

sought to minimize the clutter of visual differences in the built environment by standardizing the rules of 'good design'. If only the aesthetic tastes of professional architects and their publics could be trained to accept the European innovations of the early twentieth century, the visual feel of American cities would be explicitly connected to the new international avant-garde. Yet the success of these efforts were only ever partial. And in their partial state, they resulted in a ubiquitous design practice for a largely white professional elite, their well monied clients, and the corporations and institutions that could afford their services. Even as an official style of federal building, the international style lost its luster as an avant-gardist aesthetic because it had become too banal--an eventuality predicted, but underestimated in Johnson and Hitchcock's "International Style" catalog. Over the course of the twentieth century, this state of affairs established a celebrated avant-gardist culture that was decidedly European in pedigree and influence; both in terms of its historical origins and the geographical distribution of its most celebrated figures. A retroactive critique and revision of the international style doctrine requires us to not only acknowledge the social inequalities that have emerged from its use, but also a refinement of what constitutes good architecture in the present. While we have offered the principle of placemaking as a potential corrective, only time will tell us if this is a sufficient story to pluralize the architectural canon.

If modern architecture is to be understood as more than just the beautifully designed and executed industrial building, then 'good design' can no longer be bracketed by the exclusively aesthetic criteria of previous debates. The regularity proffered by a slavish emulation of an avant-garde style of building did not save our cities, or the minor architects who believed that emulating its tenets would elevate them to the same status as the modern masters. It is not enough to say that a building is beautiful or aesthetically pleasing in the ways it advances the conceptual underpinnings of an elitist architectural theory. Good design must apply equally, in the inclusive sense hinted at in this chapter, to include the various strategies and techniques applied by a multitude of cultural groups that developed explicit social projects to accommodate modernity on their own terms. As an example, the genius