



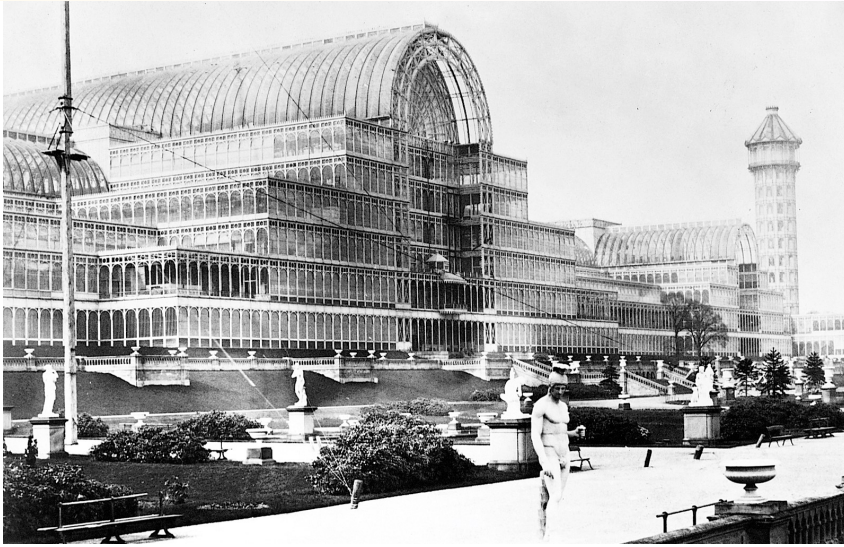
Early Modernism in Europe

Preamble and context.

Design in the Built Environment 2019. M McGarrigle

Use title slide layout

## Early European Modernism



*“ A little later he even foretold from the union of iron and glass “ a new era in architecture “ Nikolaus Pevsner quoting Matthew Digby Wyatt in Sources of Modern Architecture and Design.*

© Unitec New Zealand

2

## Early European Modernism

**William Morris.**

*“ only acceptable things are usually in the kitchen ..... they alone are simple and honest....”*

Tulips wallpaper by William Morris 1875

© Unitec New Zealand



William Morris- poet , reformer and designer . Manufacturer and shopkeeper who set up his own firm in 1861. He devised his theories from Ruskin. He thought craftsmen of the middles ages derived great pleasure from the creation of the art they laboured on. He like many others was extremely unimpressed with the quality of goods and taste on display in the Crystal palace.

The goods his company made though had to be expensive . He was a fanatical craftsman and talented designer who practiced what he preached. Tulips chints is a strive for a balance between nature and the past . Possibly inspired by the past but essentially original.

## Early European Modernism



New Zealand Chambers London  
1872 by R N Shaw.

Old Swan House Chelsea. R N Shaw.



Shaw an almost exact contemporary of Morris and Webb. Playful application of historical styles such as use of 17<sup>th</sup>C and 18<sup>th</sup>C motifs in NZ Chambers.

Old Swan house has elements from past sources in history but they are well composed and handled in an elegant fashion by the skillful Shaw.

## Early European Modernism

### Arts and Crafts



Red House 1860 by Phillip Webb.

Chimney of Red House.

5

House which exposed its red brick and did not attempt to hide it behind stucco plaster. Facades were a secondary consideration in that windows were put where they were required and elevational composition was not the priority. Morris thought that 19<sup>th</sup> century architects had spent all their time designing churches, public buildings and offices but not that much on designing houses.



## Early European Modernism



### Arts and Crafts

All Saints Church Brockhampton by W R Lethaby. 1902



Later Phillip Webb House. Standen ,  
East Grinstead Sussex. 1892



Banstead Surrey 1884 by  
Norman Shaw

### English Domestic Revival.

No one in Europe could get away from Historicism before the 1880s

## Early European Modernism

Defeat of Historicism was as much the work of Americans as Europeans.



W G Low House. Stanford Rhode Island. 1887

Standford White here displays a radicalism beyond even that of Shaws perhaps in a spirit of pioneering.

© Unitec New Zealand

7

USA had “ the pioneer background of building in a young nation.

## Early European Modernism

Nos 5-7 Aldermanbury London.  
Architect unknown. C.1840



Marquette Building Chicago by Holabird & Roche  
1894



Circa 1890  
USA had  
established  
leadership  
in  
commercial  
architecture

8

© Wayne Lorentz  
Licensed to Artefacts Corporation  
www.ChicagoArchitecture.info

USA had been colonial in its attitude and reaction to European styles , in 1890 commercially they began to leave everyone else behind. They were the first in developing the skyscraper and finding new style for it . Early skyscrapers were simply high houses but then quickly became the choice for offices. Since 1840 English office façade had become a grid of stone piers and large windows .Marquette building , steel frame is expressed completely around large broad windows. Bottom ones are already the “ Chicago “ type. So well planned it was still efficient in use up to the 1960s. Chicago was newer city than New York and lest beholden to traditions. The great Fire led to an opportunity for rebuilding.



## Early European Modernism



Mackmurdos cover for a book on the churches of Christopher Wren 1883.

### **Art Nouveau**

Term comes from S Bing's shop opened in Paris in 1895

Corresponding German  
**Jugendstil** 1896

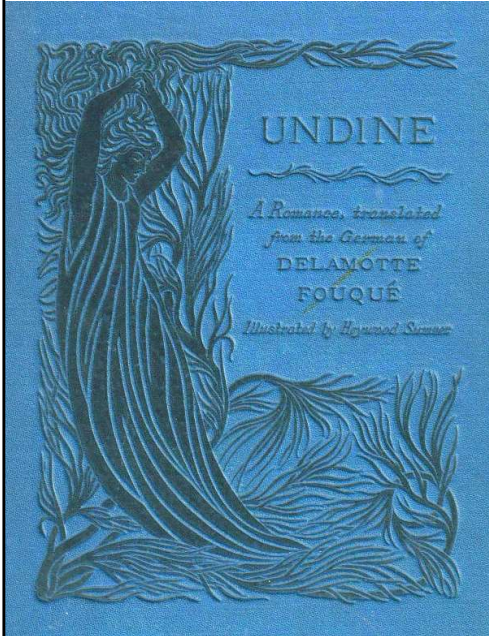
Style though is older and thought to date from Horta house of 1892

Mackmurdo cover- flaming shapes derived from nature, no ties with the past. Introduced motifs which became popular throughout Europe. Are in frame is filled with non repeating asymmetrical tulips pattern stylized vigourously as flames. Cockerels cut short but still excessively thin and long

The asymmetrical shape derived from nature , bravely handled and no ties with the past. These are prime characteristics of Art Nouveau

## Early European Modernism

Illustration on the cover of book  
Undine by Heywood Sumner 1888.



10

Aubrey Beardsley – The Peacock Skirt 1893

Era of Impressionists such as Whistler . Mackmurdo set up his Century Guild in 1882  
Named a guild to make it sound as from the middle ages and no hint of exploitation  
or competition.

Order enforced by intellect is one of the things against which Art Nouveau was  
pushing. Selecting past styles that had to be imitated represented enforcing and  
order .

Sprites and fairies appeals to Art Nouveau as do hair , waves and seaweed.

## Early European Modernism

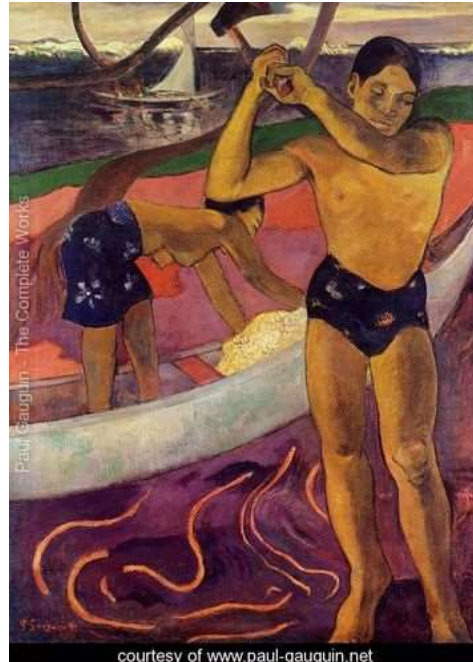
Gauguin pitcher by Chaplet.



Vermiculating lines

© Unitec New Zealand

Man with an axe by Gauguin



Paul Gauguin - The Complete Works

courtesy of www.paul-gauguin.net

11

A lot of experimentation with crafts in glasswork at this time. Amongst the leading of the times Gauguin was the only one who not only influenced design by the forms and shapes in his work but actually experimented with crafts himself making wooden panels, baked and enamelled pitchers and ceramic table centrepieces.

Vermiculating lines became a hallmark of Art Nouveau



## Early European Modernism

Gaudi- 1880 Gates and fence of Casa Vicens.



Gaudi was the son of a coppersmith and must have seen plenty of molten metal being bent and shaped . Ductility of wrought iron made it a favourite material of Art nouveau.

## Early European Modernism



Angels Watch by Henri van de Velde 1891

*"Essence of Art Nouveau- a recognizable subject but every outline reduced to undulation .."*  
Pevsner

Van de Velde was an artist who turned to design about 1890

Clean and functional Van de Velde desk of 1895

© Unitec New Zealand



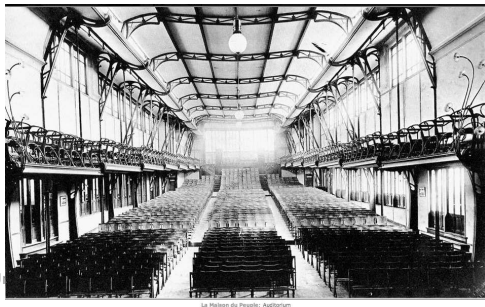
In 1899 Van de Velde settled in Weimar Germany where he set up a school which was to be the predecessor of the Bauhaus. Gropius was recommended for the role of Bauhaus director by Van de Velde. His debate with Hermann Muthesius in 1914 is meant to have been a foretelling of the modern movement.



## Early European Modernism



Maison Du Peuple 1896-99 . Horta



© U



Tietz Department store in  
Berlin. 1898

Maison Du Peuple was an Art Nouveau equivalent of the American office building. This depended on iron too but not in the way that the US buildings did for main structural properties and thereby influencing appearances. Horta's building does not conceal the frame behind stone claddings. His iron is visible displayed in many instances as the Art Nouveau curve theme. Building more fragmented than its US counterparts. Broad stone bays in the department store which are not Art Nouveau, more Baroque but the rest is glass and thin iron

## Early European Modernism

Paris Metro entrance by Hector Guimard. Built between 1899-1904



Potential  
of the new  
materials

No straight  
lines

Highly  
inventive

Guimard's works are probably the most insistent survivors of Art Nouveau according to Pevsner. Distinctive and still effective signposts today.

## Early European Modernism



Castel Beranger by  
Guimard . 1897-98

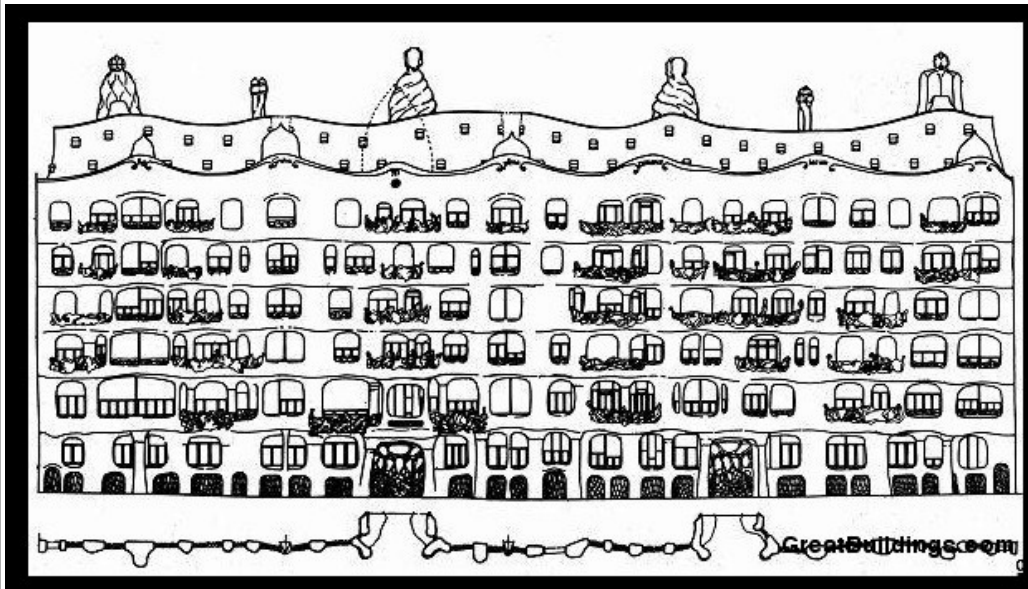
Glass block wall and detail of  
the blocks.



© Unitec New Zealand



## Early European Modernism

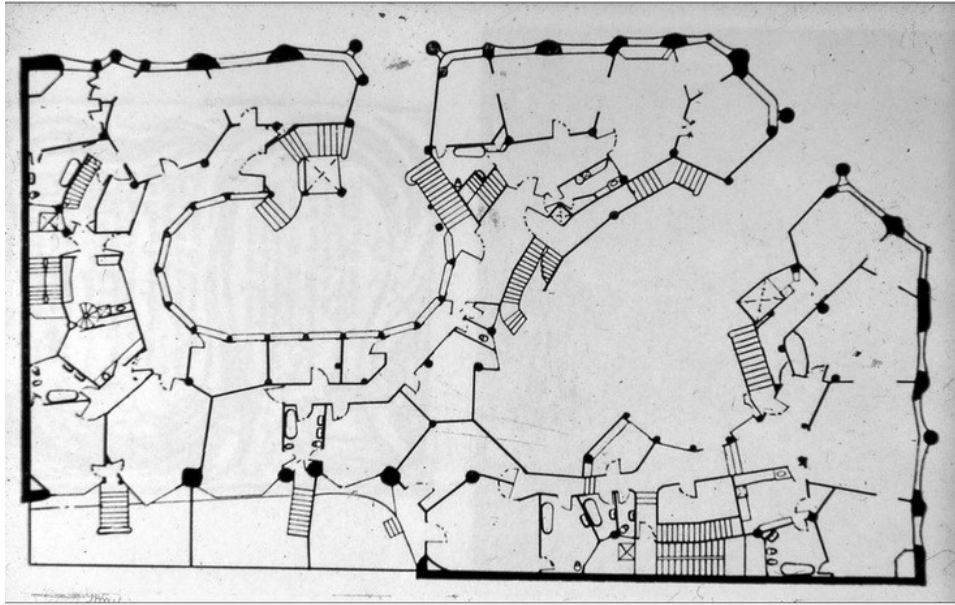


© Unitec New Zealand

17

Casa Mila Gaudi

## Early European Modernism



© Unitec New Zealand

18

Cas Mila 1905 typical plan

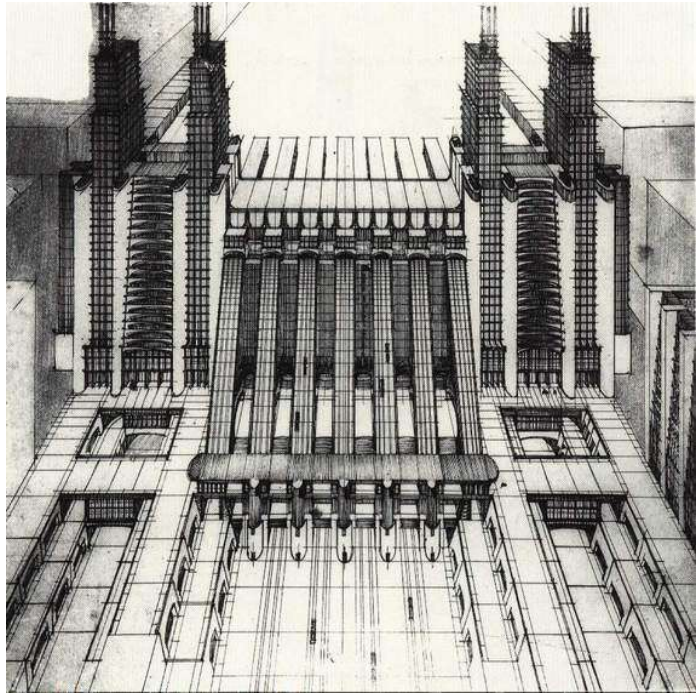
Casa Mila plan is Art Nouveau in that apparently it was flexible up to the last possible moment . Partition walls inserted only after the building was complete.



## Early European Modernism

City of the future by  
Antonio Sant Elia.

1914



© Unitec New Zealand

Italian futurist movement.

## Early European Modernism



Adolf Loos  
Goldman  
and  
Salatsch  
building .  
Vienna  
1909-11

© Unitec New Zealand

20

Radical rejection of ornament and simplicity in the building reflect the views of the architects essays. Clear structural definition. 2 lower floors retail and clad differently

Loos tried to use space efficiently .

## Early European Modernism



Alexander , Leonid and Viktor Wesnin.  
Competition scheme for the Soviet  
Palace 1933( unbuilt)

Chile Haus , Hamburg.  
Fritz Hoyer 1922-23

© Unitec New Zealand

21



Russian example from an age of Constructivism which yielded little built work and was stopped eventually by Stalin.

Hamburg building plays on past themes in this case North German gothic. Built around three courtyards it is an office block which used rejected bricks which give it an almost hand made hand crafted quality without the expense. Gothic building although it does not have one pointed arch.

## Early European Modernism

Einstein Tower  
Telegraph Hill  
Potsdam

1920-21  
Erich Mendelsohn



© Unitec New Zealand

22

Inter war Germany with its inflation meant construction had largely come to a standstill. Under employed avante garde architects were able to let things go beyond the confines of reality on paper and daring projects for the societies of the future were imagined. Behrens, Gropius and Van Der Rohe had some exposure to expressionist ideas and some books claim they were not complete immune to the attraction. Einsein tower conceived as a built sculpture. It looks plastic and like concrete but it is of rendered brick. Example of built expressionism. Harbinger of use of reinforced concrete perhaps.

## Early European Modernism

Schroder House

Gerrit Rietveld  
1924



© Unitec New Zealand

23

Rietveld a carpenter and architect. Designer of the Red Blue Chair. 3 D version of Mondrian's painting studies. "living in an art which has become reality" Mondrian.

De Stijl- 1917 abolish natural form , pure artistic expression. Pure reality hostile to nature. Rationalistic architecture echoes ?

Modern age demanded completely new aesthetic forms stripped of all picturesque associative or historicist influences.

Global uniformity of architecture in keeping with more rapid methods of transport and communication.



## Early European Modernism



Erik  
Gunnar  
Asplund

Stockhol  
m City  
Library  
1920-28

© Unitec New Zealand

24

Imaginative Neo Classicism . Alvar Aalto – Rationalist architecture was too strongly influenced by technical functionalism and not enough by the needs of the people who use the buildings.

Eg Manipulation of light in a library such as Asplund's in Stockholm. Architecture which can be humanised Nordic Classicism. Against a wilful rejection of precedent by the self conscious young modernists.