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Shadows of Le Corbusier: Pasts into Presence

Abstract

This Cloud-Cuckoo-Land issue seeks to “critically question epistemological propositions, models, and temporalities of architectural history,” which shape the core of this inquiry. This article utilizes Le Corbusier’s Ahmedabad Millowners’ Association Building as a case study, exploring many shades of its possible histories, including the building, drawings, correspondences, Le Corbusier’s theoretical writings, contemporary knowledge, and contextual material. Of particular interest is the simultaneity of multiple parallel histories, each contradicting the foundations of the others. Through this investigation, I intend to question the fixity of the notion of history, and the assumed intrinsic value of primary sources, and highlight the importance of critical engagement of historical “facts” as a matter of method and practice. Using close reading of both texts and artifacts as a strategy, I will explore alignments and contradictions of the multiple parallel histories in order to develop seven “shadows” that paint a more diverse, yet focused view of Le Corbusier and the Ahmedabad Millowners’ Association Building.

Keywords

Le Corbusier, Ahmedabad Millowners’ Association Building, Comparative Close Reading, Critical Analysis, Parallel Histories