/1: Protokolle der Sitzungen des Schweizerischen Schulrats 1969, Sitzung Nr. 4 vom 17.05.1969, 482–4, here 483, https://doi.org/10.12683/eth-130997.

263 ETH-Bibliothek, Hochschularchiv, Präsidialverfügung 4821 vom 20.11.1967, https://doi.org/10.12683/eth-112773.

1968–69[264]—the president also notes that the Greek architect has 'proved to be very successful' as a professor who is 'also valued by the students'.[265] Eventually staying on to teach at ETH for two additional academic years, Konstantinidis has the opportunity to work with the same student cohort from 1968 to 1970 on briefs that he has freely devised for his third- and fourth-year studios. The Greek architect's teaching is based on his personal approach to architecture and his lived experience of arriving at it. As I show in this chapter, the extent to which his biography informs his pedagogy ranges from his emphasis on architects' self-education to the thinking behind his proposed briefs. The student projects that he supervises at ETH also indicate how his critical regionalism became applicable abroad through an emphasis on tectonics.

Today, the impact of Konstantinidis's short presence in Switzerland pales in comparison with that of Aldo Rossi's teaching at ETH Zurich from 1972 to 1974. Ushering in the celebrated *Tendenzen* exhibition of 1975, the Italian architect's legacy was almost immediately heralded as the backbone of the School of the Ticino in Kenneth Frampton's Swiss-based account of critical regionalism. In this light, Konstantinidis's presence in the same context as a representative of Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre's Greek-based account of critical regionalism was certainly overshadowed. Still, the architect's oeuvre seems to have also served as an underlying source of inspiration in the Swiss architectural scene. Practitioners such as Emanuel Christ and Christoph Gantenbein now look back at the work of their older peers who pursued 'an alternative humanistic architecture for a modern society' in 1970s Switzerland. That generation was reportedly informed by the oeuvre of 'unorthodox modern architects', including Konstantinidis, whose influence helped them to

264 ETH-Bibliothek, Hochschularchiv, ER1.1/1: Protokolle der Sitzungen des Schweizerischen Schulrats 1968, Sitzung Nr. 5 vom 06.07.1968, 565.

265 ETH-Bibliothek, Hochschularchiv, Sitzung Nr. 5 vom 06.07.1968, 585–6.

'transcend modern or postmodern conventions in their own work'.[266] Through his comparatively subtle presence in Zurich, the Greek architect's teaching therefore also contributes to an alternative history of critical regionalism abroad that can be narrated today.

NON-TECHNOCRATIC DESIGN

Aiming for 'an exceptionally qualified elite [to] be built up' and serve the building industry, the mid-1960s curricula of the Department of Architecture at ETH Zurich were not limited to drawing; they also included 'specifications and cost estimates' and 'the economic and technical co-ordination of the 30 odd sub-contractors usually involved' in building.[267] From the outset, Konstantinidis defies this technocratic approach to architecture through statistics and specialization. His lecture on 'Tourism Problems—The Architect's Contribution' is the second in a series that had started with Jost Krippendorf's talk on the microeconomics of Swiss tourism and operational aspects of hotel building.[268] Konstantinidis refers to Krippendorf's assertion that new aircrafts could reach a capacity of four hundred passengers per flight unenthusiastically while discussing the potential dangers of overtourism in popular destinations with limited capacity.[269] Adopting a reflective tone, the Greek architect underscores the persistent beauty of staying with the problem in this bigger picture—instead of rushing to experts' quick-fix, yet

266 Emanuel Christ and Christoph Gantenbein, eds., *Typology—Hong Kong, Rome, New York, Buenos Aires, Zurich* (Park Books, 2012), 8. The other 'unorthodox modern architects' in this list are Otto Rudolf Salvisberg, Mario Asnago and Claudio Vender, Angelo Mangiarotti and Luigi Caccia Dominioni, Hans Scharoun, and Rudolf Schwarz.

267 *The Training of the Architect at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology* (Department of Architecture at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, 1965), 9.

268 ETH Folder 'Tourismus', Aris Konstantinidis private archive.

269 Aris Konstantinidis, 'PROBLEME DES TOURISMUS: Die Mitwirkung des Architekten', 12-page annotated typescript with handwritten additions, 2 November 1967, ETH Folder 'Tourismus', Aris Konstantinidis private archive, 8.

one-sided, 'solutions' to multifaceted issues.[270] Konstantinidis discusses tourism holistically as a way of life that involves multiple agents and entire communities:

> Today, as soon as we consider the tourists as an OBJECT, coming to us—in every country—, with less or more money in their pockets, we might build a useful 'industry', but not tourism, in the truest sense of the word, i.e. a human life process—a politics, I could say, of being together. ... We not only have to put our entire technology, our entire science, our entire economy at [the tourist's] feet,—we also have to mobilize our entire art, our entire art of living, in order to build up our hospitality as people to people.—And what new ways are now opening up for tourism architecture—if we build for not being alone—if we design for being together![271]

This 'humane feeling' that Konstantinidis requires from tourism-related architecture ensues from a long-standing culture of dwelling in a specific landscape. For him, the technocratic approach that addresses functional issues is additionally problematic for its purported 'international' validity that 'deforms' the landscape.[272]

The Greek architect leaves the lecture theatre believing that he has not convinced his audience. Most talks in the series (including those by architects and hotel managers, such as André Gaillard and Michel Rey, and the director of the Swiss Transport Centre, Werner Kampfen) discussed tourism in the number-driven design terms that appalled Konstantinidis.[273] In this context, his second lecture in the same series, focusing on his own hotel projects that resisted the prevailing trends of tourism development and luxurious living by the Greek coastline, reinforces his feeling of being

270 Konstantinidis, 'PROBLEME DES TOURISMUS', 11–12.
271 Konstantinidis, 'PROBLEME DES TOURISMUS', 8.
272 Konstantinidis, 'PROBLEME DES TOURISMUS', 1, 10.
273 ETH Folder 'Tourismus', Aris Konstantinidis private archive.

a lonely voice in the wilderness. Still, Konstantinidis stands by his unwavering belief that a design process based on statistics alone is heartless and that sense without sensibility ushers in inhumane results, including a reduction of both hosts' and visitors' humanity to the transaction logic of an ATM on human legs.[274] This is why he proposes an alternative, three-step way of working with his students:

> SEEING—FEELING
> × DESIGNING AND REALIZING
> × REFLECTING AND FEELING AGAIN[275]

Despite Konstantinidis's own impression regarding the reception of his lectures, his defiance of technocratic, stats-based approaches to design chimes with the concerns of Swiss students who rebelled against this institutionalized picture of the architectural profession in the summer of 1968.

STUDENT MOVEMENTS

In 1968–69, Konstantinidis starts off as the most popular tutor, with approximately one in three students selecting to join his third-year studio after the four professors' introductory presentations of their work. The Greek architect is especially in demand by the thirty-one non-Swiss students of the third-year cohort. When half of them join his studio group, his class also becomes the most culturally diverse, since international students constitute 28 per cent of his cohort.[276] Einar Dahle, one of the Norwegian members of this group, recalls Konstantinidis as 'a bright architect, but also a warm person', with whom these students could relate as 'foreigners in Switzerland. ... It was not always easy to get into the warmth in the

274 Konstantinidis, 'PROBLEME DES TOURISMUS', 2.

275 ETH Folder 'SS 69 Entwurf V, Exkursion London: 1–2', Aris Konstantinidis private archive.

276 ETH Folder 'SS 69 Entwurf V, Exkursion London: 1–2'.

Swiss society'.[277] Konstantinidis not only 'open[s] his heart' to these students, but he also exudes the energy, confidence, and 'flare' of an established architect at the peak of his career.[278] The feeling is mutual; Konstantinidis also finds that he communicates better with his international students.[279]

ETH Zurich rules allow students to 'remain with the same professor during different terms or change from one to another' to diversify their learning.[280] In the spring semester of 1968–69, almost one in five of Konstantinidis's students leave his studio, dropping its numbers to the expected average. In the Greek architect's fourth-year studio in 1969–70, however, the drop is much sharper; only 8 of 131 students (6 percent of the same yearly cohort) select to work with him.[281] One of these Swiss students, Elias Balzani, recalls a 'rather reserved' Konstantinidis during this period.[282] Despite the positive portrayal of this last academic year as a circle of the happy few working together in harmony in the Greek architect's autobiography, Konstantinidis is effectively unpopular for the majority of the student body by then. This sense is reinforced by the awkward silence from Head of Department Bernhard Hoesli at the end of that academic year, when the Greek architect enquires whether his yearly teaching contract will be renewed again.[283] In the same period, however, the students' voice, which favours the invitation of sociologists (such as Howard Zinn and Lucius Burckhardt) and leftist architects (such as Theodor Manz, Hans-Otto Schulte, and Jörn Janssen), is amplified in the school. The institutional endorsement and appointment of their choices as guest professors in 1970–71 form part of the wide-ranging repercussions of

277 Einar Dahle, email to Stylianos Giamarelos, 15 July 2024.
278 Einar Dahle, interview by Stylianos Giamarelos, Oslo, 6 August 2024.
279 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 2, 108.
280 *Training of the Architect*, 10.
281 ETH Folder 'SS 69 Entwurf V, Exkursion London: 1–2'.
282 Elias Balzani, email to Stylianos Giamarelos, 24 July 2024.
283 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 2, 104–5.

the student uprisings of 1968,[284] which also usher in Konstantinidis's dwindling reputation within the school.

The Greek architect had arrived in Zurich at a moment of turmoil. On the one hand, ETH Zurich was expanding: old buildings were being refurbished and new buildings were being erected on both campuses, in the centre and periphery of the city. At the same time, the numbers at the Department of Architecture were steadily on the rise: from 1960 to 1965, they had increased from 500 to 'roughly 600' students.[285] On the other hand, this changing 'ratio of students and assistants to professors … was not underpinned by a reform of the university hierarchy'. This was unacceptable for students of German-speaking countries who freshly engaged with left-wing thinkers after the early decades of the Cold War.[286] Before long, these students rose in defiance of the professoriate to voice their demands for direct democratic participation in decision-making processes that affected their academic life. In 1968, a federal act that proposed to change the long-standing structure and constitution of Swiss federal universities triggered the student movement. When the city of Zurich decided to temporarily lease the deserted department store Globus Provisorium to ETH Zurich for architecture courses in June 1968, students and young activists who instead wanted to see it transformed into a youth centre violently clashed with the police forces in Zurich.[287] Within a few months, the rising student movement managed to gather the necessary signatures to submit a referendum against

284 Lucia Pennati, 'ETH Zurich's "Experimentierphase": Architecture Students and Institution After 1968', paper presented at The Challenge from Within: Progressive Architects in Capitalist Systems, Zurich, 5–6 July 2024, 4.

285 *Training of the Architect*, 9.

286 Lucius Burckhardt, 'To Expect Quick Results from the Planned Reform Is to Underestimate the Braking Forces' (1972), in Silvan Blumenthal and Martin Schmitz, eds., *Design Is Invisible: Planning, Education, and Society* (Birkhäuser, 2017), 258–9, here 258.

287 'Globuskrawalle in Zürich (1968) | SRF Archiv', footage of student protests originally aired 3 July 1968, included in the 19 July 2000 episode of *Schweiz aktuell: Serie SwissRetro*, posted 27 June 2018, by SRF Archive, YouTube, 4:00, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=USzPrgGcJY4.

the new law, which was then also rejected by general population vote in April 1969. The related tumult ushered in a period of experimental and interdisciplinary approaches to architectural education at ETH, most of which took place in the Globus Provisorium with the second-year cohort of 1968–69.[288] In that academic year, Konstantinidis, however, worked with the third-year cohort in the old building designed by Gottfried Semper, which also spatially signified his distance from these developments.

Less than a decade earlier, the Department of Architecture had been reorganized, with the newly founded Institute for Local, Regional and State Planning in 1961 also introducing new courses on urbanism and planning.[289] These followed Hoesli's introduction of a basic first-year course that covered the fundamental principles of modernist design, in 1959–60.[290] Konstantinidis's students experienced his third-year teaching, with its emphasis on 'materiality, structure and texture', as building on Hoesli's approach to 'open their eyes to more than the Modern Movement'.[291]

The successive inaugurations of the gta Institute for the History and Theory of Architecture (1967), the Institute for Building Research (1969), and the Institutes for Building Technology and for Historic Building Preservation (1972) embodied ETH Zurich's attempt to lead in the field by defining the science of building through a new curriculum. Swiss architectural historians now describe this experimental period (1967–73) as a 'critical threshold' that culminated in the rejection of Hoesli's foregrounding of modernist 'functional determinism'.[292] In its place, general assemblies of ETH

288 Lucia Pennati, 'Zürich Globus Provisorium', *GAM* 18 (2022), 124–35, here 128–30; Pennati, 'ETH Zurich's "Experimentierphase"'.

289 *Training of the Architect*, 31, 41.

290 Pia Simmendinger, 'Heinrich Bernhard Hoeslis Entwurfslehre an der ETH Zürich: Eine Untersuchung über Inhalt, Umsetzung und Erfolg seines Grundkurses von 1959–1968' (PhD diss., ETH Zurich, 2010).

291 Dahle, interview by Giamarelos, 6 August 2024.

292 Adolf Max Vogt, Ulrike Jehle-Schulte Strathaus, and Bruno Reichlin, *Architektur 1940–1980: Ein kritisches Inventar* (Ullstein; Propyläen, 1980), 25–6, 66.

staff and students specified the wider 1968 demand for 'new forms of living together' across Switzerland,[293] including the provision of social spaces for holding critical debates in the university; reframing Zurich as a university city in which student life is integrated; housing and stipend provisions for students from different cantons; professional reform to reflect the architect's social role; students' accountability for their design decisions in relation to the practical reality of the profession;[294] and unmediated contact between professors and students to cultivate a sense of collective responsibility for the university community.[295] Students also envisioned an expanded field for their studies, including the economics and politics of architecture in the bigger picture and knowledge transfers from psychology and sociology.[296]

ETH Zurich's initial response was to ask students to propose new invited professors to the school. The variegated pedagogies that ensued[297] over a five-year period included intensive weekly sessions that focused on a single topic; teaching design in conjunction with technical studies; col-

Also see Michael Koch and Bruno Maurer, 'Zauberformeln: Episoden auf dem Weg der Schweizer Architektur in die Welt 1939–1968', in Anna Meseure, Martin Tschanz, and Wilfried Wang, eds., *Architektur im 20. Jahrhundert: Schweiz* (Prestel, 1998), 35–72.

293 See Schweizerisches Sozialarchiv, 'Vor 50 Jahren: Der Globuskrawall und sein Umfeld', 17 July 2018, https://www.sozialarchiv.ch/2018/07/17/vor-50-jahren-der-globuskrawall-und-sein-umfeld.

294 'Diskussionstage vom 19./20. Juni1968 an der Architekturabteilung der ETH: Zusammenfassung der Feststellungen und der Forderungen', 7-page document, 'ETH-Zürich 1967–1968' Folder, Aris Konstantinidis private archive.

295 'Bericht und Anträge aus der Professorenkonferenz vom 15.7.1968', 3-page typescript, 17 July 1968, 'ETH-Zürich 1967–1968' Folder, Aris Konstantinidis private archive.

296 Hans Hauri to all tutors, 5 September 1968, 'ETH-Zürich 1967–1968' Folder, Aris Konstantinidis private archive.

297 Frida Grahn, 'René Furer's Semantic and Syntactic Analysis: Venturi and Vignola at ETH Zurich', *Architectural Theory Review* 28, no. 1 (2024), 107-24, https://doi.org/10.1080/13264826.2023.2266072; Frida Grahn, 'Beyond Realism: The German–Swiss Reception of Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown', *Wolkenkuckucksheim: International Journal of Architectural Theory* 26, no. 42 (2022), 179–200; Pennati, 'ETH Zurich's "Experimentierphase"'; Alessandro Toti, 'Reform or Revolution: Architectural Theory in West Berlin and Zurich (1967–72)', *Architectural Theory Review* 28, no. 1 (2024), 61–80, here 70–4, https://doi.org/10.1080/13264826.2024.2356373.

laborative practices of group work in studio classes; new methods of assessing students' projects; and introductory seminars that explored wider questions such as 'for whom do we build?'.[298] Burckhardt's sociology writings from the same period connect the dots between the demands for a radical university 'that consciously formulates educational policy and uses it to political ends' and the informed society of the university city.[299] His teaching at ETH Zurich shows how buildings are integrated in invisible webs of interrelations with several epistemic fields and social forces, and he urges students to address the problems of the social world beyond the academic ivory tower.[300] In response to Hoesli's modernist basic course, which approaches architectural design in isolation from the systems in which its conception and production is integrated, Burckhardt provides 'problem-oriented' training to architects instead. He advances

> a form of teaching focused on one or several issues of such complexity as to be representative of real professional issues, as well as on solutions that ideally evince an integrated, interdisciplinary approach … the frame of mind fostered here enabled students to deal with an issue, and to arrive at a result, without knowledge of the habitual solution strategies… . [The] task was to heighten students' appreciation of the fact that social problems cannot be solved simply by a design proposal … as well as of the fact that planning, if it is ever to produce comprehensive solutions to identifiable problems, must encourage the formulation of alternative goals.[301]

298 Pennati, 'Zürich Globus Provisorium', 130–2.

299 Lucius Burckhardt, 'University Planning and Urban Planning' (1968), in Blumenthal and Schmitz, *Design Is Invisible*, 217–35, here 234.

300 See Silvan Blumenthal, *Das Lehrcanapé: Lucius Burckhardt und das Architektenbild an der ETH Zürich 1970–1973.* Standpunkte Dokumente 2 (Standpunkte, 2010).

301 Lucius Burckhardt, 'From Design Academicism to the Treatment of Wicked Problems' (1973), in Jesko Fezer and Martin Schmitz, eds., *Lucius Burckhardt*

Burckhardt directs students' attention to systemic issues that are left unaddressed by designing new buildings, architects' standard response to any social problem.[302] He calls for rethinking such prior assumptions in order to enact strategic changes to the bigger social picture.

Inspired by these approaches to architecture, which also foreground the economic criteria at the heart of planning decisions,[303] two of Konstantinidis's students refuse to follow his studio brief in the winter semester of 1968–69, advancing a sociological critique of its main premises. The Greek architect's brief outlines an 'evolving housing block' for six hundred to one thousand inhabitants on the outskirts of Zurich, a flexible project that can anticipate its expansion based on residents' changing needs and the expected extension of their families over the course of their lives. But, the two students argue, the real-estate market price of the site alone suggests that only a project for two to three thousand residents will make economic sense. Following their critique equals trebling the originally proposed building heights. However, Konstantinidis does not want to see his students' projects turning into humongous tower blocks that will further disconnect their residents from the ground. His intended focus on devising a set of structural and formal rules that allow for these blocks to expand horizontally and vertically over time would effectively be cancelled in a project of that magnitude. The Greek architect feels that the two students, when they pin up not drawings but typescript manifestos against his brief, are invalidating his approach without leaving room for discussion. When they also continue to work on their own revised programme throughout the year,

Writings: Rethinking Man-Made Environments: Politics, Landscape and Design (Springer, 2012), 77–84, here 80–2.

302 Lucius Burckhardt, 'Building—A Process with No Obligations to Heritage Preservation' (1967), in Fezer and Schmitz, *Lucius Burckhardt Writings*, 44–62, here 61.

303 Ueli Zbinden, 'Tendenzen der Studienreformen an der Architekturabteilung der ETH-Zürich seit dem Sommer 1968', *werk* 58, no. 4 (1971): 227–8.

Konstantinidis believes they should not pass. Burckhardt intervenes in favour of the students, proposing to offer them a certificate of completion for the course.[304] The situation escalates to Hoesli, who reassures the Greek architect in theory but follows Burckhardt's proposal in practice.[305]

Konstantinidis's scepticism towards a dissenting young generation is possibly expected from a renowned architect in his mid-fifties. His personal stance is apparently closer to that of ETH Zurich President Hans Hauri, who believes that political indoctrination should not form part of academic education.[306] Students' reluctance to engage in the Greek architect's aspired, atelier-like, collective work ethic reinforces his feeling that they are rebels without a cause; in his eyes, they are simply mimicking their peers in France and Germany, eager to demolish existing institutional structures without clearly proposing what should take their place.[307] But Konstantinidis is equally dismissive of the professoriate and its capacity to turn the turmoil to its advantage, retaining its privilege once the dust has settled.[308] When some of the invited professors (Zinn, Schulte, Janssen, and eventually Burckhardt) are held responsible for radicalizing students,[309] ETH refuses to renew their contracts.

The prolonged institutional crisis is resolved with Rossi's arrival to teach at the school in 1972, after his politically motivated layoff from the Milan Polytechnic for his involvement

304 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 2, 82, 86–7.

305 Bernard Hoesli, 1-page letter to Aris Konstantinidis 'Betrifft: Schlusstestat WS 68/69 für die Studenten R. [Roger] Cottier u. U. [Ueli] Zbinden', 30 April 1969, ETH Folder 'SS 69 Entwurf V, Exkursion London: 1–2', Aris Konstantinidis private archive.

306 See 'Die Krise an der ETH-Architekturabteilung', *Werk* 9 (1971), 578–81, here 578.

307 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 2, 108–9.

308 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 2, 89.

309 See Hans G. Helms and Jörn Janssen, *Kapitalistischer Stadtbau* (Luchterhand, 1971); Autorenkollektiv an der Architekturabteilung der ETH Zürich, "*Göhnerswil": Wohnungsbau in Kapitalismus: Eine Untersuchung der Bedingungen und Auswirkungen der privatwirtschaftlichen Wohnungsproduktion am Beispiel der Vorstadtsiedlung "Sunnebüel" in Volketswil bei Zürich und der Generalunternehmung Ernst Göhner AG* (Verlagsgenossenschaft, 1972); Marc Tribelhorn, "Die Marxisten von der ETH," *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 10 Dec. 2018, https://www.nzz.ch/schweiz/die-m

with student uprisings. Eventually embraced by ETH staff and students alike, the prevalence of the Italian architect's design-based approach over the sociological and political approaches of the previous years also signals the return of established hierarchies of top-down teaching and the end of the experimental phase.[310] Rossi's subtle reaffirmation of the status quo benefits the Swiss establishment, which unwaveringly supports the Italian architect in return by further amplifying his voice in local architectural culture in the years that follow. Ensuring him a key place in the School of the Ticino and the Swiss account of critical regionalism, this also explains the comparatively oversized footprint of Rossi's short teaching stint at ETH Zurich (1972–74).

Although Konstantinidis's peers and students know that he, too, had 'left Greece for political reasons',[311] he lacks the Communist credentials that inspired dissenting students in the case of Rossi. In addition, the Greek architect's thinking is not aligned with that of his ETH surroundings in many ways. Konstantinidis cannot stomach discussions of advocacy planning, participatory design, and the sociologists' critique of his profession.[312] Despite the polemical tone of his writings, he is not a systematic social critic; his words are not those of a dissenter, with a socially informed political agenda to back his architectural work.[313] Konstantinidis favours architects' proactive individual talent over any form of democratic mandate or collective intelligence to address any design issue. This sense that the architect knows life

arxisten-von-der-eth-ld.1443299; Ákos Moravánszky, 'Piercing the Wall: East-West Encounters in Architecture, 1970–1990', in Ákos Moravánszky and Torsten Lange, eds., *East West Central: Re-Building Europe 1950–1990*, vol. 3: *Re-framing Identities: Architecture's Turn to History, 1970–1990* (Birkhäuser, 2017), 27–43, here 31; Toti, 'Reform or Revolution', 70–4; Pennati, 'ETH Zurich's "Experimentierphase"', 4, 7.

310 Pennati, 'ETH Zurich's "Experimentierphase"', 7; Moravánszky, 'Piercing the Wall', 32–4; Angelika Schnell, "Von Jörn Janssen zu Rossi: Eine hochschulpolitische Affäre an der ETH Zürich," *arch+* 47, no. 215 (2014), 16–23.

311 ETH-Bibliothek, Hochschularchiv, Sitzung Nr. 5 vom 06.07.1968, 585–6; Dahle, interview by Giamarelos, 6 August 2024.

312 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 2, 75–81.

313 Cf. Philippidis, *Νεοελληνική αρχιτεκτονική*, 404–5.

and everyone's needs, in a way that transgresses one's potentially different personal preferences, is recurrent in his writings. For Konstantinidis, building good architecture is not a matter of asking the people, as suggested by the sociologists, because he believes that the people do not really know how they want to live. The Greek architect's insistence on the homogeneity of true human needs also presupposes a harmonious society free of class struggle. Such convictions could only seem anachronistic in light of the experimental pedagogies introduced at ETH Zurich in the late 1960s. In this context, Konstantinidis's teaching is indeed foreign.

REGIONAL SELF-TEACHING

Despite his deep-seated aversion to sociological approaches, Konstantinidis aspires to a collective spirit that transcends sterile individualisms as a precondition for architecture to exist at all. He believes that architects establish a deeper connection in their unmediated relation with the people of a specific place and the socio-political, artistic, and spiritual ways of thinking and feeling that are shared across a community.[314] Since the late 1940s, he had urged his modern peers to throw themselves to be baptized 'in the font of place', to learn from 'the place itself, nature and the people'.[315] This, he believes, is the way to produce 'vessels of life', an architecture that organically 'stands as an extension of body and mind and property' and serves the local needs of dwelling in a specific landscape.[316]

Konstantinidis's conviction that 'every true architecture must first be tied to its place for it to then have a universal value' theoretically legitimizes his teaching in Zurich on the grounds of his long-standing experience in his home

314 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 104–5 (8 June 1970).
315 Konstantinidis, *Δυο 'χωριά' απ' τη Μύκονο*, 39.
316 Konstantinidis, *Δυο 'χωριά' απ' τη Μύκονο*, 15.

country.[317] Unlike buildings that are inexorably tied to specific places, architectural ideas can circulate through cultures, contexts, and landscapes. This is the sense in which the Greek architect asserts, 'wherever a house may be built it is as if it has been born by all the people taken together, wherever on earth they may live'.[318] Landscapes with similar conditions and challenges for human inhabitation (such as winter snow) or similar locally available materials (stone from shale rock and timber from pine and oak trees) lead to similar architectural results. This is why 'houses on the German and Swiss Alps … are almost identical with … houses in Zagoria' in Greece.[319] Konstantinidis's lifelong reading of non-Greek architectures and landscapes is based on their perceived affinities with the natural and built environment of his homeland.[320] As he noted at his exhibition opening in Zurich in December 1967,

> the wonderful,—if not strange, thing about Anonymous Architecture is that your buildings—in all landscapes and places—are essentially the same, despite all the differences between peoples, climate and times, just as all people are essentially alike; they think and feel the same, despite differences in customs, times and climate. And that is very important,—because through Anonymous Architecture, we see that every architecture can be, essentially, the same for all peoples and countries or even times (!),—once however this architecture only builds similar (= not uniform) structures,—for it is in the similar that the manifold of every locality or every society finds its good place,—while with uniform

317 Aris Konstantinidis, 'Doktorarbeit Nahkla', 1-page letter to Prof. W. Custer, 3 July 1969, ETH Folder 'SS 69 Entwurf V, Exkursion London: 1–2', Aris Konstantinidis private archive.

318 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 100–1 (10 February and 27 April 1970).

319 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 311 (30 June 1988).

320 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 2, 109–10.

> buildings, the only way out is a style (!), without deeper content and meaning!!!![321]

Konstantinidis's belief that anonymous architecture is bound to 'deathless',[322] ecumenical qualities does not usher in a complete eradication of cultural differences. In various borderline nationalist diary entries, he praises Greek structures as he contrasts them with their German and Swiss, stereotypically 'colder, brainier and somewhat drier' counterparts, in terms of their beauty, proportions, dimensions, and the ensuing feeling of human 'warmth' and pride.[323]

Owing to his limited opportunities as a foreigner in Hitler's Germany, Konstantinidis emphasizes that 'better education is attained by that which a student discovers and masters on their own, through a process of self-teaching, beyond the confines of schools, in the realm of a living reality'.[324] He believes that the prospective architect has more to learn about 'true architecture' from the landscapes in which one will build and the people who inhabit these places than from books and institutions. Still, academic education and scholarship assist in directing one's attention to good examples and developing one's faculty of 'thinking and judging architecturally'. This in turn allows a young practitioner to engage with local conditions and gradually filter out potentially foreign influences.[325] To truly learn from noteworthy buildings, however, one has to visit and witness them in real life as they stand within their specific natural landscape.[326] In this sense, an architect who adopts a theoretical framework through

321 Aris Konstantinidis, 'Anonyme Architektur in Griechenland, ETH-Zurich / Vortrag am 5.12.67', 5-page typescript, 'ETH-Zürich 1967–1968' Folder, Aris Konstantinidis private archive, 1.

322 Konstantinidis, *God-Built*, 9.

323 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 312 (30 June 1988).

324 Konstantinidis, *Projects + Buildings*, 274.

325 Aris Konstantinidis, 'Η αρχιτεκτονική εκπαίδευση', *Η Πρωΐα*, 9 March 1943, in Konstantinidis, *Για την αρχιτεκτονική*, 40–4, here 42–3.

326 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 69–71 (14 August 1941).

academic teaching is always self-educated, in practice, by engaging with the specificities of a place.

For Konstantinidis then, architects have 'to travel, to trot the globe', and become apprentices of 'the good teacher that nature is'.[327] Becoming an architect is not only a matter of accumulating human knowledge; it also involves understanding how nature 'itself organizes its landscapes architecturally'.[328] The role of architecture is to serve the long-standing 'spirit of the landscape', to render the perfect work of nature more hospitable for human inhabitation.[329] When buildings essentially re-present 'the curvilinearities of the mountains and the sections of the same landscape afresh', architecture and nature become united as 'ONE structure, the COMPLETE form'.[330] Architecture is yet another lifeform within the same ecosystem of natural life; buildings are 'organisms that will live with the landscape and hence they will also live with the human beings who inhabit that landscape. ... In other words, landscape, man and architecture are one and the same thing within one and the same world'.[331]

In this holistic context, the city and its inhabitants also hold important lessons for self-educated architects.[332] Konstantinidis aims to design for a harmonious way of life in both natural and human-made landscapes. His method of approaching the long-standing vernacular structures of each place with sense and sensibility leads to the 'truth' of traditional human settlements:

> We will first consider that which is given: the human, on one hand, and then the landscape, climate and geography, on the other. We will observe the mores and

327 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 34 (20 April 1938).
328 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 218 (2 Dec. 1984).
329 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 266 (23 July 1986).
330 Konstantinidis, *Δυο 'χωριά' απ' τη Μύκονο*, 23; Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 266 (23 July 1986).
331 Konstantinidis, *Projects + Buildings*, 261.
332 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 218 (2 Dec. 1984).

> customs (for each place and space), the ground and all its productivity, we will enter into the spirit of a certain economy that serves the people and we will also stand before religion. And [we will also stand before] the songs, prayers and feasts, alongside the sorrows and all the expressions of 'popular' society and we will then come out to say: look at the tools that the people use to build, look at the means through which the 'popular' work is erected. Look at the ways in which different materials are interwoven with a rationalist structural system and when timber, stone, pitched and flat roofs are used. Also witness this fabulous energy that prescribes, through a certain building ingenuity, the outer formal beauty (on the surface), see how each form and the simplest 'extrusion', each curve, each corner and every surface emerge organically, when knowledge is coupled with passion. And study how the one necessity, which is common to all, leads to a different structural and aesthetic form in each place—region.[333]

During the tumultuous 1940s, Konstantinidis systematically had surveyed, documented and anthologized more than thirty-five old buildings in Athens. In so doing, he noted the significant role of outdoor spaces and the gradual transitions from them to the interior via intermediary semi-enclosed spaces. He then applied the main features of this basic typology of the two-storey Athenian house, with the open-air courtyard 'with the light, sun and warmth of the Greek climate' at its core, in his work.[334] This is how Konstantinidis's architecture became not only modern but also true to the needs and culture of a specific region and the people who inhabited this natural landscape. His projects do not copy the external appearance or specific forms of vernacular architectures of the past (see fig. 4); he delves deeper within

333 Konstantinidis, *Δυο 'χωριά' απ' τη Μύκονο*, 35.
334 Konstantinidis, *Τα παλιά αθηναϊκά σπίτια*, 36.

them to extrapolate the 'type', the inner logic of their spatial configuration, their traditional structural system and construction method.[335] When this long-standing, essentially timeless, 'type' of building in a specific landscape is updated for the present, it becomes Konstantinidis's 'modern true architecture'. It is modern not because of its novel-looking form but because it is erected with current technological means, whilst answering to the needs of the present of its construction. And it remains true to the needs of the region because it still satisfies them with the spatial configurations that have stood the test of time. As such, it re-embodies the essence of dwelling in this specific landscape, based on the age-old lessons and 'types' that its architect has gleaned from a long-standing engagement with the same place.

Konstantinidis does not conduct a similar in-depth research of vernacular structures in Swiss settlements and landscapes during his short stay in the country. Rather, the ways in which he guides his ETH students in practice is more indicative of the ways in which he approaches the challenges of foreign teaching in theory.

TECTONIC LEGACIES

In the winter term of 1968–69, Konstantinidis starts with an abstract flat site, informing students that this will be replaced by a real site on a steep slope in the spring term.[336] This is not only his way of instilling in them the idea of solving the general type of the design problem first and then testing it in practice to adapt it to the actual conditions of an existing site in the outskirts of Zurich. It also reflects his experience from the quiet early decades of his private practice, when he was exploring the 'type' of his architecture and its variations

335 Cf. Livani, 'Τύπος και τόπος', 444, 457–8, 520.
336 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 2, 84.

on paper through a series of ideal villas.[337] The ground, with its steep inclination, obviously plays the most significant role in the transition of the students' projects from the abstract flatness of the winter term to the specific topographic conditions of the actual site in the spring term. Following ETH guidelines for design teaching in the third year, which must address 'housing, the neighbourhood and the required public buildings',[338] Konstantinidis's brief outlines an evolving housing block, including public services for its residents (kindergarten, café-bar, small shops, and a multi-purpose hall for public events), adjacent to an existing settlement.

Anticipating the housing block's evolution over time through design—as the residents' families would grow and require more space in their apartments—plays a key role in Konstantinidis's brief. It reflects his main conviction that architecture is ephemeral because it is alive; it follows the changes that life brings to people's needs over time. In Konstantinidis's words, 'if every building is not only a shelter, but also a *garment* for the human body, then it is no longer a permanent and steady plastic form, but it is—it should be—something much more malleable, very ephemeral, not a still image, but life and action'.[339] To address this, each student is asked to define a structural system that will guide the future development of the housing block from the starting point of six hundred to the end point of one thousand inhabitants, whilst avoiding the impression that the block is permanently under construction. In December 1968, Konstantinidis organizes a visit to a local factory for his students to appreciate the structural possibilities of prefabricated concrete modules through a realized residential prototype, whose frame allows for variable room layouts.[340] Through its clear structural configuration, the aspired programmatically

337 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 2, 21.

338 *Training of the Architect*, 21.

339 Konstantinidis, *Τα παλιά αθηναϊκά σπίτια*, 19 (emphasis in the original).

340 ETH-Bibliothek, Hochschularchiv, Präsidialverfügung 505526, 4 December 1968, https://doi.org/10.12683/eth-122300.

unfinished architecture offers its inhabitants the pleasure of participating in the eventual expansion of the entire block, horizontally or vertically.[341] Students are, in effect, asked to create an organized canvas for the gradual, resident-led development of the block over time, through material and colour choices that will also distinguish the load-bearing parts of the structure from the prefabricated modules of future expansions. Konstantinidis believes that this is the fundamental craft of the architect: to enable 'chance and necessity [to] unite in harmony'.[342] He also specifies that a house garden should be provided from the outset and that indoor spaces should be well connected with the world outdoors[343]—both key features of his architecture in Greece.

Konstantinidis's brief includes various intertwined elements of his approach, such as material and colour choices. His aspired 'true architecture' is also 'chromatically true'; its polychromy derives from the soil that produces natural materials in their proper colours, as opposed to internationally standardized industrial paints.[344] This does not mean that the Greek architect is against the use of industrial materials; he only underscores the need to address their problematic weathering in the long run. Because they also allow for transformations over time which are unattainable with stone structures, Konstantinidis also in fact appreciates their potential to be combined with 'traditional' materials in 'lighter, more flexible' modern structures.[345] Material choices also usher in specific structural specifications, especially in terms of their mass, which in turn produce the Greek architect's austere aesthetics. For example, Konstantinidis believes that the concrete frame is 'almost antiplastic, hence antimonumental

341 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 2, 83–4.

342 Konstantinidis, *Projects + Buildings*, 261.

343 Aris Konstantinidis, 'Entwurfsarbeit fur das 6. Semester: Programm', 6-page typescript, 25 February 1969, ETH Folder 'SS 69 Entwurf V, Exkursion London: 1–2', Aris Konstantinidis private archive, 2–3.

344 Konstantinidis, *Elements for Self-Knowledge*, 317.

345 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 88 (10 May 1965).

from a purely structural position'. For him, the essence of true Greek architecture does not reside in the 'dry technique' of the West nor in the 'sensualized bulimia of the Orient' but in its 'moral austerity' which curbs a project's uncontrolled formal plasticity.[346]

The highest-scoring student projects of 1968–69 demonstrate Konstantinidis's teaching in practice. In the winter semester, Dahle organizes the two-to-five-storey housing units in four clusters around the central area of the site, where the student places the public buildings (fig. 22).[347] Each house starts from a stable core of four concrete U-shape enclosures that open onto indoor and outdoor spaces. Through their spatial configuration, these U-shapes also form the four main corners of the house, rendering the central living room as a semi-enclosed open space: an interior courtyard that is both cross-ventilated and naturally lit, as its open plan is diagonally traversed by the natural light and air flowing between the four enclosures. Anticipated additions to the original volume take the form of lightweight timber or steel structures that create more semi-enclosed spaces, as the extra children's bedrooms on the first floor hang over the ground floor (see fig. 23). As the houses evolve, the qualities of natural light and cross-ventilation of the original plans are therefore enriched by the additions that also introduce gradients to the succession from enclosed to semi-enclosed and outdoor spaces in each building. This rich interplay of open-air and indoor spaces is extended to the whole site through the free distribution of the U-shape enclosures of each building within the four main clusters of the master plan.

The intelligent use of the structural grid alongside several of Konstantinidis's main principles of spatial configuration is therefore clearly present in Dahle's work. But this

346 Konstantinidis, *Τα παλιά αθηναϊκά σπίτια*, 19, 37.

347 ETH Folder 1 'WS 68–69 ENTWURF V', Aris Konstantinidis private archive.

22 Einar Dahle, masterplan model for an evolving housing block on a flat site, Aris Konstantinidis's third-year design studio at ETH Zurich, winter semester 1968–69

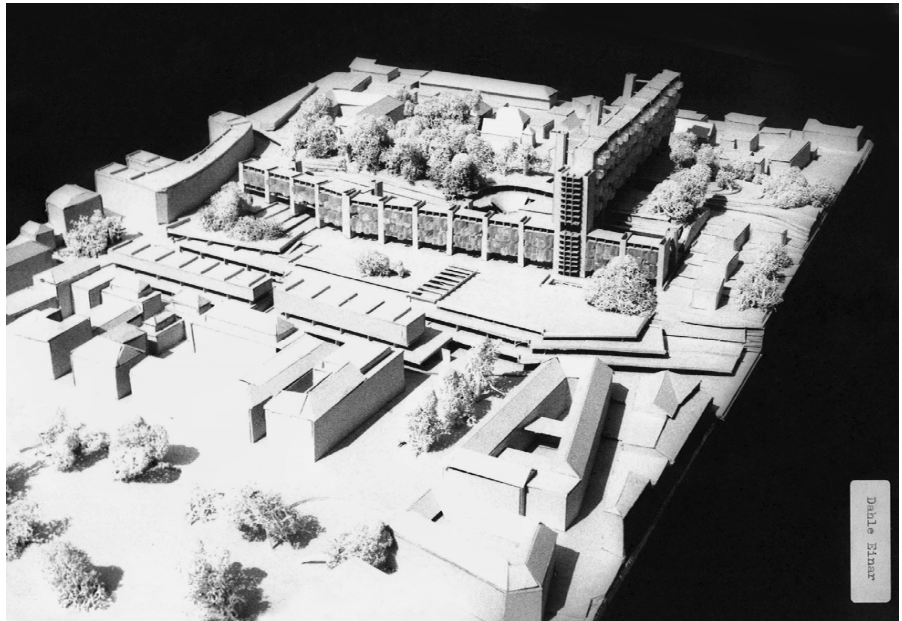
23 Einar Dahle, unit model for an evolving housing block on a flat site, Aris Konstantinidis's third-year design studio at ETH Zurich, winter semester 1968–69

student project does not simply transpose the Greek architect's typical dwelling unit to a Swiss site. In Greece, the transition from enclosed to semi-enclosed to outdoor space is more straightforwardly organized in successive zones in a free-standing residence in the landscape, such as Konstantinidis's Weekend House in Anavyssos (see figs. 15, 16). In Switzerland, the respective spatial entanglement leads to richer gradients in the transition from indoor to outdoor spaces. Strategically placed, the stable U-shape enclosures are configured not only to serve as shelters from the harsher Swiss climate but also to enable the formation of housing blocks by appropriate combinations of the U-shapes back to back.

Konstantinidis encourages his students to work 'with the ground' and the existing urban fabric as they move to the real site in the spring term. They soon realize that what worked on the flat site of the previous term will not work now. This is how Dahle's winter-term master plan of low-rise buildings across the whole flat site is turned into a housing tower block on the inclinating site (see fig. 24). This single structure spans two corners of the site to make room for the existing green space and establish transient links with the urban fabric on its other side, whilst segregating cars from pedestrians on different levels.

A similar move is evident in the project of Finnish student Nils-Erik Stenman.[348] Inspired by the megastructural propositions of the late 1960s, such as those by Yona Friedman or the Japanese metabolists, Stenman's project additionally shows that Konstantinidis is open to discussing recent developments (see fig. 25). The idea of a stable steel frame serving as an infrastructure for lighter units to clip on, evolve, and change as they follow the dictates of human life echoes Konstantinidis's conception of architecture as an essentially ephemeral response to people's needs.

348 ETH Folder 2 'SS 69 ENTWURF VI', Aris Konstantinidis private archive.



24 Einar Dahle, masterplan model for an evolving housing block at the outskirts of Zurich, Aris Konstantinidis's third-year design studio at ETH Zurich, spring semester 1968–69

25 Nils-Erik Stenman, masterplan model for an evolving housing block on a flat site, Aris Konstantinidis's third-year design studio at ETH Zurich, winter semester 1968–69

26 Nils-Erik Stenman, masterplan model for an evolving housing block on the outskirts of Zurich, Aris Konstantinidis's third-year design studio at ETH Zurich, spring semester 1968–69

The similar configuration of several students' projects on the spring-term site, with their concentration of most dwelling units in tower blocks at its same corner, suggests that this is Konstantinidis's own preferred direction (see figs. 24, 26). He reserves his highest marks for projects that distribute the programme on the site in ways he, too, thinks work better with the topography and the existing urban context. The Greek architect also appreciates (and photographs for his archive) projects that explore other options, such as Armin Heinemann's undifferentiated distribution of dwelling spaces in three-storey units whose setbacks create the impression that the buildings are inserted into the ground, following the topography of the site.

Fourth-year studio teaching at ETH Zurich in this period covered 'individual public buildings … within their respective urban framework with particular emphasis on the town-planning aspects'.[349] But the urban question was not the Greek architect's strongest point. His otherwise prolific writing rarely includes thoughts about the city. The few related comments reiterate the Albertian idea that the city is essentially a big house (and, vice versa, the house is a small city) or recount his impressions from his travels. Resorting to similar terms to interpret both the house and the city, Konstantinidis almost reduces urban design to architectural design. For him, building cities and building individual structures form part of one and the same art: architecture. The only difference is that the modular unit in cities is the single house, while in the case of buildings it is brick or stone.[350] His observations on the urban scale are indeed associated with his convictions about the architectural scale and the art of crafting enclosed, semi-enclosed, and outdoor spaces of human life, in succession.[351] Konstantinidis's reluctance to address planning in the modern city may lie behind his formulation of an

349 *Training of the Architect*, 21.
350 Konstantinidis, *Τα προλεγόμενα*, 33–5.
351 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 2, 102–3.

open-ended brief in 1969–70, his last year of teaching at ETH Zurich. Making room for students to insert their own concerns in their projects, his brief is also aligned with the curricular expectation that 'towards the end of his studies, the student can deal independently with the many-leveled problems which every building project presents'.[352]

Students develop an array of projects in response to this open-ended brief. These range from Konstantinidis's comfort zone of hotels, student dwellings, and housing blocks to the less familiar grounds of a sports centre or the elephant house at the Zurich zoo. Still, the Greek architect's signature interests and the ways in which these are further explored and developed by his high-marked students are discernible.[353] The elephant house by Ulrich Bachmann becomes an exercise in working with the frame and the structure as the main instruments of giving form to architecture (fig. 27). Konstantinidis must have enjoyed exploring the potential of a triangular grid structure side by side with his student, whilst addressing the challenges of organizing visitors' movement. He must have also appreciated the roof openings that playfully follow the grid in conjunction with Bachmann's configuration of the different levels of the ground floor in the section drawing.

Mauro Gilardi's leisure centre at the outskirts of Mendrisio, on the other hand, is one of the largest-scale projects in the Swiss landscape of Ticino with which Konstantinidis engages as a tutor (see fig. 28). With the rising Mount Generoso serving as a steady backdrop to the project, Gilardi explores the city, as well as the climate and history of the region, in order to propose a long pathway in the flat, central portion of the Mendrisiotto. This includes a built infrastructure that develops as a curvilinear succession of oblong two-storey structures whose relationship with the ground constantly

352 *Training of the Architect*, 9.

353 ETH Folder 'WS 69–70 Entwurf VII, SS 70 Entwurf VIII, Venedig-Ravenna, Milano-Ivrea-Turin: 3–4', Aris Konstantinidis private archive.

27 Ulrich Bachmann, model for the elephant house at the Zurich zoo, Aris Konstantinidis's fourth-year design studio at ETH Zurich, winter semester 1969–70

28 Mauro Gilardi, masterplan model for a leisure centre on the outskirts of Mendrisio, Aris Konstantinidis's fourth-year design studio at ETH Zurich, winter semester 1969–70

shifts to traverse the modern highway or encompass a historic structure. The result is a thin built line in the landscape that defines the plain within the vineyards as the place of leisure and promenade.

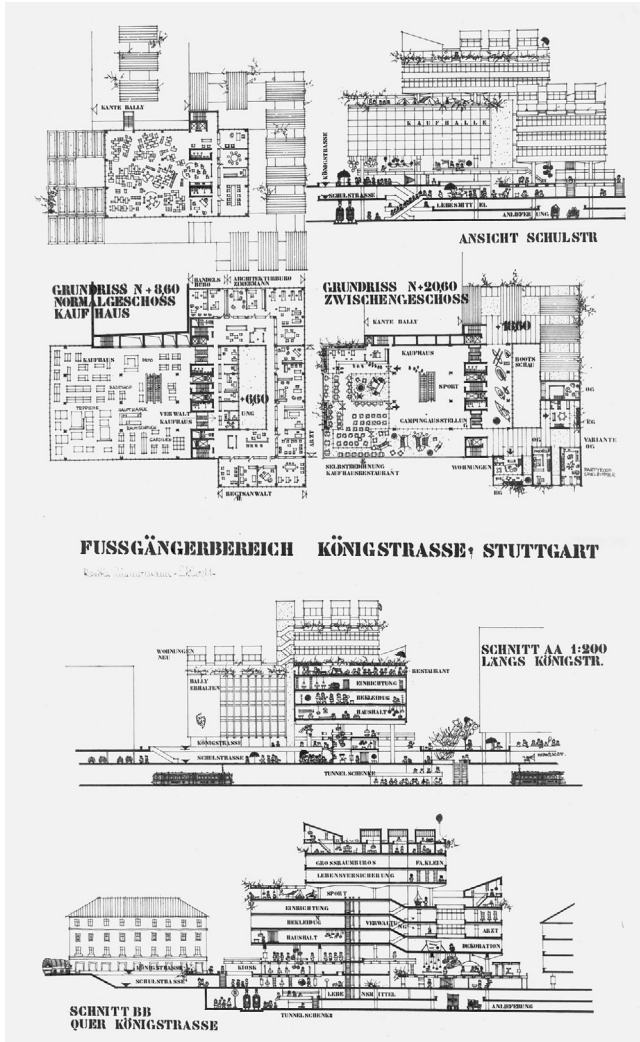
In Nicolas Joye's student housing project, Konstantinidis must have appreciated his apprentice's demonstrated mastery of site restrictions by developing a sophisticated building in section (see fig. 29). On the high floors, Joye inserts architectural order through gridded modular units, reminiscent of his Greek tutor's low-income housing projects of the mid-1950s (see fig. 5), whilst working with the contours of the site and the built volumes on the ground floor. The ensuing building mass embraces a courtyard at its core, which enables natural light and air to flow into students' dormitories, echoing Konstantinidis's typological survey of old Athenian houses (see fig. 2).

Lastly, Roswitha Zimmermann-Eckhardt's project inserts a novel built volume in conjunction with design interventions on the level of a high street in Stuttgart (see fig. 30).[354] Working with the ground in plan and section to provide platforms for a range of public uses also establishes new relationships between pedestrian ways. The visual connections between levels create a sense of conviviality in public spaces. While the proposed structures are stable and robust, the ensuing platforms can flexibly host a range of ephemeral uses. Richly populated with human figures and furnishings, Zimmermann-Eckhardt's drawings must have fascinated Konstantinidis in their anticipation of the vitality of urban life.

In the spring semester of the same year, the Greek architect asks his students to work on a flexible, ephemeral structure that can be disassembled to be reconstructed at different sites across Switzerland. Establishing a connection with public space, this provisional structure will enable

354 ETH Folder 3 'WS 69–70 ENTWURF VII', Aris Konstantinidis private archive.

29 Nicolas Joye, model for a student housing project in Zurich, Aris Konstantinidis's fourth-year design studio at ETH Zurich, winter semester 1969–70



30 Roswitha Zimmermann-Eckhardt, plan and section drawings for a high-street project in Stuttgart, Aris Konstantinidis's fourth-year design studio at ETH Zurich, winter semester 1969–70

citizens to hold events about the single most pressing problem of Swiss culture, which will also be defined by each student. Forming the core of their project, this big issue will also aid students in selecting the appropriate site for their proposed civic structure (to be installed first in Zurich). The resulting projects range from timber kiosks at central squares to floating structures on the lake. Through the work of Gilardi, whose proposal looks like a 'swimming inflated balloon' on the River Limmat (fig. 31),[355] Konstantinidis witnesses some of his longest-standing ideas about the ephemerality of architecture realized afresh. The secondary, lightweight linear structures that lead from the public space of the city to the spherical hall on the lake also bear the Greek architect's signature idea that the structural clarity of a bare skeleton is the essence of architectural form (see fig. 6). Strategically placed in the city in students' various projects, these skeletons become flexible vessels of public life. Their flights of stairs usher in pedestrian ways or exhibition spaces on the first floors, whilst serving as arcades on public squares and pedestrian crossroads at ground level. Finnish student Hilkka-Liisa Ojala also works on a structurally challenging proposal, floating over Lake Zurich (see fig. 32).[356] Having consecutively followed three of Konstantinidis's four design studios in two academic years, she characteristically utilizes a grid to organize her structure. But her intention to leave the huge timber platform hanging over the lake also introduces a mast-like structural system of chords that support it from the shore. The final result is a flexible lightweight structure and a form that is enriched by the diagonal chords, which also emphasize the three-dimensional presence of the grid throughout the project. Konstantinidis additionally appreciates less structurally challenging proposals that combine timber kiosks and frames with tent-like structures, especially

355 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 2, 91–2.
356 ETH Folder 4 'SS 70 ENTWURF VIII', Aris Konstantinidis private archive.

when these are 'aptly' configured in their urban sites to leave ample room for open-air public spaces.[357]

Despite the wide array of student projects over two academic years, the shared characteristics of their designs indicate Konstantinidis's general directions during their development. For example, all projects that ensue from his last brief are essentially timber structures. This suggests that he approached timber in Switzerland the same way he approached stone in Greece—namely, as the main material of the local vernacular that can still find its place in modern projects. In addition, the expressive form of most student projects ensues from the structural logic of their making; it is indeed a tectonic form, as this is systematically theorized by Frampton twenty-five years later.[358] The terms in which Konstantinidis's students describe him today 'as an architect in the line of NEUTRA and BREUER—but giving more importance to the structure' also point in the same direction. They additionally recall their tutor's extensive 'knowledge of classic and modern architecture', his attention to 'practical details', and his 'sensitive handling of space',[359] which drew their attention to creating L-shape enclosures and transitions that fill living areas with different light qualities. For Dahle, Konstantinidis's teaching did not fetishize construction details as long as the structure of a building was clearly expressed in its tectonic form.[360] Decades later, when this former student finally visited Konstantinidis's projects in Greece, such as the Hotel 'Xenia' on Mykonos (see fig. 9), they also note how 'natural building material, color and texture made up the important elements of expression' in the Greek architect's work.[361] This holistic approach to architectural

357 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 2, 92.

358 See Kenneth Frampton, *Studies in Tectonic Culture: The Poetics of Construction in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Architecture* (MIT Press, 1995), 373–4.

359 Balzani, email to Giamarelos, 24 July 2024.

360 Dahle, interview by Giamarelos, 6 August 2024.

361 Dahle, email to Giamarelos, 15 July 2024.

31 Mauro Gilardi, model for a floating provisorium on the River Limmat, Aris Konstantinidis's fourth-year design studio at ETH Zurich, spring semester 1969–70

32 Hilkka-Liisa Ojala, model for a floating provisorium over Lake Zurich, Aris Konstantinidis's fourth-year design studio at ETH Zurich, spring semester 1969–70

tectonics is the main legacy of Konstantinidis's late-1960s teaching in Zurich.

Despite such testimonies by his former students, the extent to which Konstantinidis's teaching influenced young architects of the time cannot be easily assessed. Still, if one architect can be regarded as a Swiss follower of Konstantinidis, then that is Urs Gutknecht. During his studies, he joined all four of the Greek architect's design studios from 1968 to 1970. He is followed by two female students who selected three of Konstantinidis's studios at ETH Zurich: Ojala and Zimmermann-Eckhardt. But the work of these architects has remained largely unknown until now. Some of the highest-marking students who followed two of Konstantinidis's design studios, however, such as Dahle,[362] Stenman, or Heinz Peter Oeschger, became locally reputable architects in the decades that followed. Assimilated features of the Greek architect's teaching can possibly be traced in Stenman's Kokkola City Library (1999), for example, with its sparse partition walls and the natural light that cascades from the glass roof to the central open area. Like several of Konstantinidis's students' projects, buildings by these architects also resemble the Germanic 'vessels of life' that their Greek tutor admired in the oeuvre of Egon Eiermann and Johannes Duiker (see fig. 7). Other students followed different trajectories, ranging from working on issues of conservation with the gta Institute at ETH Zurich in the late 1970s (Lukas Högl) to abandoning architecture altogether in order to lead the hippie life and open a clothing store in Ibiza in the early 1970s (Heinemann).[363]

362 See Hallgeir Opedal, 'Byggmester Dahle', *mur + betong* 2 (2016), 4–9.

363 See Lukas Högl, 'Die Casa dei Pagani von Malvaglia: Vorläufiger Bericht über die Untersuchungen im Sommer 1977 durch das Institut für Geschichte und Theorie der Architektur an der ETH-Zürich', *Nachrichten des Schweizerischen Burgenvereins* 51 (1978), 137–49; Silvia Ihring, 'Der Hippie Armin Heinemann kooperiert mit dem Luxushaus Loewe', *Welt*, 31 July 2017, https://www.welt.de/iconist/mode/article166896016/Wie-ein-Hippie-die-Luxusmode-von-heute-beeinflusst.html.

Lastly, one of the two dissenting students who critiqued Konstantinidis's brief in 1968–69, Ueli Zbinden, became a reputable architect and academic in Switzerland and Germany.[364] Zbinden was genuinely interested in the question of architecture's socio-political role, its mode of production, and its place in the current real-estate market. Yet, the Greek architect did not change his mind about his two dissenting students even when he witnessed that their Italian peers also defied and revised their professors' briefs at the IUAV School of Architecture in Venice in 1969.[365] In 1976, at the opening of Konstantinidis's photographic exhibition at Desmos Gallery, a student from the National Technical University of Athens challenged him about the absence of people and their activities in the vernacular buildings and landscapes of his photographs. The architect's overly general response about human life and its relationship with architectural form and the ground reportedly came across as 'ever dogmatic', stirring the reaction of left-leaning students in the audience.[366] Konstantinidis's reactionary stance, including his hostility to sociological approaches to architecture and experiments in participatory design, also had significant repercussions in the latent history of alternative critical regionalisms abroad, as I discuss in the epilogue.

364 See Ueli Zbinden, *Hans Brechbühler 1907–1989* (gta, 1991); Markus Wassmer, Florian Fischer, and Ueli Zbinden, eds., *Wechselseitig: Zu Architektur und Technik* (Technische Universität München, 2006).

365 Konstantinidis, *Εμπειρίες και περιστατικά*, vol. 2, 97–8.

366 Nelly Marda, email to Stylianos Giamarelos, 30 September 2023.

EPILOGUE: CRITICAL REGIONALISMS ABROAD

Throughout this book, I have discussed how Aris Konstantinidis can be regarded as an alternative model for the development of critical regionalism abroad through the different ways in which he engaged with local and global architectural audiences. Working from within a privileged social circle in Greece, which granted him access to civic posts of power and influence, Konstantinidis challenged this very status quo through his polemical writing and architectural practice. This critic from within did not succumb to the dictates of the global tourism industry or the consumerist values of his upper-class clientele; with each new commission, he continued to advance his vision for an authentic way of dwelling in the Greek landscape through his architectural projects. His vocal presence on international architectural fora further enabled him to advance his critical stance against the commodifying trends of the rising tourism industry of the 1960s.

Throughout this process, Konstantinidis did not leave his sensitive work alone or assume that buildings speak for themselves. Rather, he ensured that his architectural vision was propagated across the world in his own terms by combining his narrativizing photographs with his own manifesto-sounding words for the successive worldwide publications of his flagship projects. With his values steadily accompanying the photographed projects that embodied his vision, the Greek architect also conditioned the reception of his work by global audiences. This is also why Konstantinidis's worldview could not be easily unsettled or adapted to conform to other critical approaches to architecture that he encountered during his three-year stay in Zurich (1967–70). Based on his lived experience and professional practice in Greece, he applied his critical regionalist approach to a different context in his own terms when teaching his Swiss and international students at ETH Zurich. Their resulting projects show that, in the process, the Greek architect retained his conviction in the primacy of tectonics and structure, whilst

conveying his sensitive, transitive handling of spatial sequences to his student cohort.

Yet, whether Konstantinidis's position of the critic from within is tenable in the long term is questionable. Still, in the absence of a foreseeable restructuring or replacement of the global capitalist production cycle, it remains an option that merits further consideration. After all, critical regionalism always relied on such clusters of resistance, whether they were eventually doomed to fail or not. In this light, Konstantinidis's example suggests that a similar position can at least retain its value in the context of critical regionalism abroad today. This is why, in this epilogue, I start by foregrounding more features of the Greek architect's approach that remain relevant in this discussion. In so doing, however, I also encounter the limits of his thinking in this framework. For this reason, I gradually move beyond Konstantinidis's historically specific trajectory to embark on a speculative comparative reading that serves to further advance the discourse of critical regionalism abroad in an operative way.

The Greek architect was still in Zurich when Mario Botta was completing his first exemplary projects of the School of the Ticino in 1970. Although it would have been historically possible, a meeting of the two independently developing strands of Greek and Ticinese critical regionalisms did not take place through these two figures. Nonetheless, attempting to reconstruct their potential combination or juxtaposition holds significant implications for critical regionalism abroad today. In attempting this reconstruction, I stay close to Kenneth Frampton's account of Botta's work. This enables me to move beyond the old Konstantinidis's pejorative account of his Swiss peer's projects as 'bunkers' that did not establish proper complementary relationships with their sites.[367] Instead, I focus on potential points of convergence, enrichment or significant differences of the critical regionalisms that developed in these two different contexts. In so doing,

367 Konstantinidis, *Αμαρτωλοί και κλέφτες*, 67–77.

I reaffirm the potential of operative history writing to instigate an exploration of paths not taken that retrieves the latent possibilities from a forgotten past for the exigencies of the present. Lastly, I move away from Konstantinidis and Botta to briefly focus on Rena Sakellaridou's (b. 1956) and Nikos Ktenas's (1960–2022) engagement with the Swiss context. Foregrounding more cross-cultural exchanges between Greece and Switzerland, their work further expands the scope of critical regionalism abroad.

CRITICAL REGIONALIST AFFINITIES

Konstantinidis's critical regionalism is not exclusively reliant on its Greek roots. Having been partly cultivated abroad, it is effectively cross-cultural. His German architectural education enables Konstantinidis to see, for example, the aesthetic and structural modernity of the glass windows of the old Athenian houses (see fig. 2), which he then foregrounds as pertinent for his modern peers across the world. Forming part of the regional vernacular, extensive glass surfaces are therefore not only compatible with the local climate; they also enable the 'unique sculptural and painterly beauty' of the Greek landscape to enter into the innermost spaces of the house.[368] Similarly, African ways of building, in which the roof is first constructed on the ground and then manually carried to be put in place, are, for Konstantinidis, no less modern in their structural logic than techniques used by Mies van der Rohe during the erection of the New National Gallery in Berlin (1961–68).[369] Owing to its geographical location and its socio-political history at the crossroads of East and West, modern Greek culture is, for him, a reflective combination of these two long-standing cultural traditions. The stereotypically '"hard" and dry and unrefined' features of

368 Konstantinidis, *Τα παλιά αθηναϊκά σπίτια*, 51–3.
369 Themelis, *Ο λόγος του αρχιμάστορα*, 39–40.

Western culture prove frequently unsuitable for the Greeks, who share more affinities with the 'warm in spiritual maturity and wisdom' cultures of the East.[370] Konstantinidis especially appreciates these cultures' 'artistic ethos' of putting each day in the service of 'perfecting the preceding perfection'. For him, the only drawback of Eastern cultures, which is also exemplified in the work of Dimitris Pikionis, is their 'unrestrained sentimentality'.[371]

More than three decades after Konstantidis's essentialist cultural critique, the 'sentimental' Eastern recapitulations of vernacular architecture are still left out of the narrowly defined critical regionalist canon because they are regarded as inferior to their 'emancipatory and progressive' Western counterparts. As architectural historian Zeynep Aygen notes, Egyptian and Turkish architects such as Ramses Wissa Wassef (1911–74) and Sedad Hakki Eldem (1908–88) have yet to be elevated to the privileged status of critical regionalists, despite the affinities of their work with that of Pikionis or Konstantinidis. This strict 'borderline' for Eastern practices is another significant way in which critical regionalism still functions 'like stardom' in the history of architecture,[372] instead of fulfilling its theorists' original aspirations for global inclusivity. This is another direction in which critical regionalism abroad can also serve as a significant guiding question.

Konstantinidis's own response to this question is informed by an onerous journey of self-knowledge within and without Greece that culminates in his architectural practice. His aspired 'true architecture' ensues from a complex social and cultural process which leads to the erection of buildings that retain homologies with their surrounding environment.[373]

370 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 129–30 (9 March 1980).

371 Konstantinidis, *Αμαρτωλοί και κλέφτες*, 26–7.

372 Zeynep Aygen, 'The Other's History in Built Environment Education: A Case Study: History of Architecture', *Journal for Education in the Built Environment* 5, no. 1 (July 2010), 98–122, here 110, https://doi.org/10.11120/jebe.2010.05010098.

373 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 312 (17 July 1988).

Because honest construction and traditional architecture are intrinsically related in his mind, the exclusive focus on architects' technical expertise 'alienates' them from the genuine 'needs' of the people and the embodied wisdom of vernacular structures.[374] Konstantinidis believes that these are the roots of the mid-twentieth-century problems of modernism: so-called international architecture can exist in only a limited number of places that share common characteristics or conditions. Because people share similar needs and desires, however, 'inasmuch as we build (—our true architecture) for the specific people of a specific place, we also build for any people in every place'.[375]

Like Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre, who stress that the principles of critical regionalism are among the skills that any architect can develop,[376] Konstantinidis believes that regional architecture is not exclusively produced by local architects. Cultivating the design principles that relate to the material and climatic aspects of a specific landscape ushers in 'a common architecture for each specific environment; an architecture that any architect could create'.[377] This is why Konstantinidis also believes that spatial relations, such as those of the house and the open-air courtyard that serves as its main 'living room', constitute an 'organic synthesis, that aptly solves a problem' of dwelling across the globe—from Greece, Egypt, and the Mediterranean basin to Asia and the Americas.[378]

Konstantinidis's writings on Greek architecture also resonate with Frampton's later accounts of critical regionalism in different parts of the world. In the 1940s, for instance, the architect notes how the high walls that fence the old Athenian houses and their courtyards from the street also serve as 'a spiritual barrier'; they create 'a monk's cell' within the urban

374 Konstantinidis, *Σύγχρονη αληθινή αρχιτεκτονική*, 41–3.
375 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 221 (10 Jan. 1985).
376 Tzonis and Lefaivre, 'Critical Regionalism', 23.
377 Konstantinidis, *Projects + Buildings*, 262.
378 Konstantinidis, *Τα προλεγόμενα*, 24.

fabric that enables residents to concentrate on their intellectual life and psychological well-being.[379] More than three decades later, Frampton describes the high walls of Tadao Ando's projects in Osaka in the similar terms of 'creating an introspective domain within which the homeowner may be granted sufficient private "ground" with which to withstand the alienating no-man's-land of the contemporary city'.[380] Konstantinidis is also concerned with Frampton's main question of critical regionalism; namely, how to become modern (following the technological dictates of universal civilization) and return to the sources (of local cultures). As the Greek architect characteristically notes upon his return to Athens from Zurich, 'If modernism drove us to losing our roots, let's work to find new ones. From our own grounds, but also possibly from elsewhere'.[381] Lastly, Konstantinidis writes some of his finest lines against ubiquitous air-conditioning, one of the main points of Frampton's formulation of critical regionalism and a pertinent subject of current debates on collective senses of thermal comfort and the foreseeable necessity for them to be unsettled:[382]

> Since the invention of air-conditioning [...] and its easy application to houses ... the climate in Greece changed. Winters are colder, and summers are warmer. This 'disease' had started earlier with the 'radiator'. When it, too, arrived in our land, winters immediately became more frosty and we all started to feel much colder than before ...—and with the advent of air-conditioning, which can cool our houses, summers immediately became hotter. We can no longer cope with the heat, as we used to do.

379 Konstantinidis, *Τα παλιά αθηναϊκά σπίτια*, 39.

380 Kenneth Frampton, 'Tadao Ando's Critical Modernism', in Kenneth Frampton, ed., *Tadao Ando: Buildings, Projects, Writings* (Rizzoli, 1984), 6–9, here 6.

381 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 109 (4 January 1971).

382 Frampton, *Modern Architecture*, 2nd ed., 327. See Daniel A. Barber, 'After Comfort', *Log* 47 (2019), 45–50; Daniel A. Barber, *Modern Architecture and Climate:*

> And this is the result (—debasement):—our place became more northern during winter, and more … African during summer. Since then modern Greeks lost their more direct contact with their natural surroundings. Under such conditions, how could one build a house where the interior and the exterior are interwoven into an organic whole, which also includes the climate. With air-conditioning indoor and outdoor spaces are (—… harshly) distinguished. During winter and during summer.
>
> And I am, of course, exaggerating …—but not unjustifiably so. I think of the many 'changes' that we are living through as we progress technologically, with such an enthusiasm that we do not realize the negative consequences …—which we (—this … progressive majority) almost stubbornly do not want to weigh with the scale of life, if our living is not to be hanging solely from material 'satisfactions', …—in fact we might even be losing some of our sensibilities if we do not see the matters of our existence clearly from all sides, namely 'with thoughts and dreams' (SOLOMOS) and 'for the true essence' (—SOLOMOS's words again).
>
> And another note on technological 'progress':—since the invention of sealants and bitumen, all roofs … 'are leaking'; that is to say, rainwater frequently seeps through to the interior of the house more than before, when our structures were more 'primitive' and their materials simpler and, of course, more tested in time.[383]

Design Before Air Conditioning (Princeton Architectural Press, 2020), 270–5.

383 Konstantinidis, *Η αρχιτεκτονική της αρχιτεκτονικής*, 109 (25 September 1980). Konstantinidis's writings frequently refer to the verses of Dionysios Solomos (1798–1857), who is widely regarded as the national poet of modern Greece. The architect regarded Solomos's work as his formative intellectual influence. See Kiosoglou, *Άρης Κωνσταντινίδης*, 16.

Less discussed than such affinities, however, is Konstantinidis's special place between the Greek and Swiss variants of the early history of critical regionalism. His reluctance to meaningfully engage with the work of his peers during his three-year teaching stint at ETH Zurich more than five decades ago represents a series of missed opportunities for sophisticated cross-cultural exchanges that could have enriched his own architectural approach, reinforcing its pertinence for the twenty-first-century context of critical regionalism abroad.

PATHS NOT TAKEN

Back in 1967, Konstantinidis was initially invited to teach within a group of professors that included Alberto Camenzind, a significant figure for the formation of the *Tendenzen* generation of Swiss architects which formed Frampton's School of the Ticino.[384] But the Greek architect did not mention Camenzind's work or teaching in his writings. Lucius Burckhardt, with whom Konstantinidis was also reluctant to engage at ETH Zurich, was another important figure in the early history of critical regionalism. As an early proponent of ecological and sustainable design, in the 1970s Burckhardt approached young architects in German-speaking countries who were working with local resources in their regions. In this context, he also invited Tzonis and Lefaivre to write their first essay on regionalism in architecture for his related

384 Heinz Ronner, 'On the Situation of Architecture in the Ticino', Steinmann and Boga, *Tendenzen*, 153–5, here 153–4; Frampton, 'Mario Botta and the School of the Ticino'. The Ticinese architects that featured in the *Tendenzen* exhibition were Roberto Bianconi, Kurt Kuehn, Jean Roth; Mario Botta; Peppo Brivio; Mario Campi, Franco Pessina, Niki Piazzoli; Tita Carloni and Design Collective 2 (Lorenzo Denti, Fosco Moretti); Giancarlo Durisch; Aurelio Galfetti, Flora Ruchat-Roncati, Ivo Trümpy, Antonio Antorini, Francesco Pozzi; Ivano Gianola, Fabio Tarchini; Marco Krähenbühl, Tino Bomio; Bruno Reichlin, Fabio Reinhart; Luigi Snozzi, Livio Vacchini, Fredi Ehrat; Roberto Bianconi; Dolf Schnebli; and Livio Vacchini.

publication, in April 1980.[385] Leaving Zurich in 1970, Konstantinidis additionally missed meeting Aldo Rossi, whose teaching at ETH Zurich from 1972 to 1974 was formative for the youngest members of the School of the Ticino.[386]

In the late 1960s, Konstantinidis could not yet have seen most of the buildings for which the School of the Ticino would become famous later in the 1970s. Out of the now canonized 'early gems' of the Ticinese architects,[387] their Greek peer could have visited only the Public Baths in Bellinzona by Aurelio Galfetti, Flora Ruchat-Roncati, and Ivo Trümpy, completed in 1970 (fig. 33). Other significant projects of this canon, such as Mario Botta's houses in Cadenazzo (1971) and Riva San Vitale (1972), were completed only after Konstantinidis had left Switzerland. But the Greek architect could have been familiar with the unique regional architecture of Ticino. As noted in passing by Eleni Livani, his mentor Adolf Abel wrote positively about the age-long building tradition of a Ticinese village, underscoring the impressive adaptation of this vernacular architecture to the mountainous landscape of the Alps.[388] With buildings' sides at the lower parts of the mountainside that served as supporting walls and the buildings' roofs doubling up as terraces and courtyards for dwellings on the higher parts, the end result is a cohesive settlement with a distinct architectural identity of working with the ground that Konstantinidis would have certainly appreciated.[389]

Swiss critical regionalism was therefore born when this 'people of artisans' met the Italian architectural theory of the 1960s through Rossi's teaching. Its main characteristic

385 See Alexander Tzonis, Liane Lefaivre, and Anthony Alofsin, 'Die Frage des Regionalismus', in Michael Andritzky, Lucius Burckhardt, and Ot Hoffmann, eds., *Für eine andere Architektur: Bauen mit der Natur und in der Region* (Fischer, 1981), 121–34; Giamarelos, *Resisting Postmodern Architecture*, 63–4, 77–81.

386 Frampton, 'Mario Botta and the School of the Ticino'. See Ákos Moravánszky and Judith Hopfengärtner, eds., *Aldo Rossi und die Schweiz: Architektonische Wechselwirkungen* (gta, 2011).

387 See Davidovici, *Autonomy of Theory*, 41–2.

388 Livani, 'Τύπος και τόπος', 308.

389 Adolf Abel, *Vom Wesen des Raumes in der Baukunst* (Callwey, 1952), 13–15.

33 Aurelio Galfetti, Flora Ruchat-Roncati, and Ivo Trümpy, public baths in Bellinzona (1970)

is reportedly 'a new attitude about the problem of the relationship of a building to its environment'; no longer limited to topography, this also includes 'the typology of houses, streets and developments'.[390] In theory, all of these are also within the purview of Konstantinidis's own studies of old Athenian houses and vernacular architecture in Greece. In practice, however, his work rarely addresses the complexities of the urban context. Most of his projects refer to pristine landscapes, and his typological studies of houses in Athens rarely show the streets behind the walls that surround their courtyards. By contrast, Ticinese architects such as Luigi Snozzi and Tita Carloni were already developing their 'studies on the relationship of city morphology and house typology' in Bellinzona in 1969.[391] Konstantinidis was teaching in Zurich then, but evidently he did not engage with this work; yet another path not taken for his critical regionalism while he was abroad.

Theorists and historians of the Ticino School such as Martin Steinmann and Frampton could also have further refined the Greek architect's approach. Both critics use Botta's 'building the site' motto as a starting point to note how the ensuing project essentially 'serves to better define' the site or renders its users 'critically if not poetically aware' of its 'urban morphology or rural topography'.[392] Konstantinidis emphasizes the primacy of the natural landscape, without addressing its agricultural, human-made sides. Yet, for Steinmann, 'even uncultivated landscape', such as the sites on which the Greek architect built most of his celebrated projects, is also 'a cultural fact insofar as we perceive it in

390 Ronner, 'On the Situation of Architecture', 155.

391 Ruth Hanisch and Steven Spier, 'History Is Not the Past but Another Mightier Presence': The Founding of the Institute for the History and Theory of Architecture (gta) at the Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule (ETH) Zurich and its Effects on Swiss Architecture', *Journal of Architecture* 14, no. 6 (2009), 655–86, here 665, https://doi.org/10.1080/13602360903357096.

392 Steinmann, 'Reality as History: Notes for a Discussion of Realism in Architecture'; Steinmann and Boga, *Tendenzen*, 155–7, here 157; Frampton, 'Mario Botta and the School of the Ticino', 4.

coded form'.[393] Indeed, the implications of the nature/culture nexus are not problematized in Konstantinidis's writings. In addition, when Frampton discusses Botta's typological approach to the vernacular architecture of Ticino, he notes how the house at Riva San Vitale 'refers obliquely to the traditional country summer house or *ricoli* which was once endemic in the region'.[394] The Greek architect also alludes to the white 'saddles' of the 'dry stone' walls of the Cycladic agrarian landscape in his Hotel 'Xenia' on Mykonos (see fig. 9). This is therefore a direction in which he could have further developed his own typological approach, which mainly refers to spatial and structural configurations rather than traditional forms. Lastly, Steinmann's views on architecture's ability 'to designate the real ... only indirectly, by repeating forms which draw their meaning from appropriate socialized experiences—connotations'[395] could add nuance to Konstantinidis's unwavering conviction that one can arrive at 'true architecture' that addresses people's real needs. The same goes for Ticinese architects' clear conception of the civic and political side of architecture, its relation to power games and ideological differences, and the internal laws of architecture as an autonomous discipline,[396] all of which rarely find their way into his practice.

Despite the numerous paths not taken by the Greek architect, Konstantinidis shares several of his Ticinese peers' concerns, including their reference to Frank Lloyd Wright's 'organic' approach to architecture.[397] The stone and timber structures in Rovio and Pregassona by Tita Carloni, Lorenzo Denti, and Fosco Moretti (Design Collective 2) share architectural affinities with Konstantinidis's combinations of stone

393 Steinmann, 'Reality as History', 157.

394 Kenneth Frampton, 'Modern Architecture and Critical Regionalism', *RIBA Transactions* 3/2, no. 1 (1983), 15–25, here 22.

395 Steinmann, 'Reality as History', 157.

396 Steinmann, 'Reality as History', 155.

397 Tita Carloni and Design Collective 2, 'Notes from a Professional Chronicle', in Steinmann and Boga, *Tendenzen*, 157–9.

walls and concrete slabs in the Greek landscape. However, Konstantinidis would not likely have endorsed Carloni's and other Ticinese architects' views that 'political commitment … is understood to be a requirement which is also important for cultural commitment' or that 'the emancipation of territory in its formal values can only take place through an alternative political control of territory itself'.[398] Political readings are mostly absent from his otherwise prolific writing, and his negative experience with dissenting ETH Zurich students suggests that he would not have been keen to further explore the politics of architecture. Carloni and her peers rightly acknowledge the difficulties of demanding a strong political stance from practicing architects. For this reason, they also note that political commitment, 'even if it cannot be directly expressed on the drawing board, finds an inestimable outlet in the classroom, in the written word, in political and labor organizations and in the—however seldom possible—use of the mass media'.[399] Konstantinidis's global editorial practices indeed safeguard his work from its potential recuperation by the burgeoning architectural media complex of the following decades. Retaining his ethical stance in the midst of it all is no small political feat on its own. On the other hand, the Greek architect does not seem willing to address other forms of social commitment in his practice as teacher, writer, or active citizen. Hence, the political aspects of region, architecture, and territory indicate another important missed opportunity for the development of an extra dimension of Konstantinidis's critical regionalism abroad.

In addition to the above historical, theoretical, and political approaches, affinities between the work of Konstantinidis and the Ticinese architects suggest more missed opportunities for the Greek architect to further develop his own approach. A closer engagement with Botta's ideas, for example, would have allowed Konstantinidis to also consider

398 Carloni and Design Collective 2, 'Notes', 158–9.
399 Carloni and Design Collective 2, 'Notes', 159.

the cultural field that gives shape to a specific site and its understanding in his discussions of supposedly 'given', pristine Greek landscapes. In Botta's words:

> With regard to the environment, the architectonic intervention does not provide the opportunity for building on a SITE but rather provides the tools for building THAT SITE; in such a way architecture becomes a component in a new geographical configuration inseparable from the values of history and the recollection of this site: an expression of and witness to the aspirations and values of contemporary culture.[400]

Frampton also stresses how Botta believes that 'the loss of the historical city can only be compensated for by cities in miniature'; this is how the Swiss architect organizes his architectural projects, especially his public buildings.[401] Despite Konstantinidis's early interest in the old Athenian houses and his disappointment with the loss of the architectural qualities of their spatial configuration, however, he does not directly address the dissipation of the historic city through his architectural projects. Rather, he prefers to transcend the history of the city and refer back to the timeless way of life out of doors in the Greek landscape and climate.

Important meaningful differences between the Greek and Swiss architects' approaches also suggest why these critical regionalist paths of cross-cultural exchange were not taken. In his writings of the late 1980s, Konstantinidis critiques not only Botta's work but also that of his Swiss peer's main references (Le Corbusier and Louis Kahn).[402] In addition, the Greek architect's thinking is far removed from the main principles of the Italian Tendenza, as these are conveniently summarised by Frampton:

400 Botta, 'Academic High School', 160.

401 Frampton, 'Modern Architecture and Critical Regionalism', 22.

402 Konstantinidis, *Αμαρτωλοί και κλέφτες*, 31–4; cf. Frampton, 'Mario Botta and the School of the Ticino', 3.

1. The relative autonomy of architecture and the need for its re-articulation as a discourse in terms of *types* and *rules* for the logical combination of its elements;
2. The socio-cultural importance of existing urban structures and of the role played by monuments in embodying and representing the continuity of public institutions over time; and
3. The fertile resource of historical form as a legacy which is always available for analogical reinterpretation in terms of the present.[403]

Keeping its distance from the main formative references of the School of the Ticino, Konstantinidis's mindset is more conventionally modernist: his interest in the typology and spatial configuration of the Greek *megaron* with the gradual transition from enclosed to semi-enclosed to open-air spaces is combined with his desire to standardize the ensuing 'type' through the use of universal grids in his designs. In addition, the Greek architect sidesteps the question of form, arguing that this directly results from structural honesty. Lastly, he does not address the significance of existing structures in establishing a sense of urban continuity.

Despite Frampton's insistence that Botta's public buildings are more significant for his critical regionalism,[404] the Swiss architect's domestic projects eventually attract more attention in this context. The British historian conveniently summarizes Botta's architectural approach in seven points, which also apply, albeit partly, to Konstantinidis's architecture. For instance, in both architects' projects, 'exterior terraces are rendered in such a way as to fuse with interior volumes'; in both cases, open-air spaces, such as atria, also play a significant role as entry spaces.[405] In addition, both

403 Frampton, 'Mario Botta and the School of the Ticino', 2.
404 Frampton, 'Modern Architecture and Critical Regionalism', 22.
405 Frampton, 'Mario Botta and the School of the Ticino', 15–17.

Konstantinidis's and Botta's buildings are 'never contoured into the site, but instead declare themselves as clear primary forms set against the topography and the sky'.[406]

At the same time, Frampton's points help to clarify significant differences between the two architects' work. To begin with, the British historian stresses how Botta's houses frequently signal borders in their sites. When the main living spaces of the house turn their back to the cultivated landscape so as to be clearly directed towards the village, they also establish 'the frontier where the village ends and the agrarian system begins'.[407] Konstantinidis's buildings usually do the opposite, since the Greek architect is more interested in establishing a relationship with the natural landscape rather than the human-made city. The hotels 'Triton' on Andros (1958; see fig. 8) and 'Xenia' on Mykonos (1960; see fig. 9), which were constructed on liminal sites of existing island settlements, turn their back to the adjacent built fabric so as to focus on their inner courtyards or face outwards to the open sea. Frampton also attributes the harmonious integration of Botta's houses in the vernacular Ticinese landscape to 'their *analogical* form and finish'. Echoing Rossi, the British historian describes this in terms of 'the concrete block from which they are invariably built and from the simple primary box-like forms, which together with the proportions adopted, allude directly to the traditional barns from which they are derived and to which they evidently refer'.

While Konstantinidis's work features similarly simple free-standing volumes in the environment, the Greek architect does not directly allude to the forms or proportions of vernacular structures. What he gleans from his study of old Athenian houses and regional settlements is the spatial configuration that enables gradual transition from outdoor to indoor spaces. In a similar fashion, Konstantinidis does not attempt to accord 'the vernacular shell precedence over the

406 Frampton, 'Mario Botta and the School of the Ticino', 17.
407 Frampton, 'Mario Botta and the School of the Ticino', 15.

Rationalism of the interior', as Botta reportedly does. The Greek architect's views on the logic of construction and structural honesty undermine this distinction between the shell and the interior. Konstantinidis treats the whole building as the same, single, indivisible, and irreducible organism. Any discussion about form is therefore irrelevant, since this will always result from adhering to the principles of structural honesty.

In the late 1970s, Konstantinidis does not regard the postmodern question of 'accessibility' or communication as the main issue with architectural culture. For him, the distinction between 'rationalist formal principles' and 'an analogical commitment to the vernacular' does not hold, because the structural logic suffices; the ensuing architectural form is already expressive, without needing to allude to anything beyond its own making. As a result, Konstantinidis does not need to arrive at a 'satisfactory resolution' between them, as Botta arguably does.[408] After all, the Greek architect's harsh critique of his Swiss peer's projects in the late 1980s is precisely based on Botta's attempt to treat architecture as a language which not only develops independently from a building's structural logic but also blatantly transgresses it. Konstantinidis especially abhors the projects in which his Swiss peer deploys traditionally load-bearing materials, such as brick, to form surfaces that hang like ornament from other structures.[409]

All of the above suggest that the main reasons behind Konstantinidis's ambiguous association with critical regionalism are primarily generational. Indeed, in Frampton's earliest essay on the subject, the Greek architect is mainly discussed alongside the earlier modernist generation of his Swiss peers, represented by Ernst Gisel (1922–2021) and not by the critical regionalist Botta (b. 1943).[410] Although

408 Frampton, 'Mario Botta and the School of the Ticino', 17.

409 Konstantinidis, *Αμαρτωλοί και κλέφτες*, 67–77.

410 Konstantinidis is included in the same list of 'well-known' architects of the first decade after the Second World War who 'have yet to attain "star" status': Jørn

architects of Konstantinidis's generation were still active in Switzerland in the 1960s and 1970s, the *Tendenzen* exhibition arguably 'snubbed Ticino's modernist establishment' to promote 'a generational shift' in the local scene, based on the legacy of Rossi's teaching at ETH Zurich.[411] Keeping his distance from the Italian architect's thinking, Konstantinidis simply addresses different questions through his practice. These are driven by his desire to render his architecture as timelessly associated with the outdoor way of life in the Greek landscape. In an operative context of critical regionalism abroad today, however, one can address the paths not taken that I outlined above as open possibilities for intergenerational cross-cultural exchanges. This would also initiate a dialogue between architectural approaches that historically developed as irreconcilable monologues in their respective modernist or postmodernist oppositional silos of the 1980s.

The paths not taken during the Greek architect's teaching stint in Zurich also represent the limits of his critical regionalism abroad. To advance this discussion further in the twenty-first century, one therefore needs to move beyond the individual case of Konstantinidis.

UNEXPECTED FUTURES

Konstantinidis's critique and Frampton's praise are not the only ways in which one can approach Botta's architecture. In the same year that the Greek architect publishes his negative portrayal of his Swiss peer's work (1987), his compatriot Irena Sakellaridou embarks on a very different study of Botta's oeuvre, focusing on nineteen houses.[412] In her resulting 344-page

Utzon, Vittorio Gregotti, Oswald Mathias Ungers, Sverre Fehn, Ludwig Leo, Carlo Scarpa, and Kahn. See Frampton, 'Modern Architecture and Critical Regionalism', 21.

411 Davidovici, *Autonomy of Theory*, 53; see Moravánszky and Hopfengärtner, *Aldo Rossi und die Schweiz*.

412 Irena Sakellaridou, 'A Top-Down Analytic Approach to Architectural Composition' (PhD diss., University College London, 1994), 4.

doctoral dissertation, only a short paragraph is accorded to Frampton's critical regionalist reading of the Swiss architect's projects, with its emphasis on their 'reference to specific vernacular forms'.[413] The rest of Sakellaridou's thesis unfolds as a formal analysis that unveils the underlying syntax of Botta's personal architectural idiom. Moving away from Konstantinidis in Switzerland, the question of critical regionalism abroad can therefore be revisited from the parallel, converse perspective of Botta in Greece now, through Sakellaridou's work.

Sakellaridou traces the main 'themes' of Botta's thinking as it unfolded chronologically. Her study reconstructs the 'canonic' parti of his architecture which is gradually developed in the first eight selected houses, from 1965 to 1976. In this first period, the Swiss architect experiments with different combinations of the same rules from one project to the next. In the 'canonic' phase that follows, the spatial and formal organization of the project through the 'plan, the elevations and the mass' attains 'a unified expression giving the impression of the house as an object totally controlled by design'.[414] The resulting parti is then explored and further expanded in eleven houses that Botta designed from 1979 to 1986. During that period, these rules are established as the 'deep structure' of his work (see fig. 34).[415] This relatively stable set of design principles allows for further variations and transformations, with the ensuing 'themes' serving as the interrelated 'rules of composition' in the analyzed projects. The interrelated rules of volume, plan, and elevation, their gradual development through the constant reshuffling of their combinations and the ensuing exploration of their consequences in design constitute 'an internal logic of bringing everything together'. This is what Sakellaridou calls the '*logic of oneness*'

413 Sakellaridou, 'A Top-Down Analytic Approach', 72.

414 Irena Sakellaridou, 'Searching for Order: Synchronic and Diachronic Aspects (of a Personal Case)', *Journal of Space Syntax* 2, no. 2 (2011), 154–79, here 163.

415 Sakellaridou, 'Searching for Order', 159.

34 Irena Sakellaridou's analysis of the 'canonic' phase of Mario Botta's houses as exemplified in the design of the single-family house at Pregassona, Ticino (1979–80). In Irena Sakellaridou, 'A Top-Down Analytic Approach to Architectural Composition' (PhD diss., University College London, 1994), 268

in her Swiss peer's architecture; 'a logic that intensifies the reading of the whole and attributes dense meaning to the form'.[416] This in turn leads her to assert that architectural form 'does not necessarily need to be referential to have meaning. Its constitution offers a basis on which signification can rest'.[417] As such, her approach differs from the critical regionalist emphasis on Botta's allusions to vernacular forms.

Following from the above, Sakellaridou does not refer to critical regionalism when she discusses, in her subsequent study of 2001, a wider selection of public and private buildings from her Swiss peer's 35-year-long career. Even when she analyzes his architecture in her own terms, however, Sakellaridou implicitly touches on features that have also been discussed in the context of critical regionalism. Her list of such themes, which form the 'deep structure' of Botta's creative process, include 'the primary solid and the wall; the eminence of the front; the light coming from above; the point of reference; the site'.[418] Sakellaridou is especially successful in showing how these main themes are creatively intertwined to produce the coherent whole of her Swiss peer's architecture. In so doing, she implicitly suggests that Frampton's related critical regionalist points cannot work individually or in isolation; rather, they produce Botta's desired result only when they are taken together and combined. In this light, she offers a reading of critical regionalism which foregrounds 'the primary solid', such as the cylinder, as the decisive outline that asserts the presence of the building in the landscape, without being 'indifferent to its surroundings'. Although she does not also underscore the direct references of the rectangular primary solid to the local vernacular, as Frampton does, Sakellaridou foregrounds the importance of the wall, with its material, three-dimensional solidity, in establishing the boundary of this built volume. The primary volume's relation-

416 Irena Sakellaridou, *Mario Botta: Architectural Poetics* (Thames and Hudson, 2001), 10 (emphasis in the original).

417 Sakellaridou, *Mario Botta*, 98.

418 Sakellaridou, *Mario Botta*, 7.

ship with the landscape is further accentuated through the glass roof, which allows for natural light to cascade into the main indoor spaces, rendering the building as a 'shelter' that 'cannot isolate from nature'. This light that enters the interior from above in turn amplifies the role of the subtracted void in the building mass. Serving to visually connect the different floors, this void that cuts across the volume of the building becomes 'a point of reference' in the established 'continuous visual field' of the interior. This visual continuity renders the spatial configuration of the interior intelligible. As such, users can understand the building as a whole, 'all at once', as it is shaped by the external boundary 'with as little interruption as possible'. The same clarity is achieved in the exterior perception of the building through a front which enables the user to interpret the volume as a sign that communicates the message of the building as a whole.[419]

All of the above would not have been possible without the building's indispensable relationship with the site, which is both 'a context and a topography, a physical reality and a geographical situation' for the Swiss architect. As such, Sakellaridou adds her own interpretation of Botta's 'building the site' motto to its prevalent critical regionalist readings:

> When in open landscape, the building stands out and signifies its existence with its solid volume and ordered geometry. By either emphasizing the vertical dimension or extending along the horizontal, its mass is delineated by the geometry of its volume and its elaborate and disciplined front relates to the view. When in the city, the front takes account of street elevations and responds without sacrificing its desire for an independent presence. Even in its assertion, the elaboration of the volume responds with delicate gestures. It follows street lines and takes account of the urban fabric. It diminishes in size in order not to upset existing scale. It hides its mass,

419 Sakellaridou, *Mario Botta*, 7–9.

> placing it underground to leave space for the existing, or it boldly asserts its presence by setting up dialogue with a landmark. When on a street corner, it addresses this corner appropriately. When on a large scale, it opens up its courtyard to make space for the public realm and invites the city into the building. The city will always be there, as a context and underlying reference, and the building relates and responds.[420]

But Sakellaridou's work is not only significant as a discursive contribution to critical regionalism; it is also a unique response to the question of critical regionalism abroad. Parallel to the publication of her 2001 book on Botta, Sakellaridou and her partner Morpho Papanikolaou (with Maria Pollani) collaborate with their Swiss peer to design the National Bank of Greece and the Hellenic National Insurance Company headquarters in Athens (1999–2002 and 2001–2006 respectively). Working with an architect whom she has thoroughly researched for more than a decade enables Sakellaridou to witness the 'generation of concepts within an ordered set of pre-structured rules' and explore 'ways of operating within the limits set by a formal system' in the development of their joint projects.[421] Specifically, the unforeseeable unearthing of significant archaeological findings on the site of the National Bank of Greece headquarters prompts the architects to turn their initial concept for the building into that of an 'open-air museum'. This conceptual shift ignites a transformative reshuffling of the established array of Botta's design themes and formal rules. The subtraction of mass now allows for natural light not only to enter from the roof but also to extend to the underground and illuminate the ancient ruins under the glass floors (see fig. 35). This void with the skylights above and the glass floors below in turn creates both a new public space for the building and the con-

420 Sakellaridou, *Mario Botta*, 10.
421 Sakellaridou, 'Searching for Order', 169.

tinuous visual field that renders it intelligible as a whole. The resulting interior space, which is unexpectedly lighter and more luminous than that of Botta's single-authored projects, also sharpens its contrast with the customarily sturdy bulk of the exterior (see fig. 36).

Most significant for Sakellaridou, however, is the design process that ushers in the translation of the intuitive metaphor of the desired transparency of the ancient past through the building to its literal realization through the architects' formal, spatial, and material means. This integration of 'intuitive thinking with formal structure' and of the '*significant transformation generating innovation within the system*' stays with her.[422] In joint and individual projects over the next two decades, Sakellaridou changes her way of reflecting on the creative process. She no longer starts from an established set of themes that give architectural form to the syntactic rules that underlie spatial configurations, as she did when she first approached Botta's architecture. Rather, she now promotes intuition, metaphor, reference, and poetic associations as the main drivers of her creative process. Henceforth, not primary solids but abstract concepts (e.g., permeability and direction) or processes (e.g., the sea voyage) and concrete objects (e.g., masts and sails) import their geometric implications to her projects.[423] As in Botta's mature works, her own architectural forms 'become more and more expressive and symbolic'.[424] Today, Sakellaridou's creative process explicitly works with 'analogy', which includes the 'translation of something about the genius loci and/or the program to the geometry of the building'.[425] That is, she increasingly turns to the referential critical regionalist aspects of an architect's creative process which she had bypassed

422 Sakellaridou, 'Searching for Order', 170, 173 (emphasis in the original).

423 Irena Sakellaridou, 'How Is Architecture Conceived?', 21-page transcript of a postgraduate seminar session at University College London, 2021, Irena Sakellaridou private archive, 12–17.

424 Sakellaridou, *Mario Botta*, 11.

425 Sakellaridou, 'How Is Architecture Conceived?', 14.

35 Atrium in the interior of the National Bank of Greece Headquarters (1999–2002). Architects: Mario Botta (consultant), Irena Sakellaridou, Morpho Papanikolaou, and Maria Pollani

36 Exterior view of the National Bank of Greece Headquarters (1999–2002). Architects: Mario Botta (consultant), Irena Sakellaridou, Morpho Papanikolaou, and Maria Pollani

in her earlier studies of her Swiss peer's work. Her interest in working with analogy additionally connects her with Rossi's legacy in Switzerland. The main difference of Sakellaridou's approach is that her pool of analogical references and poetic associations is wider than Rossi's focused interest in the minor architecture of the city.

The unique case of Sakellaridou serves as a reminder that critical regionalism abroad is a two-way street. As such, this book—which started by exploring Konstantinidis's multifarious presence beyond the Greek borders and ended by discussing his missed opportunities to more closely engage with the Ticinese critical regionalists—concludes with a discussion of Botta without Switzerland, in Greece. In this context, Sakellaridou's theory and practice emerge as a fulfilment of the potential for cross-pollination that remains latent in the case of Konstantinidis's teaching stint in Zurich. Sakellaridou not only studied Botta's work after it became internationally celebrated for its critical regionalism but also worked with him to realize important projects in Greece. Her personal creative process evolves through her dual theoretical and practical engagement with her Swiss peer's practice. Her interest in the evolution of architectural ideas and her openness to the transformations of the order that she originally sought to establish also differ from Konstantinidis's less flexible approach. Presenting himself as uninterruptedly standing by his unwavering beliefs over the decades, Konstantinidis studied variation in his own projects mainly in terms of 'steps' of the grid (see fig. 14).

Throughout this book, I have adopted an operative approach to history writing. By not challenging the established theoretical discourses of Frampton, Tzonis, and Lefaivre, I am attempting to expand the scope of the question of critical regionalism abroad. At the end of the book, however, this approach also shows its limitations. For example, when taken as a given, Frampton's endorsement of Botta as the main representative of the School of the Ticino, which overshadows

the equally significant practices of his local peers, becomes restrictive for further expanding the scope of critical regionalism abroad. To address this shortcoming, I conclude with one last apposite example from the same cross-cultural Swiss-Greek context.

The year 1987 is not only when Konstantinidis publishes his critique of Botta's work and Sakellaridou embarks on her doctoral study of the Swiss architect's creative process; it is also when Greek-born Ktenas establishes his architectural practice in Lugano, after having studied architecture in the United States. Although he is associated with several architects of the School of the Ticino, including Botta, Ktenas is essentially mentored by Snozzi (1932–2020).[426] Having both studied and established his architectural practice abroad, Ktenas also starts to practise architecture in Greece in 1993. Continuing to fly between the two countries to work and teach in the decades that followed, he is convinced that speaking about a specifically Greek architectural identity is impossible in the twenty-first century.[427] He is fully aware that he belongs to a generation of local architects who share a 'culture of *diaspora*' and '"sowed their own land" with the fruit of an experience hybridized through its encounter with other cultures', upon their return to Greece.[428] Through his architecture, which attempts to establish new ties with the local context, Ktenas seeks to re-cultivate his roots based on his experience away from his homeland. Frequently serving as the culmination of the architectural experience of his projects, the flat roofs of Ktenas's buildings double up as platforms that provide new experiences for contemplating, interpreting, or connecting with the surrounding natural and urban landscapes of his home country.

While most of Ktenas's projects look nothing like Konstantinidis's work, some of the older Greek architect's main

426 Salvatore Amaddeo et al., *Nikos Ktenàs: Semplice / Complesso* (Iiriti, 2006), 105.

427 Amaddeo et al., *Nikos Ktenàs*, 103.

428 Amaddeo et al., *Nikos Ktenàs*, 99.

principles, such as the clearly tectonic use of structural materials, shine through in Ktenas's thinking. As the younger architect characteristically notes, 'spatial authenticity' ensues from 'the perfect correspondence between space and structure, and not through form'.[429] His additional emphasis on the tactile aspects of architecture that subtly convey the size and scale of a project to its users, or the significant role of light in one's perception of built spaces and landscapes, also underscores his discursive affinities with critical regionalism.[430]

Unlike Konstantinidis, however, Ktenas endorses his formative influences, frequently underscoring his indebtedness to the works of Le Corbusier, Kahn, or Pikionis.[431] His early projects in 1990s Greece (see fig. 37) are reminiscent of Snozzi's similar architectural gestures in the Swiss landscape, such as Casa Kalman (1975) and other well-known projects of the mid-1970s. Additionally referring to Richard Serra's land art projects from the same period, Ktenas underscores the importance of inserting new structures, such as walls, in an existing natural and cultural landscape, for these also 'create a *new horizon* and, at the same time, rewrite a *new landscape*'. As a result, in Ktenas's words, 'the architectural object … becomes the *instrument that reveals the topology of the place*'; it allows one to 'read the shape of the site' or establishes 'a new measure' that also bestows 'a new meaning to the landscape' or manages to 'redefine the morphology of the city'.[432] As such, the thinking behind his projects in Greece clearly echoes his Swiss mentor's lifelong conviction: 'The concept of the territory as our field of intervention can be understood as part of a long transformation process in which man converts nature to culture'.[433]

429 Amaddeo et al., *Nikos Ktenàs*, 131.
430 Amaddeo et al., *Nikos Ktenàs*, 85–7.
431 Amaddeo et al., *Nikos Ktenàs*, 37–9, 105–11.
432 Amaddeo et al., *Nikos Ktenàs*, 33–5 (emphasis in the original).
433 Luigi Snozzi, 'Design Motivation', in Steinmann and Boga, *Tendenzen*, 164.

37 Nikos Ktenas, vacation house in Marathokampos, Samos (1994–96)

Through my concluding brief accounts of Sakellaridou's and Ktenas's work, I do not mean to suggest their necessary connection with that of Konstantinidis. Despite the occasional affinities, the built projects and agendas of these three architects stand clearly apart. Still, this dissonance is not necessarily disconcerting in the context of this book. From the outset, critical regionalism served as an 'astylistic' umbrella term for a variety of architectural approaches.[434] Their crucial shared characteristic is not their visual similarity but their sophisticated approach to questions of space and place in a modern context. Zooming out to look at the bigger picture of the Greek architectural scene again, the work of a younger generation of architects, such as that of Sakellaridou and Ktenas, demonstrates how the torch of critical regionalism abroad can be implicitly carried further forward into the more complicated landscape of cross-cultural exchanges in the twenty-first century. Today, this discussion can encompass an even younger architectural generation that includes Point Supreme (Marianna Rentzou and Konstantinos Pantazis), for example. These architects' 'hybridized culture of *diaspora*' breaks away from the originary Swiss and Greek contexts of critical regionalism to creatively include the Dutch influences of OMA and MVRDV in their locally inflected projects in Athens.[435]

For such conversations to meaningfully develop within and without the Greek and other contexts, the nuances and sophistication of the related cross-cultural exchanges across decades, architectural theories, and practices also require more thorough scrutiny because they move even further away from the related formulations and references of the early 1980s.[436] This is where operative history writing also shows its limits; if it is to address the complexity of the questions at hand, it requires to be complemented by

434 Spyros Amourgis, 'Introduction', in Amourgis, *Critical Regionalism*, vii–xii, here x.

435 See *A+U* 632 (May 2023).

436 See Giamarelos, *Resisting Postmodern Architecture*, 337–70.

twenty-first-century critical historiography. As such, the long history of critical regionalisms abroad—within and without the national territories from which they first emerged on the international scene—is only now starting to be written.

ANNEX

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