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Book Title: Urban Exile

Book Subtitle: Theories, Methods, Research Practices

Book Editor(s): Burcu Dogramaci, Ekaterina Aygün, Mareike Hetschold, Laura Karp Lugo, Rachel Lee and Helene Roth

Published by: Intellect

Stable URL: https://www.jstor.org/stable/jj.2458925.23

(Re)routing and (Re)rooting in Urban Exile: Exploring Villa Ocampo in Buenos Aires and Jassim House in Bombay with Actor-Network-Theory[1]

Mareike Schwarz

[A] ser ya todo yo la total arboleda perdida de mi sangre. Y una larga memoria, de la que nunca nadie podrá tener noticia, errará escrita por los aires, definitivamente extraviada, definitivamente perdida.

(Rafael Alberti 1959/2003, 546)[2]

After 38 years in exile, the Spanish poet Rafael Alberti articulated his artistic development as a "lost grove" in his autobiography of the same name, *La arboleda perdida* (1959). For the anti-fascist intellectual, who fled to Argentina after the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939) and became a regular contributor to the Buenos Aires-based arts magazine *SUR*, this imaginary place is emblematic of the loss and uprooting he felt as a result of emigration (Sanz/Funes 2016). Such topoi of private and artistic rootlessness are often expressed in the context of modern exile (Fajardo 2010).[3] They raise the question of whether and how émigré artists could connect to cultural developments and actors in their respective exile cities: Could a 'third space' evolve between home and foreign, whose creative potential unfolds precisely through the experience of emigration and within new urban contexts? Along this metaphorical configuration of the third space in the sense

of Homi K. Bhabha's postcolonial theory (Bhabha 1994), this chapter sets out to find the traces of artistic (re)rooting in exile.

At the centre of this search are two 'arrival cities' (Saunders 2010) studied in the METROMOD research project: Buenos Aires and Bombay, now Mumbai.[4] For it was there that displaced creatives from Europe contributed to the formation of "inspirational *and* conflict-laden" contact zones in the first half of the 20th century (Dogramaci et al. 2020, 11). Back then two private homes in Argentina and India became a nodal point for local and exiled artists resulting in significant cultural projects: Victoria Ocampo's Villa Ocampo in Buenos Aires, housing *SUR* magazine, and Jassim House in Bombay, a living and working space for the Modern Architectural Research Group (M.A.R.G.) and their periodical *Marg*.

This chapter uses Actor-Network-Theory (ANT), a theoretical and methodological approach to the social as a constantly shifting network of relationships, which has been developed since the 1980s by Bruno Latour and Madeleine Akrich, amongst others. The aim is to trace the human and non-human factors that made these dwellings a home for creative exchanges between exiles and locals. Starting from the respective arrival city, this methodological approach counter-acts exile studies' tendency to focus on biographical information.[5] As a result, the following questions are also addressed from an urbanistic, and less person-centred perspective: What kind of social and built environments enabled the formation of a third space resulting in significant transcultural mediators like *SUR* and *Marg*?[6] What personal dispositions let these networks grow? Which architectonic and interior design settings fostered creative dialogues? How are all these conditions connected to each city?

In a first step, I will reflect on the capacity of dwellings to emerge as third spaces under the premise of (e)migration. In the following, I will outline the methods of ANT in the expanded field of urban living and exile, which have yet to be sufficiently addressed in scholarship. Based on this, I will study and compare the actants of the transcultural encounters in Buenos Aires and Bombay, while differentiating these findings regionally and historically.

Exile dwelling as third space: "Too many houses for a home"[7]

In view of various cross-border migrations, which reached an immense scale in the 20th century due to colonialism, capitalism and the persecution caused by political systems, the traditional understanding of home and dwelling is put into question (Clifford 1997). The flows of information, people and things run counter to the well-received approaches of European philosophers like Martin Heidegger, whose conceptions of dwelling and home are rooted in a particular time

and space. Home and roots for a mobile population may be inscribed not in a physical space but in words, opinions, gestures, styles of dress, (inter)actions and narrative forms (Berger 1984). The over-valuation of a single, fixed home and the over-proclamation of a somehow distorted rootlessness in modernity may have "as its necessary correlative the suspicion of mobility", as the cultural scientist David Morley (2008, 33) suggests.

'Being-at-home' has been so irrevocably re-interpreted by modern migration that it undoubtedly transcends the physical location of the 'house'. Therefore 'home' and 'dwelling' are introduced as plurilocal terms. This is in keeping with Bhabha, who pleads for a renewed understanding of home and the world in his book *The Location of Culture* (1994). In this study of cultural difference and the enunciation of minority identities the concept of the 'third space' is formulated, which is derived from hybridity theory (ibid., 217–229). With critical reference to the Marxist-oriented literary scholar Fredric Jameson, Bhabha defined the third space as a liminal space, where "difference is neither One or the Other but *something else besides, in-between*" (ibid., 219).

This conceptualization aims at overcoming binary divisions such as home/world or private/public through which social experiences are often presented as spatially opposed. "These spheres of life are linked through an 'in-between' temporality that takes the measure of dwelling at home, while producing an image of the world of history" (ibid., 13). Bhabha takes up the architectural metaphor of the stairwell, which "opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy" (ibid., 4). Instead, it allows "to dwell 'in the beyond'" of race, class and gender, which can become a "space of intervention" (ibid., 7). According to Bhabha, such potentials are enacted by distinctive visual artworks as well as literary works of an intellectual community.[8] Bhabha's statement that such hybrid minority communities as a significant "antagonistic supplement" are formed in metropolises or imaginative geographies through gatherings of exiles and émigrés, is particularly noteworthy for the research thesis proposed here (ibid., 231–243).

But how is the artistic capacity of intervention located in arrival cities? This chapter suggests that third spaces emerge explicitly through liminal processes of (re)routing and (re)rooting of life and work in urban exile. Following the historian James Clifford (1997), the widely held notion that roots always precede routes is discarded. Instead, home (roots) and displacement (routes) are understood as co-existing shapers of cultural developments that, according to art historian Burcu Dogramaci (2013, 46), intertwine in "dwelling under the premise of (e)migration".[9] Thereby the root metaphor is not invoked without reservations. Maurizio Bettini (2018) has rightly criticized the identitarian implications of the notion of roots, which all too often negate cultural differences from the point of view of a putative guiding culture. In sharp contrast, the roots metaphor is drawn upon here in an
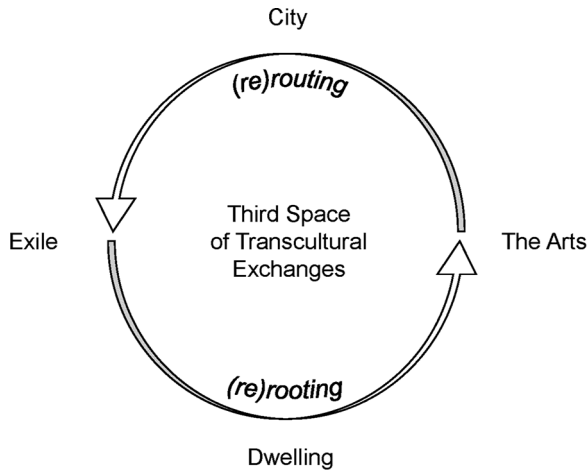
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FIGURE 20.1: *The constitution of a third space along processes of (re)routing and (re)rooting* (model and illustration © Mareike Schwarz).

explicitly non-identitarian and plurilocal way.[10] (Re)rooting then means an ambivalent process within a metropolitan in-between-space, which grows out of transcultural exchanges. By situating emigrated artists in their urban communities as a place that simultaneously is and is not their home, third spaces emerge. This understanding of a (re)routing of feeling rooted in urban exile is outlined in fig. 20.1.

An ANT analysis of the urban sociotopology of exile

Dwelling, in the double sense of place and inhabiting that place (Dogramaci 2019), already terminologically eludes an assignment to the sphere of subjects or objects. Taking this hybrid character into account, ANT provides a productive methodology to explore dwelling in urban exile outside the conventional subject-object-dichotomy. Existing, person-centred exile studies are expanded by the biographies of non-humans.[11] This offers the possibility to not only examine entangled networks between exiles and locals but also to consider circulating ideas and things as equal parts (Hensel and Schröter 2012).

From the 1980s onwards, ANT has focused on reassembling the social (Latour 2005). The social, which is not to be confused with society, is understood as a temporary assembly of actors or actants in networks. An actant is considered to be an "entity that more or less successfully defines and builds a world filled

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by other entities with histories, identities, and interrelationships of their own" (Callon 1990, 140). This connecting process, which negotiates the characteristics and activities of any entity, is called 'translation'. In such networks of translations, all entities can obtain the potential for action: an "agency" (Hensel/ Schröter 2012).

Reacting to the lack of a comprehensive ANT-application to dwelling, let alone in relation to exile, in the following I will draw on theorizations on architecture and design as actants. Following Albena Yaneva, I consider architectural outcomes as ever-changing rather than static projects. By exploring architecture in its historical entanglements with dwellers and immanent design challenges, the "social career of a building" is recollected (Yaneva 2009, 7). Regarding the interiority of these buildings, which encompasses the interior objects as well as their inhabitants' psychological inwardness, each object is seen as a vision of the world and programme of action for its users. Via these inherent 'scripts', the objects within a home afford certain activities and prevent others from being implemented. These 'affordances' act together with legal, technical, artistic and economic ties as one connector within networks manifesting the social (ibid., 285f.). According to this understanding, enlivened things act with people and vice versa (Belliger/Krieger 2006). Methodologically, these heterogeneous networks are approached through processual descriptions rather than periodizations or style analyses (Heß 2018).

Dwelling of exiles or locals conveys a tacit knowledge through its arrangements of human and non-human actants. These not only point to a person's present self-conception, but also their life routes in the past. As a kind of sign system, diverse memories and emotions are condensed within a home via assembled things (Dogramaci 2013). Particularly in consideration of the felt separation and foreignness inherent in exile, familiar objects may be loaded with great meaning. For displacement from the country of origin was usually accompanied by an enormous loss of acquainted places and things. In their book *Dinge des Exils* (Things of Exile) Doerte Bischoff and Joachim Schlör describe exile as a condition, in which "things often become central objects of reflection for the exiled person, who recognize and reflect their own being rejected and uncontrollably driven around in the existential mode of movable objects" (Bischoff/Schlör 2013, 15).[12] These actants in exile evoke embodied (hi)stories and life visions facilitating a kind of mobile home (Svašek 2014). These entangled networks affect their environment and vice versa. Places of encounters between exiles and locals can thus be studied by ANT beyond static essentializations (Latour/Yaneva 2008).

My analyses of relational contact zones in both Ocampo's and M.A.R.G.'s dwellings are based on descriptions of their thing constellations and architectural actings. Drawing on historical visuals and architectural layers persisting in the present, this chapter attempts to reconstruct the past lifeworld as precisely as

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possible. However, the processual, descriptive approach of ANT is limited by the fragmentary records of exilic life situations. In order to consolidate my analyses, I will consult (auto)biographical sources and scientific studies in a second step. As dwelling is "not *naturally* given, but always discursively mediated" (Nierhaus/Nierhaus 2014, 9), I will also draw on specialized and popular media which provide necessary background information regarding housing in Argentina and India.[13] Not only the distance in time but also the distance in place of the writer to the written place increases the risk of misinterpretations. I am aware of my culturally different perception in relation to the objects of study. In order to keep unconscious biases low, the ANT-based methodology requires the aforementioned contextualization.

Villa Ocampo: Exchanges of "the other" in Buenos Aires[14]

Arriving in Buenos Aires in the first half of the 20th century meant coming to a country that had incorporated immigration as one of the foundational myths in its national historiography (Bjerg 2016). Already in the 19th century, Argentina's capital featured an immensely diverse population since the city attracted foreigners with open immigration policies and promising economic prospects. Both colonialism and the continuous encounters of migrants with locals "allowed the city to open up towards plural forms" (Karp Lugo 2020, 49).

A multinational network existed in the 1930s and 1940s on an artistic level, too. Creative ideas, objects and people circulated especially through magazines, refuting the historiographic narrative of an isolated Latin American artistic community (Wechsler 2014). One of these transcultural networking hubs was the periodical *SUR*, which was founded by Victoria Ocampo in 1931 and which flourished under her direction for many decades (fig. 20.2). As the title and the cover with an arrow pointing downwards suggest, the starting point of this publishing work is situated in South America. The interdisciplinary editorial team consisted of both Latin American and European cultural figures, including the Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges and the exiled Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset (Karp Lugo 2020).

SUR offered plural perspectives on the political and aesthetic agenda of modern movements of the time; its writings often translated into Spanish for the first time (Majstorovic 2005). The first issue for instance contained both a literary contribution by Alfonso Reyes and an architectural treatise by Walter Gropius (SUR 1931). Its network soon crossed numerous national borders, which proved beneficial to European exiles in Argentina in the course of their forced displacements. According to Rosalie Sitman, *SUR,* unlike comparable magazines, took a clear stance

FIGURE 20.2: Gisèle Freund (émigré artist), *Photograph of Victoria Ocampo with SUR magazine*, Buenos Aires, 1944, diapositive, 24 × 36 mm (bpk | IMEC, Fonds MCC | Gisèle Freund).

against political extremes (Sitman 2008). It became an important press organ of the republican diaspora of Spanish writers such as Rafael Alberti or María Teresa León who opposed the dictatorship under Franco (Sanz/Funes 2016). At the same time, pro-Jewish articles contrasted with nationalistic groups, whose antisemitic propaganda continued to spread in Argentina. A month before the borders were to be tightened for Jewish exiles in Argentina, *SUR* advocated for the positive effects of immigration (Lombroso 1939).

Given Ocampo's intense involvement, *SUR*'s solidary position – strengthened by publicly known anti-fascists in *SUR*'s team, like Waldo Frank – connected to the editor herself.[15] Ocampo was the financial and administrative force behind various relief funds as well as the life-saving emigration of several artist friends (Thurn 2019): this ranged from her support of Jewish photographer Gisèle Freund to arranging a job for Odessa-born architect Vladimir Acosta (Karp Lugo 2020).

Among a selected circle, dialogues beyond national borders and resident status took place in Victoria Ocampo's privately owned houses, above all at Villa Ocampo, in the residential district of San Isidro. It was the setting for many *SUR* activities during the 1940s, which links it historically to the Bombay case study discussed later in this chapter. The house was designed by Victoria Ocampo's father, the engineer Manuel Ocampo, and built in 1891 (Bordelois/Grementieri 2006). It is a few minutes' walk from the historic centre of the suburb of San Isidro (fig. 20.3), which lies 25 kilometres outside the federal capital in the province of

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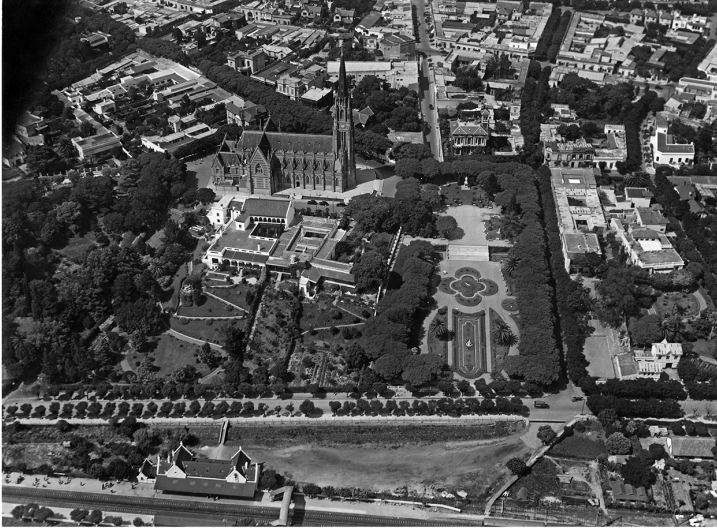
Vista aérea Casco Histórico de San Isidro, ca. 1938.
Fotógrafo no identificado.
Colección Archivo General de la Nación.

FIGURE 20.3: *Aerial view of the historic centre of San Isidro, Buenos Aires Province*, c.1938 (Argentina, Archivo General de la Nación, Departamento Documentos Fotográficos or AR_AGN_DDF/Consulta_INV: 185223_a.AGN. Caja 1651, courtesy of Museo, Biblioteca y Archivo histórico municipal de San Isidro "Dr. Horacio Beccar Varela").

Buenos Aires. A large gate leads from the street Elortondo 1837 into a garden overgrown with gnarled trees, cacti and palm trees. In its centre rises a stately house in warm ochre and sienna (fig. 20.4).[16] In a lighter earth tone, ornaments and fluted pilasters are set off on the facade, contrasting with the 'pietra serena' colored windows and roof. The architecture and luxurious furnishings may have evoked the feeling of "Old great splendour" that Walter Gropius described during his visit to San Isidro (Isaacs 1984, 1158).[17]

An external staircase flanked by balustraded railings opens the building to those coming from outside. It leads to an arcaded portico overgrown with bougainvillea. The large windows with light curtains give a first glimpse of the interior. At the carved wooden door, outside and inside, or to paraphrase the sociologist Georg Simmel, human "separateness and connectedness" (1984, 10), meet in a protective space.[18] Imposing and yet inviting, the view through the large portal is directed towards the entrance area. At the end of the vestibule, hangs a tapestry by

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FIGURE 20.4: *Image of the renovated Villa Ocampo (built in 1891) in 2015* (Photo: Claudio Morales, 2015).

FIGURE 20.5: *Entry room in Villa Ocampo (as redecorated by Ocampo in the 1940s) in 2015* (Photo: Claudio Morales, 2015).

Pablo Picasso, marking a modern setting in neoclassical surroundings (fig. 20.5). On both sides of the modern work of art, white double doors with glass windows provide a view of a bright central hall supported by pedestalled columns, from which various lounges can be explored.

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The architecture offers permeability so that sounds are transported across the individual levels. The open spatial structure delegates a distribution of individual conversations. If, in line with the sociologist and philosopher Michel de Certeau, the order of lived spaces relates to social structures, the result is a flexible configuration of contact possibilities (de Certeau 1988). The individual rooms have white walls, which Ocampo chose over the existing panelling and wallpaper. Due to the reduced ornamentation, the bookshelves, which reach up to the ceiling with deliberately selected painted portraits and photographs in their interstices, attract all the more attention. Just like Ocampo, who was socialized in French and English, the multinationally arranged libraries act as cultural mediators. A reach into the bookshelf could lead to a poem by Rabindranath Tagore dedicated to Ocampo: a materialized, transcontinental connection.[19] Other books, such as Borges' Ode to the German language "Al idioma alemán", refer to the multilingual *SUR* network (Borges 1994).

A mutual coexistence is manifested that takes place on a similar proverbial and literal eye level as the relations to exiles of other origins and languages. In the same environment, 19th-century family portraits by Prilidiano Pueyrredón meet an abstract carpet by Fernand Léger. In this way, the artworks act as a link between an avant-garde orientation towards the future and a traditional history of origin. Not far from each curated library is always soft seating furniture that affords the house's inhabitants and visitors a pleasant reading environment. In contrast to the material hardness of concrete and steel as in the rationalist Casa Ocampo, which Ocampo had built in the inner-city district of Palermo Chico with the architect Alejandro Bustillo, and which is generally considered one of the first modern buildings in Buenos Aires (Anonymous 1929), here the textiles of the furniture presuppose a sinking of the body: ideal for deepening the mind.

It is exactly this clear stance for ambivalence that set Ocampo's interiorities apart from contemporary comparative examples. The photograph of a living room in a nearby house from the Revista de Architectura of 1941 also shows a design hybrid of functional living and 19th-century borrowings. However, according to scholarly research on domestic architecture in Buenos Aires, these interiors are consciously oriented towards the idea of an Argentine homeland (Sánchez 2015). In contrast, Ocampo's home depicts a plurilocal understanding that translates non-verbally to visitors as glocal 'living knowledge' (Nierhaus and Nierhaus 2014, 11). Underlying the individual objects as well as the Argentinean interpretation of the Franco-Victorian architectural style is the vision of a cosmopolitan world as a 'script' for action.[20] This reflects Ocampo's self-image as a world citizen who always represented "the other" (Ocampo 1980, 61). She understood her role in Latin America as a writer in exile, which further affirms her solidarity with immigrants in Argentina (Cetraro Luna 2009).

Certainly, the exchange processes of local and exiled artists around Ocampo would not have been possible without her financial support. Coming from an aristocratic background, Ocampo and her choice of popular, often European protagonists for *SUR* were therefore criticized for being elitist (González 2018). Her personal patronage also led to some exclusion of artists such as the exiled author Paul Zech (Thurn 2019). Nonetheless, human and non-human actants of diverse, yet co-creative backgrounds gathered in San Isidro. According to her memoirs, Ocampo chose to renovate Villa Ocampo and its interior for the sake of a lively genius loci that would actively participate in the intellectual exchange of ideas (Ocampo 2000). In this international thought forum, encounter and retreat were just as possible as singularity and diversity.

Jassim House: Shared plans and dreams in Bombay[21]

Arriving in Bombay in the first half of the 20th century meant coming to a "secular, multicultural" city, whose urban imaginaries were, according to Arjun Appadurai (2000, 650), "modernist in their visions of equity, justice and cultural cosmopolitanism". Already during British colonial rule, which lasted from 1858 until the independence of India and Pakistan in 1947, the metropolis had become an economic hub used to foreign influx (Franz 2015). As a port city, Bombay was the principal entry point to India for Jewish refugees fleeing National Socialism, who were confronted with ambivalent social and political attitudes of the urban society, at least since if not preceding the beginning of the war (Singh 2017). For exiles associated with the arts, Bombay's broad entertainment and culture sector offered various income-generation opportunities (Franz 2020). The city was also an attractive arrival point due to its art and architecture schools (Dwivedi/Mehrotra 2001; Huppatz 2018). One specificity of the city's cultural field was its informal organization. Foreign entrants were welcomed into more or less private circles, which resulted in transcultural exchange processes (Dogramaci/Lee 2019).

An example of such an unofficial contact zone was Jassim House at 25 Cuffe Parade, later also known as Taraporewala Mansion. According to the autobiography of architect Minnette De Silva, who rented the lower floor of the villa in 1941, Jassim House became a space of debate and activity for several (trans)cultural projects whose participants were on the search for new aesthetics:

> As soon as I saw Jassim House and the ground floor flat, I knew I had found my corner of Bombay. [...] Sister Anil had joined me. So many seminal events happened there. The Indian Peoples' Theatre (IPTA), Kutub Publishers and MARG were all born there. Everything seemed to be happening. [...] It was such a mixed world of the

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political Left and Right: industrialists, army generals, executives, struggling artists, writers, film-makers, dancers, actors – a cosmopolitan world. After we had left, it continued to be an artistic hub of Bombay and India as Mulk Raj Anand stayed on.

(De Silva 1998, 65)

In addition to IPTA and Kutub Popular Publishers, which were both co-founded by the art historian Anil (also Marcia) De Silva, the Modern Architectural Research Group (M.A.R.G) developed out of informal gatherings.[22] Besides intellectuals from Asia such as the Indian author Mulk Raj Anand and the De Silva Sisters from Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) , the total of 14 founding members also included a remarkably high number of German-speaking exiles (ibid.): the architect Otto Koenigsberger, who fled Germany in 1933 and later became India's Federal Director of Housing (Lee/ James-Chakraborty 2012); the Berlin émigré art critic Rudolf von Leyden; and the art historian Hermann Goetz, who had completed his doctorate on Indian art at the University of Munich and was director of the Baroda Museum during the 1940s (Singh 2017). From 1946, the interdisciplinary team published the quarterly art and architecture magazine of the same name: *Marg*. Its title also means 'pathway' in Sanskrit (Anand 1946, 5). This resonated with the magazine's humanistic impetus in discussing the built, visual and performing arts of Asia, Europe and the United States. While it focused on modernist practices, it also aimed at re-contextualizing the region's cultural heritage in the process of nation building.

The place of *Marg*'s inception, Jassim House, is located on the sea-side promenade of Cuffe Parade where imposing villas are lined up one after the other in the wealthy Colaba precinct in South Mumbai (fig. 20.6). Recognizable from afar thanks to its dome and multifoil arches, the villa is simultaneously open and protected (fig. 20.7). The wall of ornamental stonework partially surrounding the site allows a frontal view of the building. Yet, the overall impression still signals privacy through its spatial demarcation and the portico in front of the entrance doors. The architecture is characterized by an eclectic architectural mix typical for Bombay during the British Raj. Often classified as 'Indo-saracenic', it combines contemporary colonial tropes with vernacular Indian building elements (Bryant 2020). The consistent patterning and symmetrical structure with large domes, arched doorways and delicate ornamentation are informed by Mughal and Sikh styles. The blending of the intricate facade design with more minimalist tilework in grey-blue anticipates later Bombay Deco architectures. According to sources, 'saracenic' embellishments, which seem initially in contrast to *Marg*'s anti-revivalist orientation, were added at the request of an Arab client (Mistri 1986, 226). However, compared to colonial representative buildings of this time, the ornamentation seems less like a pure transfer of supposedly local stylistic elements. This might be due to its Indian architect Jamshedji Mistri – father of the *Marg* co-founder Minocher J.P. Mistri.[23]

FIGURE 20.6: Postcard "Cuffe Parade. Bombay", n.d. (Private Collection Rachel Lee).

FIGURE 20.7: *Historic image of Jassim House, built around 1900* (Mistri 1986, 227).

The short walk from Cuffe Parade to the entrance is framed by tropical plants. Suited to the local climate, the house has embraced permeability, which is also the case with many buildings in this region and the architectural structures designed by Koenigsberger or Minnette De Silva. Taking in the view of the Arabian Sea, guests could step out onto the expansive open terraces, retreat to shady areas or enjoy

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the small backyard garden. In the covered portico, the corbelled pillars, which were probably made of poured concrete, stand out. Crafted, floral ornaments in the glazing immerse the entrance area, which was shared by all parties living in the house, in a diffuse light.

Upon entering through the three-door portal into the ground floor flat, spacious rooms with high ceilings open up. Anand described the specific spatial atmosphere of the living area as follows: "The people who built this room had an awareness – they left room for you to move and relax" (qtd. in Sales-Pontes 1985, 123). From the few published images of the historical interior, the only ornamental elements, such as pilasters or window shades, seem to be directly related to the outer skin of the building (fig. 20.8). In the otherwise reduced interior, the tiled floor with a graphic pattern is covered by a few bookshelves and low seats, similar to the low mattresses (*gaddi*) widely used in India (Chaudhuri 2012). Reflected in the piles of books on all shelves is an international interest ranging from Frank Lloyd Wright's architecture to "Soviet Ballet" and the "Battle for Asia". Several artisanal objects are placed in the immediate vicinity of artworks by Ceylonese painter George Keyt. The paintings tell a story about the quest for modern art in these very rooms, of Keyt's stay at Cuffe Parade initiated by Anil and thus of inter-Asian migratory routes.

FIGURE 20.8: Dolly Sahiar, Photograph of Mulk Raj Anand in his late years at 25 Cuffe Parade, n.d. (Courtesy The Marg Foundation, Mumbai. Taken from: *Mulk Raj Anand: Shaping the Indian Modern*, edited by Annapurna Garimella, Marg Publications, 2005, p. 26).

In multiple ways, the material culture of Cuffe Parade's interior reflects the cultural politics verbalized in *Marg*. In a series of articles on interior design (fig. 20.9), the "impact of modern Europe [on India…], which have neither been synthesized with the surviving forms, nor been integrated into a new way of living"

· NOTES ON INTERIOR · DESIGN·
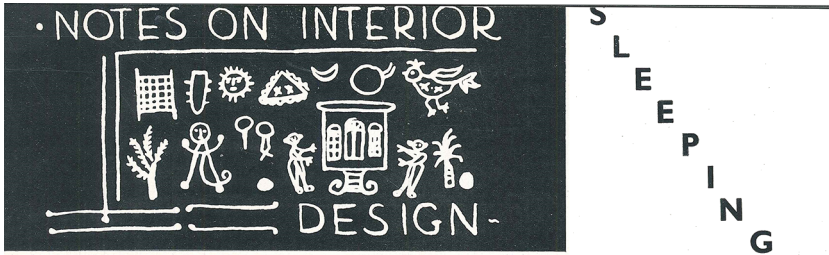
SLEEPING

SOMETHING like thirty per cent of our lives is spent in sleeping. Nature would not require this rest, if it were not essential to our well-being. For sleep is very certainly nature's sweet restorer ; quiet, sound, undisturbed slumber being one of those things which brace the body up to resist all influences which tend to undermine health or render the individual liable to disease.

If the fullest possible benefit is to be obtained from the hours passed in it, the sleeping-room must be chosen with the greatest of care, and made the brightest, cleanest and most hygienic of all the rooms of the house. Few people realize, however, how much can be done in the planning and construction of a bedroom to make the conditions there conducive to what is commonly called "a good night's sleep".

If we study the history of the sleeping-room, it is astonishing what a long time it took for this function of the house to be definitely isolated from the others. Mediaeval sleeping accommodation was promiscuous, uncomfortable and disgusting. But when separate bedrooms became established, it was usual to put them away from the external walls, at the back of the house, without light or ventilation.

Indeed, sleeping comfort seems to have been surprisingly neglected, though not sleeping magnificence. (Evelyn refers to the Queen's bed in 1662 as an embroidery of silver and crimson velvet, costing £8,000, which in our money is an enormous sum.)

It was not uncommon in great houses, and universal in small ones, for bedrooms to be passages to other rooms. In many houses there was only one bedroom which was not a passage. We demand privacy in our bedroom and the moving sun flooding through big windows.

And what of the bedstead ? Bedsteads have been in use for many thousands of years among the ancient Hindus. There was the canopied bed too. In certain Buddhist bas-reliefs both in India and Java, the bed is depicted. One of the Buddhist precepts for the monks and for those among the lay folk wishing to practice the eight or the ten precepts, was abstention from the use of high beds and furniture generally. The bed of the householder was in a kind of living-room apart from the female quarters, but in ancient Buddhist cave monasteries there were separate bedrooms or cells with beds sometimes carved out of rock, as in Karli Caves and Baja. In the Ajanta frescoes too, there are divans depicted.

This bedroom is rather large for the average small home, but it shows commendable lack of fussiness and unnecessary ornamentation while having plenty of fresh air and light.

FIGURE 20.9: Excerpt from "Notes on Interior Design" (Marg, vol. 1, no. 4, July 1947, p. 40 [image cropped as in the original]).

(M.A.R.G. January 1947, 42) is discussed.[24] Folk and tribal art forms are considered as equal shapers of the Indian modern aesthetic. Notwithstanding the sometimes superelevated internationalism of *Marg*, in particular in the field of architecture, Cuffe Parade showcases a balanced negotiation between Asian and European elements. Unlike the often lifeless transmission of the colonizer's design habits, as described by Rabindranath Tagore in his novel *Relationships* (*Jogajog*) of 1929, Jassim House energetically combined local with migrated habitational knowledge.

Similarly, the emancipated lives of the De Silva sisters did not follow traditional role assignments, cemented in 19th-century India by the architectural separation of women's household spaces inside and the male zone outside (Chaudhuri 2012). Even though historiography (Singh 2013; Deboo 2021) has mostly focused on Anand's role as *Marg*'s editor, Minnette was the first to rent the ground floor apartment and Anand was invited by Anil as a former London acquaintance. Apart from the fact that several sources suggest a love affair between Anil and Anand (Sales-Pontes 1985; De Mel 2001), egalitarian shared flats were not uncommon for the progressive left at the time (Loomba 2019). Furthermore, it was down to Anil's entrepreneurial spirit that Kutub, IPTA and maybe also *Marg* were finally put into practice.

The assumption that the 25 Cuffe Parade was already in itself an open-minded space is demonstrated not least by the other dwellers of the house who shared the same entry. From 1933 to 1970 the Jewish-Muslim Hamied family led a secular life there. With their legendary parties, Luba Derczanska and Khwaja Abdul Hamied, who met in Berlin, fostered exchange among Hindus, Muslims and Jews alike (Jonker 2020). Further evidence of the transculturality of this environment is the presence of exiles in *Marg* and its intellectual network. Although many articles are signed with the acronym M.A.R.G., the voices of exiled creatives resound. The founding manifesto "Architecture and you" echoes earlier lectures by Koenigsberger, promoting an understanding of architectural modernism as a site-specific method (Lee/James-Chakraborty 2012). Furthermore, the recurring support of the Bombay-based Progressive Artists' Group can be traced not only to Anand but also to von Leyden, who committedly featured young modern artists in his reviews for *The Times of India* (Franz 2015). His socialist perspective on art resonates with editorials like "Design and Patronage", which took a clear anti-fascist stance (M.A.R.G. July 1947).[25]

It can be argued that the transgressions of boundaries in the context of gender, origin and culture emerged from this specific constitution of Jassim House situated in the progressive milieu of 1940s Bombay. The cosmopolitan spirit seemed to have been manifested in both living and life in Cuffe Parade, where foreign input was to some extent welcomed. Even if the exiles' reputations were partly due to advantages gained through their racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds in the segregated Indian society of the time, egalitarian reviews on Asian topics prove the spirit of openness permeating 25 Cuffe Parade.[26] Although these voices, due

to the departure of the De Silva sisters and many exiles from Bombay, gradually decreased in the course of the 1950s, Jassim House as Anand's residence continued to be a transcultural contact zone (De Silva 1998).

Concluding remarks on the actants of urban exile

From these considerations, it can be concluded that in the specific urban contexts of Buenos Aires and Bombay in the 1930s and 1940s, a third space in Homi Bhabha's sense emerged through the interconnectedness of art and exile within both Villa Ocampo and Jassim House. Through the transcultural exchange processes circulating there, exiled creatives were able to (re)root themselves in personal networks and cultural projects such as *SUR* or *Marg* – at least for a time. This process was closely linked to the private homes and the cities they were embedded into, both of which had colonial pasts and relatively positive approaches to migrants. While in Bombay this could be explained by the lack of artistic infrastructure at the time, this argument is obsolete for Buenos Aires with its numerous art spaces. Rather, these domestic contact zones were made possible through certain socio-economic and cultural-political constitutions at work in both metropolises manifesting itself in a humane and design openness.

Analyzing these two dwellings' social and built environments as equal actants in diverse networks has enabled a new perspective on urban exile. My analyses combined architectural, urbanistic and biographical approaches based on historical text and imagery. Moreover, ANT proved to be a valid method to explore the complex historical entanglements of artistic exchanges between exiles and locals. Yet, the porous records in both contexts as well as the lack of field research on site made a holistic investigation difficult.[27] Therefore, additional secondary sources were taken into account to identify the human and non-human factors of transcultural encounters for the two cases.

Interconnectivity in urban exile is visible in the historical accounts of the setting within Villa Ocampo and Jassim House as well as within the pages of both magazines. This was of course closely linked to the editors. Both Ocampo and the group around Anand and the De Silva sisters belonged to an urban, multilingual elite. Their privileged living conditions enabled them to have more scope of action, which they in turn transformed and translated into collaborative creation. Due to previous stays in Europe, all of them were used to cultural differences and consciously wanted to surround themselves with European intellectuals. So, the resulting urban communities fulfil many of the characteristics that Bhabha describes as an "antagonistic supplement of modernity" (Bhabha 1994, 231).

Likewise, the architectural environments in Villa Ocampo with the mediating room structure and Jassim House with its flowing transitions between inside and

outside were characterized by permeability. Books and artworks acted as mediators of global modernities, which co-existed with local heritage and handicraft. Multiple cultural references conveyed a living and lived plurality that interacted with progressive social agendas. There was a concern to join the international modernist movements, which offered decisive points of contact for exiles. In both cases, migrant-situated creativity, be it from Europe or the surrounding countries in South America or Asia, was largely perceived as stimulating, and materialized in everyday domestic dwelling.

The specific thing-human constellations opened up possibilities of arriving and settling far beyond the borders of one's own home. Considering the shattered lives of other exiles, (re)rooting in different spaces might have been easier for these artists, as they not only shared interests but also future visions with the locals. The bonding agency of common projects together with a lingual and cultural diversity that emerged from and was projected onto the private houses, fostered hybrid networks. The combination of economic means, cosmopolitan attitudes, the simultaneity of migrant and local forms of knowledge and representation, (interior) architectural structures of permeability and open cities led to the emergence of a transcultural third space for personal and artistic exchanges in modernity. In view of 21st-century migration routes, a (re)rooting of discussions about cultural difference just as much as a (re)routing of certain political actions appears desirable. What contemporary societies can learn from these specific case studies is that openness to plurality and tolerance of ambiguity can lead to outstanding creative results.

NOTES

1. I would like to thank Ania Loomba, Burcu Dogramaci, Claudio Morales, Hernán D. Caro, Laura Karp Lugo, Marg (Anjana Premchand, Mrinalini Vasudevan), Museo Beccar Varela/ Quinta Los Ombúes – San Isidro (Marcela Fugardo), Rachel Lee, Shiromi Pinto for their support of my research for this chapter.

2. In the edition translated into English by Gabriel Berns, the text passage reads: "[A] total grove that lives and pulsates inside of me. And a long memory of which no one will ever hear will be written fleetingly on the air; driven definitely off its course – definitely lost" (Alberti 1959/1981, 18).

3. In the following, the terms 'exile' and 'emigration' are used alternately, as both refer to a forced, indefinite stay outside the country of origin due to a political situation. In contrast, the term 'migration' also includes economically or socially enforced emigration (Dogramaci 2013, 19).

4. The research project "Relocating Modernism: Global Metropolises, Modern Art and Exile" (METROMOD) marks out a map of exiled artists' life and work in six global metropolises between 1900 and 1950, see www.//metromod.net/.

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5. The focus on biographical details and approaches in exile studies partly prevents the analysis of wider intercultural dynamics (Gemünden/Kaes 2003).

6. The term 'transcultural' is preferable to 'intercultural' or 'multicultural' because it indicates an ambivalent meaning (Marotta 2014). Following early conceptualizations by the anthropologist Fernando Ortiz, transculturalism not only acknowledges the potential of exchange between cultures, but also conveys the tensions within this process (Ortiz 1947).

7. The subheading is inspired by Jane M. Jacob's theorization of a 'sense of being at home' away from home in diaspora communities (Jacobs 2004).

8. Bhabha for instance refers to a museum installation by the contemporary artist Renée Green, see pp. 4–7.

9. In the original: "Wohnen unter der Prämisse der (Aus)wanderung". If not specified otherwise, all quotations have been translated by the author.

10. The use of the term is also explained by the self-statements and writings of exiles from the two networks discussed, as in Alberti (1959/2003).

11. Indeed, a full turning away from a biographical approach in studies on exile is proving difficult since the necessity of emigration was caused mostly by in- or externally ascribed identities.

12. In the original: "Dinge werden häufig zu zentralen Reflexionsobjekten des Exilierten, der sein eigenes Verworfensein und unkontrollierbares Umhergetriebenwerden im Existenzmodus der beweglichen Objekte wiedererkennt und reflektiert".

13. The German original phrase reads "nicht *natürlich* gegeben, sondern immer diskursiv vermittelt".

14. The subheading refers to Ocampo's self-description as "lo otro" (Ocampo 1980, 61) in her autobiography, which can be interpreted as a demarcation from a rather conservative upbringing and paternalistic milieu.

15. Sitman (2008, 144–147) gives a detailed account of Ocampo's anti-fascist engagement.

16. For a walk-through of Villa Ocampo see www.youtube.com/watch?v=5TxlpJBUmOU. Accessed 28 December 2020.

17. In a letter Le Corbusier attributed "Alter großartiger Glanz" to Villa Ocampo.

18. Simmel defines the metaphysical meaning of the door, in its "Getrenntheit und Verbundenheit", as an architectural element of human performance.

19. On the transcultural implications and misunderstandings of the relationship between Ocampo and Tagore, see Dyson (1988, 322–328), Klengel (2013).

20. According to Saito (2011), cosmopolitanism is understood as a sociological phenomenon defined by the three key elements: cultural omnivorousness, ethnic tolerance and cosmopolitics.

21. The subheading is inspired by *Marg*'s first editorial "Planning and Dreaming" (*Marg*, October 1946, 3–6).

22. According to the imprint, Cuffe Parade remained *Marg*'s headquarters until the summer of 1948, when the editorial staff moved to new offices in 3 Queens Road. See *Marg*, vol. 1–2, 1946–1948.

23. The author had access to undisclosed, historical material from private archives for her visual analysis. Further copyright-protected images of the renovated house can be found at sunilthakkar.in/portfolio/architecture/taraporewala-mansion-jones-lang-lasalle/. Accessed 01 April 2021.

24. See also *Marg* April 1947; *Marg* July 1947.

25. Even though *Marg*'s digital archive attributes this editorial to Mulk Raj Anand, the original magazine names M.A.R.G. as an author.

26. *Marg* dedicated entire issues to Ceylon, Buddhist and South Asian art; as outlined in detail in Garimella (2005, 102).

27. This was in part due to the impossibilities of research trips during the Covid-19 pandemic as well as the closure of archives.

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