



Introduction

This book deals with architectural and urban development. Chronologically, it covers the period from 1999 to 2009. Geographically, it addresses the region of the Arab world consisting of the Arabian Peninsula and the Levant.¹ The book's chronological and geographic boundaries, with their resulting inclusions and exclusions, will be discussed in more detail below.

Let me begin with a personal anecdote. I carried out my architectural studies in the United States during the late 1970s and early 1980s. One of my courses was a seminar on contemporary architects. The course instructor asked each of the seminar students to present the work of two widely recognized architects who have made major contributions to the field. He presented a list of architects to choose from, but also gave us the option of suggesting others.

As a student from Jordan, I felt this would be an opportunity to explore the work of a contemporary architect from my part of the world. No Jordanian architect was well known outside Jordan and its neighboring countries. I therefore widened my search to include the whole of the Arab world. The only contemporary architect I could identify who had achieved any level of international recognition was the Egyptian architect Hassan Fathy (1900–1989). I should note that I did not know much about Fathy then. A student from India had told me about Fathy and about the resourceful architectural mud-brick solutions he had

begun developing in the 1940s to accommodate the housing needs of the Egyptian rural poor.²

I therefore suggested to my instructor that I research Hassan Fathy's work. He told me he had not heard of Fathy, and he asked for a few days to see what he could find about him. When he got back to me, he said that from the little he could find, he did not feel that Fathy's architectural contributions were important enough to warrant a presentation. My instructor was thoughtful, perceptive, and curious. I feel indebted to him up to this day, for he helped me develop a special appreciation for architectural history and also for the evolution of architectural modernism. Still, he did not find Fathy to be adequately interesting. I instead gave presentations on Harry Weese and Alvar Aalto.

Much has changed since then. The work of architects from the Arab world has been receiving increased international coverage and interest. Moreover, the recent large-scale construction projects taking place in Dubai and the various oil-rich countries of the Arabian Peninsula have attracted considerable attention, not only in architectural publications but also in the popular press. Still, presenting that world's contemporary architectural and urban development to those who do not have personal, intellectual, or professional links to it remains a challenge. To those from outside that world (and to some within it), the

suggestion that it has consistently devoted significant resources to developing its built environment during the modern period comes as a surprise.

In fact, the region under consideration is not particularly known as a center of sustained architectural or urban production and experimentation. Instead, since the middle of the twentieth century, if not earlier, the world's gaze primarily has focused on two often interconnected phenomena. The first relates to oil, the world's primary source of energy. The oil reserves that a number of countries in the region hold are among the world's largest. The second phenomenon relates to the conflicts that have regularly rocked it. Their effects very often have spilled well outside its borders. They also raise fears regarding the interruption of oil supplies coming from it. The conflicts of the region deal with contested space, both physical and ideological. They very often have turned violent, resulting in wars, civil strife, and acts of terrorism. A significant portion of this violence has been connected directly or indirectly to the Arab-Israeli conflict. At the heart of this conflict is the plight of the Palestinians, which remains unresolved.

The region has yet to "find its center" and to reach a state of equilibrium, whether politically, culturally, or economically. As a whole, it is still searching for its place on the world stage, and it aspires to take on a role that extends beyond that of world oil supplier or hotspot.

A relatively gloomy image of a region haunted by violence has often determined how the outside world has viewed it. This image, however, masks much more hopeful and positive possibilities and potentials. The international media's coverage of the region usually emphasizes political instability and brewing problems. What often is overlooked is that much of the region has been economically and politically stable for decades. The occasional rocking of the boat brought about by surges in political or religious extremism, military adventurism, oil prices, or acts of terrorism have not undermined that overall stability.

The passion with which building projects

have been carried out in the region is one reflection of a faith and belief in its potentials, which many outside it have failed to grasp. The fortunes of such building projects undeniably have been closely linked to oil prices. The region's oil-rich countries benefit directly from rising prices. Those benefits also trickle down to affect the region's countries with little or no oil wealth, as both enjoy intimate economic ties with each other.³ The price of oil has undergone tremendous fluctuation during the period under consideration in this book. It dipped down to below US\$12/barrel in 1998, but since then it has risen more or less continuously, reaching almost \$150/barrel in the summer of 2008. Following that, it suddenly fell to about \$30, ending 2009 at about \$80. In spite of this instability in prices, the region still received unprecedented windfall profits, and a good part of those profits have been directed toward construction activities.

The region as a result has emerged during the first decade of the new millennium as one of the world's primary construction sites. It is impossible to locate accurate statistics, but the value of construction projects initiated in it during this period have easily reached hundreds of billions of dollars. Some observers even have estimated that value at a few trillion dollars.⁴ It has been said that during this construction boom, the number of construction cranes in Dubai in the United Arab Emirates was comparable to those in Shanghai in China. This is particularly striking because Dubai's population of 1.5 million people is less than one-tenth that of Shanghai, and the population of the United Arab Emirates (4.8 million) is a tiny fraction of that of China (1.3 billion).⁵ As had happened in the 1970s, the region once again emerged as a primary construction laboratory, with architects from just about every corner of the globe vying for a position in it. This book attempts to shed light on the tremendous architectural and urban construction activity that has taken place in this region during this decade.

Déjà Vu: The 1970s and Today

Construction activity in the region during this period has strong parallels, and also contrasts, with developments that took place there three to four decades earlier. Considering that so much of present human activity is determined and illuminated by past events, these past developments can help us achieve a better understanding of the situation today. During both periods, a construction boom connected to a rise in oil prices came into being. Oil prices rose dramatically beginning in 1973, from about \$3 to \$12/barrel within a few months. This primarily was the result of the oil embargo that the Arab members of OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) put in place against Western countries supporting Israel during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. For the next decade or so, oil prices continued to be high, and the countries of the region enjoyed sizable increases in their national incomes. These increases primarily affected its oil-rich countries, but also trickled down to reach neighboring countries with little or no oil wealth.

The increased revenues of the 1970s translated into an unprecedented construction boom. Architects from various parts of the world poured into the region to take advantage of the lucrative potentials that emerged there. Author Tom Wolfe even felt compelled to remark on this phenomenon in his satirical *From Bauhaus to Our House*. He commented that a good number of architects in the United States could only survive the recession that hit the country then by working in the Middle East.⁶

The chronological separation between the first construction boom of the 1970s and early 1980s and this second construction boom of the early twenty-first century, although significant, is not that great. The two booms are about 30 years apart. A number of the architects and architectural firms who participated in the first construction boom also have participated in the second. The similarities between the first and second booms are numerous. The region has had a propensity to direct a significant part of its surplus oil income into construction.

During the 1970s, new airports, universities, government buildings, mosques, hotels, and housing projects had to be constructed to meet the growing needs of the region's rapidly expanding economies and populations. These often were built on a monumental scale, and in many cases more was built than was needed or could be adequately maintained.

This immersion in building activity served psychological and even emotional roles. Buildings, whether public, commercial, or residential, reflect wealth, and tremendous wealth was being generated and flaunted in the region. After all, the countries of the Gulf boasted some of the world's highest per capita incomes. These incomes affected both their citizens and their expatriate entrepreneurs and professionals, many of whom were from the region's non-Gulf countries.

Building also is viewed as a safe and tangible way of protecting one's wealth. A building always will be there unless some out-of-the-ordinary natural or human-made calamity takes place. Also, there is a strong belief in the region (and elsewhere) that the value of real estate will always appreciate. In contrast, less tangible investments such as shares in a company may go down in value and even vanish if the company goes bankrupt. Moreover, at the time of the first construction boom, the nonconstruction segments of the region's economies, whether their industrial or service components, had not been adequately developed. This left few local options where one could park excess cash.

After this first oil boom subsided and the dust settled, there was a feeling that this windfall income was not used in the wisest and most effective manner and that too much money was squandered and misplaced. Many of the massive projects that were built, often larger and more elaborate than needed, ended up as white elephants that symbolized that sense of waste.

As for conditions that have led to the second construction boom, they follow a relatively dry economic spell that extended from the mid-1980s up to the first few years of the new millennium, during which oil

prices were depressed. Then, once again, oil prices rose spectacularly. The rise this time has had less to do with inherent political factors affecting the region and more to do with external economic forces. These primarily concentrated on the tremendous increase in energy demands, both real and anticipated, by the world's two newly emerging economic powerhouses, China and India. The effects on the region in both instances, however, have been similar. The region once again found itself with considerable amounts of excess cash. The economies of the region have become more diversified than they were three decades ago and do present many more opportunities for investment in their industrial and service sectors. Still, their construction sector continues to get a significant share of available investment money. This is partly because the region's economies still are not as diversified as they could be, and the real estate sector is still viewed as a safe haven for preserving one's wealth.

A number of developments nonetheless differentiate this second construction boom from the first. For example, during the 1970s, a good part of the region's available cash reserves was invested in the United States and Europe. This has begun to change. Two factors are behind this development. The first is the terror attacks of September 11, 2001. One of the numerous negative consequences of this tragic event has been the emergence of a new level of antagonism between the region and the West. A result of this has been a realization that investments in the West are not as safe as previously thought. They now may be frozen by Western governments for political reasons. The second factor is a more positive one. As economic conditions became leaner after the fall of oil prices during the 1980s and 1990s, many of the region's countries took significant steps toward economic liberalization and openness to encourage the inflow of direct foreign investment. Investors in the region consequently started to realize that the investment climate in their own region was becoming very attractive. They therefore began to invest more actively in countries

next door, in completely familiar environments, rather than placing all their investments halfway around the world. A good segment of this intraregional investment has gone into construction projects.

The growth in intraregional investment provides for a major differentiating factor between the two economic booms. There are other factors, a number of which specifically relate to the architectural vocabularies prevalent during each of the two periods. Anyone examining the architectural discourse in the region during the first economic boom will notice that considerable emphasis emerged then on connecting contemporary architectural production to the historical and vernacular architectural heritage of the Islamic world in general and the region in particular. This was accompanied by attempts at identifying a balance, or even a synthesis, between an architecture that expresses "modernity" but also relates to "tradition." The international predominance of postmodernism during that period, which promoted borrowing from the past in creating the architecture of the present, also played a role in supporting this emphasis on linking the Islamic world's architectural heritage with the region's emerging architecture.

By the advent of the second construction boom, this had changed drastically. On the social and cultural levels, the region has been displaying increasingly strong conservative leanings. Although it is true that the forces of the mass media, particularly those of satellite television and the Internet, have created zones that are socially and culturally relaxed and open, social and cultural conservatism recently has been the more vocal in asserting its presence in the region. In contrast to this situation of push and pull in the social and cultural spheres, most of the countries of the region have undergone a very clear and strong process of economic liberalization during this period. This process accepts, if not embraces, the forces of economic globalization, and attempts to find an active presence for the region within the emerging economic global scene. It also accepts the role of the consumer as a main force of economic growth and with

it the culture of mass consumerism. The architecture that subsequently has emerged in the region is more clearly affiliated with these economic developments of openness and globalization than with the social and cultural forces of conservatism.

The list of projects featured in this book does include a few that still look at the past for inspiration. This search into the past involves a number of directions. There is, of course, a direction that churns out eclectic pastiches of the past. This approach unfortunately reveals little understanding of the past, and primarily looks at it as a catalogue of images that may be borrowed, mixed, matched, and mutated at will, as long as they evoke, even if only vaguely, the idea of a certain bygone era. Considering its decreasing number of examples and also its general lack of architectural merit, this direction is not presented in this book.

There are other more valid approaches, however, that borrow motifs from the past. In one approach, the borrowing often is eclectic. The borrowed motifs may belong to different architectural traditions, but are copied in a consciously literal, and also rather restrained, selective, and even academic manner, and are combined to create new arrangements. These different motifs also are brought together into a rather harmonious whole through applying unifying overlays of materials, colors, and scale. An example of this is the King Hussein Mosque in Amman by Egyptian-born British architect Khaled Azzam. Another related approach is evident in some of the more recent work of Jordanian architects Rasem Badran and Wael al-Masri of Dar al-Omran. Al-Masri identifies a search for a “hybrid” architecture that consciously juxtaposes distinctly traditional and modernist elements rather than aiming at forcing a synthesis between the two. This is evident in his combining of traditionally inspired domes, window openings, and arcades along with exposed steel trusses and air-conditioning ducts.

Another common direction, which has been particularly predominant in residential architecture, involves searching for inspiration in the region’s vernacular

architectural traditions. These also lend themselves with relative ease to twentieth-century modernist interpretations because of their unadorned surfaces as well as their clearly articulated masses. Some of the more interesting examples of this design direction were pioneered by Jordanian architects Rasem Badran and Jafar Tukan during the 1970s and early 1980s. The most recent manifestations of this approach are represented in this book in the work of Lebanese architect Simone Kosremelli. These various architectural directions, with their sensitivity to the past, through intent or coincidence, are part of a lineage that may be traced back to the work of Hassan Fathy. In the case of Fathy, however, the primary source of inspiration was the vernacular architecture of the Egyptian countryside. All these traditionally inspired architectural directions still are in circulation in the region. They still have a following, often are architecturally valid, and express considerable architectural skill and talent. They have gone, however, from representing a mainstream architectural status to a minority one.

What has emerged instead in the region is an architecture that clearly situates itself within the boundaries of today’s dominant international architectural vocabularies. It is an architecture that tries to “keep up with the Joneses” on the global level. It no longer seeks to establish an independent regional identity that is rooted in a premodern Islamic past. It instead seeks to find a position within the parameters of a globalized world, in which vocabularies including those of Deconstructivist and High-Tech architecture, as well as reincarnations of the mid-twentieth-century steel and glass block are currently in vogue. One manner in which this architecture has been implanted in the region during this second construction boom is by inviting its primary international performers to build samples of their work there. At the same time, a new generation of local architects has emerged whose members are developing their own versions of an architectural avant-garde that are grounded in local realities. This book presents the work of both groups.

These new architectural developments also may be understood as being more than expressions of a specific contemporary architectural zeitgeist. Let me return here to the subject of economic developments affecting the region. Construction after all is an economic activity, and the construction that has emerged in the region recently is more integrated than before with evolving economic realities. The most prominent expression of this new reality is the highly visible role that the private sector is playing in defining the region's built environment. Those studying the architecture of the first construction boom were presented primarily with two types of projects that deserved investigation. The first included large-scale public infrastructure-related projects such as universities, airports, state mosques, and government buildings. Governments dedicated tremendous resources to those projects. They were presented as symbols of state authority, of achievement, and of sharing some of the bounties of economic growth with the general population. The second type was the smaller-scale private residence. The then new generation of local architects practicing in the region carried out fresh experiments in residential architecture. These two groups of building types, of course, are well and alive today, but they are joined by a third and often dominant group: the commercial real estate development project, which ranges in scale from a single building, to a city neighborhood or district, to even a complete new city.

These real estate projects are often carried out by developers from the private sector, but the larger urban-scale ones usually are implemented through extensive coordination or through partnership between the private and public sectors. Considering the relatively high level of public-sector control over the economy that existed throughout the region before the 1990s, and the legal and economic environments that such control created, the urban-scale projects being realized today would have been difficult if not impossible to conceive then. The economic liberalization that has taken place over the past two decades as well as the combining of resources by both the public

and private sectors (with the private sector usually providing capital, and the public sector providing land as well as capital), has made it possible to develop urban-scale mega-developments at a magnitude simply not known before.

This spread of urban-scale developments is also connected to a new interest in urban issues in the region that began to surface in the 1990s. Since the first construction boom of the 1970s and early 1980s, the cities of the region have grown at dramatic rates in both population and area. This growth has put a tremendous strain on their urban fabrics. These are most readily visible in challenges such as overwhelming levels of urban sprawl, suffocating traffic congestion, and the shortage of open public spaces. These problems are impacting the region's cities in both its affluent and poorer countries. There accordingly has been a growing awareness among architects, decision makers, and city residents in general that the main challenges facing the region's built environment need to be addressed on the macro urban scale rather than merely the micro architectural one. The numerous urban-scale projects that have emerged in the region over the past decade or so are partly an expression of this awareness.

The earliest of these projects is Solidere's ongoing reconstruction of the Central Beirut District, which was initiated in 1994. Since then, many other projects have come into being, such as the Abdali development project in Amman, the expansive King Abdullah Economic City along the Red Sea coast of Saudi Arabia, and the various massive multi-use man-made islands being developed in Bahrain, Dubai, and Qatar.

Architecture as Commodity and the Challenges of Sustainability

As presented above, a good number of the architectural and urban undertakings coming up in the region are commercial real estate development projects, and they may not be fully understood unless examined from this perspective. The available published materials on them support this view. There is no shortage of such published

materials. However, instead of being located primarily in scholarly or professional publications, these materials abound in construction and business magazines as well as in general newspaper and magazine articles. Considerable information also may be found in brochures and websites devoted to these projects. These various printed and digital resources function primarily, or at least partly, as marketing materials intended to promote the developments they present as commodities in search of buyers.

Going through such resources is very instructive. In most cases, there is an emphasis on luxury and on conspicuous consumption, as these developments are aimed at affluent buyers with considerable excess liquidity. Many of the marketing materials are about luxurious apartments, hotel and resort facilities, office space, and shopping malls. These developments are presented as “destinations” that are “world-class,” “state of the art,” “vibrant,” “iconic,” and “cosmopolitan.” As business ventures, the publicity and marketing discourse that has emerged around them emphasizes a positive tone according to which all participants, whether developers, architects, or contractors, are “excited,” “delighted,” and “proud” to be working with each other. Moreover, the architecture of the development and the identity of the architect often function as an integral part of their marketing and branding process. High-profile architects often are brought in for marketing purposes. They help to sell the project he or she is designing in the same manner that the name of a renowned fashion designer sells a line of clothing.

These properties are not intended to be sold only locally. In fact, there often is not enough of a local market to absorb them. They are to be sold regionally and even internationally. Accordingly, there is an emphasis in some of them on their proximity to airports and the ease with which cosmopolitan jet-setters are able to commute between them and the nearby international airport. In this context, it should be noted that tourism development is viewed as the main economic *raison d'être* for many of these projects. This of course applies to

Dubai, which successfully has established itself as a regional and international tourist destination. It also applies to the region's oil-poor but heritage-rich countries outside the Gulf, most of which always have treated tourism, with mixed levels of success and through varying strategies, as an integral segment of their economies. Surprisingly, it now even applies to the oil-rich Gulf countries, where a strong conviction has emerged that tourism will be a major source of income within the next few decades, after oil runs out or alternative energy technologies supplanting oil become commercially feasible. These oil-rich countries therefore have taken on the first steps of promoting themselves as luxury tourist destinations as a means of diversifying their economies.

This raises the question of whether history will repeat itself. Will the region end up with a plethora of white elephants as testimonies for a period of excessive wealth, as was the case with the first construction boom? If so, the difference will be that those white elephants will consist of luxury developments connected to a tourism industry that never fully materialized rather than large-scale institutional public buildings and complexes.

Serious concerns may be raised about the sustainability of many of these projects. This partly relates to energy consumption. The oil-rich countries of the Gulf provide some of the world's highest per capita energy consumption rates. The issue of energy conservation admittedly is increasingly being raised there. One comes across the occasional government directive stipulating that building projects need to be more energy efficient or the now-common declaration by a project architect or client that a given project incorporates sun-shading devices or satisfies a certain international energy-efficiency rating system. On a more serious level, there is an increased interest in developing efficient and comprehensive public transportation systems in cities as diverse as Amman and Dubai. This can help bring down carbon dioxide emissions, save on energy consumption, and encourage the development of more compact urban

fabrics. There even is the \$20 billion Masdar City initiative in Abu Dhabi, which aims at achieving a zero-waste, carbon-neutral urban development where alternative energy sources would be developed and utilized. Whether these efforts will be effective or not remains to be seen. For the time being, however, most of the construction projects coming up in the Gulf (and increasingly in the other countries of the region) are energy-intensive. This is evident in their extensive use of mechanical air-conditioning and elevators, their incorporation of high-water-consuming landscapes, and their almost complete reliance on the automobile to provide access between them and other parts of sprawling cities. With time, we shall find out if these projects will prove to be sustainable when energy reserves dwindle or when the world eventually develops more ecologically friendly built environments and alternative energy resources.

The concerns regarding sustainability are not limited to energy consumption but also include environmental and ecological issues. An important example of this is the large man-made islands being created throughout the Gulf. They involve dredging enormous amounts of sand from beneath the sea. They also disrupt the natural movement of sea currents around them. All this is raising controversy regarding the impact of these projects on marine life in the Gulf.⁷

There also is the important issue of socioeconomic sustainability. Considering the size and ubiquity of these projects, they rely on affluent foreigners buying properties in them, but also require employing a large number of low-paid foreigners to carry out the various tasks needed for their maintenance and upkeep. After all, no locals are available in the affluent countries of the Gulf to take such low-paying jobs. Whether a large supply of these affluent and poor foreigner groups will continue to be available is open to question.

In spite of these various concerns, treating architecture as commodity offers one important advantage for those studying the architecture of the region. It greatly increases the quantity of information available on what is being built. The projects

of the first construction boom either were developed by the public sector or were private residences that naturally would not be widely announced. Many of the projects of this second construction boom, however, are large-scale developments that are intended for sale to consumers, investors, and speculators (real estate speculation is an integral component of any construction boom). To sell these properties, their developers need to market them effectively. Here, the profit-motivated private sector always has been far more effective at marketing an idea or product than any propaganda campaign that government bureaucrats are able to put together. During the previous construction boom, one had to go through piles of newspaper, magazine, and journal articles, of which very little was devoted to the built environment, to come across any information about a single project. Today, a web search for a given project most often will produce a significant amount of data. Of course, much of this data is about prices and square areas, but such quantitative information is a very important part of the marketing process. In fact, that is partly why information about costs and square areas has been included in this book's entries on individual projects. Although much of that information for unbuilt projects or for projects under construction very well may change during the construction process, the numbers provided remain informative. They shed light on the often overwhelming costs as well as expansive size and scale of these real estate development projects.

Consolidation of the Gulf Countries as the Region's Centers of Architectural Production

An important development that characterizes this second construction boom relates to the consolidation of the Gulf countries as the primary centers of architectural production in the region. This applies to both the quantity and variety of construction taking place. The Arabian Peninsula and the Levant feature tremendous urban diversity and a rich architectural heritage. This region is the home of cities of significant historical importance such as Aleppo, Damascus, and

Sana'a. It is the home of some of the world's most venerated religious cities, including Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem. There also is Beirut, which during the 1950s and 1960s was a major and unique international cosmopolitan center. It also was one of the very few cities where the West and the Arab/Islamic worlds actively intersected and interacted on the political, cultural, and economic levels.

As a result of their newly acquired oil wealth, the countries of the Gulf already were emerging during the 1970s as the region's prime centers of economic predominance and also of architectural production. This was accompanied by a relative marginalization of the region's traditional historical centers on the economic, political, and cultural levels. In this, architecture is no exception. Syria, for example, has a very rich architectural and urban heritage that includes examples from both the pre-Islamic and Islamic periods. However, it has had a state-planned economy for a number of decades, and this has limited possibilities for architectural experimentation. This, after all, depends heavily on the availability of a relatively free marketplace with a significant number of both large and small clients and architecture offices. Of course, as the project entries in this book show, such conditions do not prevent the appearance of individual cases expressing serious architectural exploration, but these remain limited in number and in influence. The Palestinian territories have not been able to develop an effective contemporary architectural tradition, as Palestinians have had to deal with the difficult conditions of occupation. Yemen has a small economy and the lowest per capita income in the region. This has restricted any significant architectural experimentation from taking place there. The fact that these different countries have had rich, glorious architectural traditions in the past has not been of much use in helping them overcome current challenges and develop new architectural directions and momentum for the twenty-first century.

Another country from outside the Gulf region, Lebanon, had suffered a grueling civil war from 1975 to 1990 that almost

completely sidelined it as the region's prime tourist destination, and this marginalized its capital city Beirut as a main political, economic, and cultural center as well as the region's undisputed cosmopolitan metropolis. Beirut, however, has managed to pull off an impressive architectural comeback. This comeback has been sustained to a considerable degree in spite of the political turmoil that Lebanon occasionally continues to undergo. Beirut, however, has still to regain the position of predominance it enjoyed before the war.

Jordan is one country from outside the Gulf that has been able to embark on developing a sustained and vibrant architectural tradition that shows a continuous line of evolution dating back to the 1920s, although the rate of development there generally has been slow. The country's architecture, which generally is limited to relatively small structures, has emphasized developing a sense of place through experimenting with traditional and historical forms as well as with modern ones. What the architects of Jordan are able to accomplish, however, remains restricted by the country's economic resources and relatively small size.

It is in the oil-rich Gulf countries where most of the region's construction activity—and with it a considerable amount of architectural experimentation—is taking place. These countries achieved this position or prominence during the first construction boom and, as a result of the recent spectacular rise in oil prices, consolidated it in the second. Shifts within this oil-rich zone, however, also have taken place. During the first construction boom, Saudi Arabia was the Gulf's main architectural laboratory, where local, regional, and international architects actively participated. This time around, the region's undisputed center of architectural activity has been Dubai. In spite of its relatively small size, it also has emerged as the region's unmatched commercial and cosmopolitan center and its main trendsetter. This is not to undermine the architectural production and experimentation taking place in other locations in the Gulf, whether Abu Dhabi, Bahrain,

Kuwait, Qatar, or Saudi Arabia. What has taken place in Dubai, however, is truly phenomenal, not only on the regional level but on the global level as well. In fact, Dubai has emerged as one of the world's prime global cities. The serious financial and economic problems it has undergone after the collapse of oil prices in late 2008 may have significantly slowed down its global ascent, but it is doubtful that they will reverse it.

The Architects, Local and Foreign

An important subject is the identity of the architects participating in the region's second construction boom. As mentioned earlier, a few of the architects and architectural firms that practiced 30 years ago are still active today. Among the best known are Rasem Badran and Jafar Tukan from Jordan. Large international corporate architectural firms, many of which are American, such as Hellmuth, Obata, + Kassabaum (HOK) and Skidmore, Owings and Merrill (SOM), also had a very strong presence and still do. Otherwise, a few high-powered, internationally recognized individual architects such as Kenzo Tange (d. 2005) of Japan, Ricardo Bofill of Spain (who is a co-designer of one of the projects featured in this book), and Robert Venturi of the United States also carried out large-scale designs. A good part of the building activity taking place also was designed by a host of unknown and generally unremarkable architects from different parts of the world.

A number of developments mark today's architectural landscape. For one thing, a new generation of architects from the region with new approaches has successfully established itself. A few of them have even received considerable attention internationally, as with the Lebanese Bernard Khoury and the Jordanian Sahel Al Hiyari. A most remarkable new development has been that just about everyone of today's international "starchitects," a quality often connected to receiving the architectural Pritzker Prize, has carried out design activities in the region. Pritzker Prize winners who have been active in the region include Tadao Ando, Norman Foster, Frank Gehry, Zaha Hadid,

Rem Koolhaas, Thom Mayne, Jean Nouvel, Raphael Moneo, I. M. Pei, and Christian de Portzamparc. The proliferation of works by these acclaimed architects further supports the proposition that the region is trying to position itself within a globalized world rather than being sidelined by it.

An important issue that arises is the level of participation of foreign versus local architects. This differs from country to country. In the countries of the Gulf, with the partial exception of Saudi Arabia, the scene is dominated by foreign architects, whether large international offices, individual architects known for their signature works, and little-known or unknown practitioners. It also is common to find consortiums bringing together local and foreign firms, as with the partnering of Omrania and Associates with the American firm Ellerbe Becket to design the Kingdom Center in Riyadh, or the multinational group of architects that designed the various components of the King Abdul Aziz Historical Center, also in Riyadh. In oil-importing Lebanon and Jordan, there are foreign architects (more so in Lebanon), but the participation of local architects is very active, strong, and clearly felt.

This increasing presence of internationally acclaimed signature architects is a double-edged sword. It does express an increased interest in the quality of architectural design among the region's clients, and it connects the region more effectively with avant-garde architectural developments taking place internationally. However, there also has been too much cheerleading in the international media for signature architects, and their work more often than not has been met with admiration. This definitely is the case in the region, which has been anxious to host them as this is a reflection of integration into a globalized world. What a number of such architects often end up producing under such conditions of celebrity status are half-baked solutions that seem to come out of an assembly-line process. Moreover, they do not give much attention to the specificities of place beyond the

predictable and superficial. Otherwise, they may merely engage in designing mega-scale architectural follies.

The region's serious local architects generally do not enjoy this luxury of riding on a wave of global fame. Moreover, they are intimately engaged in the region for the long term, and a few have gradually and carefully developed solutions that effectively interact with local specificities. In this regard, the work of the new generation of architects, particularly as represented by Sahel Al Hiyari and Hani Imam Hussaini in Jordan and Bernard Khoury in Lebanon, deserves special consideration. It is unabashedly forward-looking, but explores local contemporary practices in the building industry and adapts them to develop new building techniques and forms, as well as new architectural vocabularies.

The Architectural Duality between the Gulf Countries and the Other Countries of the Region

In the same manner that a duality exists between the work of foreign and local architects practicing in the region, a related duality is that between the architecture of the Gulf countries and the region's other countries. As mentioned earlier, the quantity and variety of construction in the Gulf greatly surpasses the quantity and variety taking place outside it. However, there often is a more serious search for establishing a modernist sense of place outside the Gulf, primarily through the efforts of local architects practicing there. However, the region is undergoing the most intensive levels of economic integration in its modern history. Real estate developers, primarily from the Gulf, are functioning throughout the region and employing the services of regional and global architects and planners. In the case of large projects at least, the contrast between the Gulf and the non-Gulf countries is becoming less pronounced. It is in the more private, smaller projects in countries outside the Gulf that the most highly crafted and methodologically inquisitive works are coming up. Since these do not belong to the large-scale real estate development projects being marketed in the

region, they are not widely known and are not widely conveyed. One aim of this book is to shed light on them.

An important challenge that the countries of the oil-rich Gulf face regarding the quality of their current architectural production is that a critical mass of local architectural practitioners has yet to emerge. A partial exception to this is Saudi Arabia, where an active local architectural community of practitioners and academicians has been in the making over the past two decades or so. But that community is not large enough and does not have the necessary specialized human resources to satisfy the demands of the tremendously expanding building activity taking place there. Such a local presence is very important in terms of developing a discourse that observes, assesses, critiques, and consequently influences the architectural evolution of a given country. It also contributes to developing local benchmarks according to which architectural production by both local and foreign architects may be measured. Many decisions relating to architecture in the countries of the oil-rich Gulf instead are made by foreign professionals. This applies not only to the architects designing the projects but also to client representatives. All of them know that their presence in those countries is temporary. Although there are exceptions, such conditions do not foster a sense of long-term architectural commitment or of local professional accountability. As a result, the creation of architecture in some cases is viewed either as a potentially lucrative financial transaction or a chance to indulge in architectural follies that may not be available elsewhere.

In contrast, a critical mass of local architects that makes up an architectural community of practitioners does exist outside the Gulf. This can create an environment of continuous architectural self-assessment. Such a local architectural community will always take on, though at varying levels of consciousness, effectiveness, or competence, at least the role of observer and possibly watchdog that evaluates major works conceived by both foreign and local architects. This creates a level of accountability

that remains largely missing in the Gulf. One downside to such a situation, however, is that it can eliminate architectural openness to the outside world and also experimentation, which generally is prevalent in the Gulf. In addition, a strong local architectural community needs to resist the strong temptation of ending up a pressure group that lobbies against granting commissions to foreign architects. If so, it will slam the door in the face of possibilities for architectural cross-fertilization and instead create an environment of architectural inbreeding.

The Catalogue

This book presents 110 projects that illustrate the architectural and urban development of the Arabian Peninsula and the Levant between 1999 and 2009. The projects are grouped into 14 categories, each introduced by an essay.

Each project is accompanied by an explanatory text and is illustrated by a set of images that includes measured drawings, renderings, and photographs. The following provides a discussion of the geographic and chronological boundaries defining these projects, as well as an elaboration of the thinking process through which those projects have been selected and categorized.

Geographic Boundaries

The countries under consideration in this book are Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, the Palestinian Authority, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, the United Arab Emirates (which includes the seven emirates of Abu Dhabi, Ajman, Dubai, Fujairah, Ras al-Khaimah, Sharjah, and Umm al-Quwain), and Yemen. These countries may be divided into two geographic groups. The first consists of those located in the Arabian Peninsula: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen. All except Yemen are members of the wealthy Gulf Cooperation Council. The second group comprises the countries of the Levant: Jordan, Lebanon, the Palestinian Authority, and Syria. Both groups nonetheless are brought together by a shared

language, Arabic, and by a shared religion, Islam. In spite of these unifying factors, the region also presents considerable diversity and variety. It is the home of significant Christian minorities, which historically have inhabited the Levant. A number of its countries also used to include sizable Jewish populations, but most of them had immigrated as a result of the intense political tensions that emerged following the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948. The majority of Muslims in this region are Sunnis, but it also has a significant Shiite population, which makes up a majority in Bahrain and is the largest religious group in Lebanon. Historically, much of the region was under the rule of the Ottoman Empire from the sixteenth century until its breakup during the 1920s. Following the Ottomans, the British and French stepped in as the new dominant powers, and directly or indirectly they controlled much of the region until the age of independence in the 1940s. Also, these countries form the heart of what generally is identified as the Middle East. Although the geographic definition of the modern Middle East is very elastic, it generally is considered to include the countries mentioned above, in addition to Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Israel, and Turkey.

As part of the Middle East, this region occupies a central location within world geography. It is bordered by a number of main water bodies. These are the Mediterranean and the Red Sea from the west, the Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Aden from the South, and the Gulf of Oman and the Persian Gulf from the east (in the Arab world, the Persian Gulf is referred to as the Arabian Gulf; in this book, it simply is referred to as the Gulf). The three non-Arab Middle Eastern states are Turkey, Iran, and Israel. These countries have had intricate, changing, and closely intertwined relations with the region that have ranged from the friendly to the hostile, but each has its own political, economic, and cultural specificities. Each consequently expresses its own distinct line of architectural development during the modern period that differentiates it from the architecture of the region.

Just to the west of the countries of the region, occupying the northeastern corner of Africa, is Egypt. Like the countries of the region, Egypt is an Arab and Muslim state. It historically has had very intimate relations with the region, and this, of course, has applied to architecture and the built environment. A strong argument in fact may be made that the architectural development of Egypt and the region should be studied together as one geographic category. This definitely applies historically. It is particularly valid for the period extending from the middle of the twentieth century to the 1970s. A significant number of the region's architects practicing at that time were trained in Egypt. Egyptian architects, such as the prolific Sayyid Kurayyim (d. 1999), were extremely active during the 1950s and 1960s. Since the 1970s, however, this close relationship has waned, making it more instructive to investigate the architectural and urban development of Egypt and the region separately.

One reason for this weakening is that a significant number of schools of architecture have emerged in the region since the 1970s. These have made it possible for architects in its countries to be educated locally, thus undermining Egypt's prominence as the area's primary center of architectural education.

Also, Egypt has been facing significant pressures over the past few decades as it attempts to address the needs of its rapidly increasing large population, whose growth is about 1.5 million people a year. This has considerably drained its resources and has prevented it from continuing its historical role of political, economic, and cultural leadership in the area. In contrast, the increasing wealth of the oil-rich Gulf countries has allowed them to emerge as the region's new centers of economic and political influence. As for cultural leadership, no country has been able to claim it since it slipped out of Egypt's hands. Instead, cultural activity in the area has come to be fragmented among its various countries.

Another development that weakened Egypt's position of leadership in the region

is its signing of the 1979 peace treaty with Israel, against the wishes of the countries of the Arab League. This led them to sever ties with Egypt and to expel it from the League. It took a full decade for Egypt to fully restore relations with the Arab world and to regain its seat in the League. During that estrangement, Egypt and the countries of the region followed separate paths, whether political, economic, or cultural. This, of course, also applied to architecture. Although they again are more closely linked today, that period of separation did weaken some of the bonds that historically existed between the two.

Finally, Egypt's large population of about 80 million is comparable to the total population of the countries of the region under consideration. Geographically, it not only is a Middle Eastern Arab country but also an African one through which the Nile flows. Historically, it has had a long autonomous evolution that dates back thousands of years. All this indicates that it would be more informative to treat it as the subject of a separate study rather than including it here.

Iraq ideally should have been included in this study. Not only does it share borders with Syria, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait, but its historical, political, cultural, and economic connections to the region are extremely strong. However, it has suffered from considerable political instability and high levels of violence during the period under consideration. During that decade, it has undergone crippling international sanctions, a violent regime change, and foreign occupation. Such conditions have completely disrupted the active architectural environment that had developed in Iraq and that had placed it at the vanguard of the region's architectural development, particularly between the 1950s and 1970s. In fact, it has not been possible to identify any projects from Iraq from this period that would have allowed for its inclusion in this book. Having said that, it should be emphasized that the architectural connections between Iraq (and Egypt) and the region cannot be denied. As shall be seen, the catalogue's

introductory category essays and project entries acknowledge these connections.

Geographic Distribution of Projects

Serious efforts have been made to evenly distribute the projects featured in this publication across the countries of the region. The uneven levels of architectural activity in each of these countries, however, have meant that the number of featured projects will necessarily differ from one country to the other. As mentioned above, existing political and economic conditions in the Palestinian Authority, Syria, and Yemen limit the number of projects that may be featured from them, especially in relation to their historical cultural wealth.

Although a politically stable and affluent country, Oman has had relatively little architectural experimentation. For better or for worse, the authorities in Oman have established a conscious policy of promoting traditional architectural vocabularies. Although this has resulted in a level of architectural coherence and continuity that is relatively unusual in the region, it also has limited the entry of new architectural trends. This has limited the availability of projects from Oman that can be featured in this publication. This may be changing, however. Regional real estate investment pressures, with their homogenizing cross-border influences, may transform the built environment in Oman and integrate it more effectively with what is taking place in the region's other investment-friendly countries.

At the other extreme, the small city-emirate of Dubai, which has emerged as a major global center of commerce and tourism, has established an exceptional architectural presence. This is evident in the scale of projects being carried out there, whether the world's tallest building or the world's largest man-made islands. It is also where an all-star cast of internationally acclaimed architects have been active over the past few years in forming its built environment. There is so much that took place on the architectural and urban levels in Dubai during the period under consideration, and whatever one's judgment of such

developments may be, they have set the architectural and urban standards that the rest of the region has followed. It therefore should not be surprising that Dubai is well represented in this book. Still, the projects in Dubai do not dominate this publication, and all efforts have been made to ensure that the other countries of the region are also represented.

In spite of the effort at distributing projects as fairly as possible across the region, this book categorizes projects according to function and scale rather than country. This allows for putting forward a new reading of the region's architecture according to which unifying cross-border themes and phenomena are emphasized. It also avoids viewing the region's architectural development in a fragmented manner that treats each of its countries as an autonomous entity that is isolated from what is taking place around it.

Chronological Boundaries

All the projects featured in this book were designed or completed during the first decade of the millennium, with a handful completed in 1999. They are contemporary and present a period of architectural development that has not yet reached its full conclusion. Admittedly, this means that one is not able to enjoy the benefits of hindsight, which allow for a fuller understanding of such projects within their overall physical, architectural, urban, and general cultural contexts. This will need to wait for at least another two to three decades. The emphasis on a contemporary set of projects, however, does serve to provide an immediate snapshot that captures what is taking place at a given moment and also to comment, elaborate on, and explain the region's architectural scene. In other words, this book aims at demonstrating the zeitgeist of a most eventful and consequential moment in the evolution of the built environment in that part of the world. It is within this framework that it should be read.

On a related note, it is very important to keep in mind that a number of the projects featured in this publication are still in the construction or even design phases. They may be modified by the time they are

completed. What eventually will be built in terms of budget, square area, and even certain architectural and planning characteristics may differ from what is presented in this catalogue. Also, for a number of the projects in the design or construction phases, the dates of initiation or completion remain in constant flux. The ongoing drastic vacillation in oil prices and its impact on overall economic conditions in the region only serve to make such a state of flux more pronounced. Still, the intended impacts of these projects, visual or otherwise, remain constant.

It should also be stressed that the period under consideration includes what is more or less a complete construction “boom-bust” cycle. This cycle was initiated by a significant rise in oil prices in 2004, and it came to an end as with the sudden fall in prices in late 2008. A number of projects still in the design phase were postponed or not implemented. Also, construction was significantly slowed down for a number of those being built.

Choice of Projects

Considering that the region has undergone the biggest construction boom in its history during this relatively short period, there is no shortage of projects to cover. What is presented here only provides a small selection of what exists. The challenge is deciding on which projects to choose. A number of factors have shaped the selection process. In addition to attempting to represent the different countries of the region as fairly as possible, an effort also has been made to present both international and local architects in a balanced manner. An effort also has been made to feature completed or near-completed projects. However, it is important to include those on the drawing board or under construction. These present the latest developments in an ongoing process that has been extensively transforming the built environment in the region.

The selection of projects also presents the architectural trends that have established a foothold in the region. The High-Tech vocabularies that are achieving considerable

popularity are present. So are the regionally sensitive, historicist, and vernacularly influenced works that may not be as popular as they were a generation ago. They still provide a valid line of architectural production that is not to be discounted.

The selection of projects also takes into consideration the issue of scale. It aims at treating the built environment in a holistic manner that incorporates both works of architecture and urbanism. What follows therefore presents at one end highly crafted small-scale projects and at the other end projects for urban districts or even new cities. The selection of projects also aims at covering a variety of functions. Although the large-scale projects featured are all mixed-use projects, an effort also has been made to identify a wide range of specifically religious, cultural, academic, and small-scale residential buildings as well as public spaces.

And there is the difficult and subjective issue of selecting what is deemed to be good works of architecture and urbanism. I believe that all the works featured here at least reflect an acceptable level of competence in architectural and urban design. What is even more important than including what I may or may not believe to qualify as competent is presenting projects that clients believe are of high quality. A major selection criterion therefore is to put oneself in the shoes of those commissioning those projects. Some projects selected are ones for which clients have devoted significant resources and have hired what they consider the highest quality talent available to them, whether locally, regionally, or internationally. Many of the projects selected present what the region collectively views as defining works of architecture and urbanism. Admittedly, some of those projects may end up being better remembered for their massive presence or for certain outlandish features than for being high-quality examples of the built environment in its various manifestations. Still, they are very much worth presenting considering the energies and resources that have gone into their making.

It should also be mentioned that in presenting these projects, an important goal is to provide a reasonable amount of information on them and to help position each of them within the overall context of the region's architectural and urban production and development. A main purpose behind the following catalogue accordingly is not so much to critique them as it is to inform the reader about them and to help the reader put together a comprehensive understanding of the mosaic of architectural and urban activity that makes up the built environment in the region. The information provided for each project partly presents an objective description and assessment. It also partially presents each project through the eyes of its designer (and by extension, its client) and allows their concept to be heard.

Finally, the book features a group of extremely well known projects. These have been covered in the popular press, are recognized far beyond those involved in the construction industry, and have emerged as prime visual representatives of their cities and even countries. At the other end of the spectrum are far less known projects. These usually are small and known only within local architectural circles, where they attract considerable interest and excitement.⁸

Categorization of Projects

Categorizing this relatively large number of projects is a challenging task. There are numerous categories according to which the projects may be presented, and the grouping system used will strongly impact how the book's information is communicated to the reader. I have decided to group the projects according to a system based on function and scale rather than according to other possible categories. A category based on countries readily comes to mind, but I have decided against using it. My goal is to present a regional rather than national overview of architectural and urban development. While national specificities definitely are acknowledged, the

book also emphasizes the region's growing interconnectedness.

Grouping the projects according to other categories such as chronology or architect/planner also is not feasible. Chronologically, this book deals with one decade, which is not long enough to accommodate a process of chronological evolution. Moreover, a number of projects featured in the book are currently under construction. Considering their scale and ongoing economic uncertainties, a good portion of them will remain so for years to come. As for grouping the projects according to architect/planner, it is true that one aim of this book is to shed light on the various people and firms, both local and foreign, involved in making the built environment. However, the book's primary emphasis remains on the region rather than on designers.

As with any taxonomic system, one based on function and scale does present challenges. In no way is it clean-cut or unequivocal. For example, a number of projects may fit comfortably under more than one functional category. The Dubai Sports City and the Dubai Motor City both may be placed in the category of "urban-level master plan." However, they have been presented in the category of "sports" to emphasize the growing importance of this category, not only within the context of the built environment but also as income-generating projects on a large scale and as symbols of national pride. In addition, the spectacular urban-level developments taking place in the region, which are at the level of a few city blocks, a city district, or even a whole city, are by definition multiuse. They do not present a specific function but encompass the whole spectrum of activities found within the urban context. The inclusion of these projects necessitated relying on a taxonomic system that features a combination of function and scale rather than only function.

As a result of this categorization, the projects presented here illustrate common functional typologies that include the residential, religious, cultural, and academic,

as well as public spaces. Office and institutional projects, as well as the book's lone industrial building, are grouped together under "workspaces." Other categories presented relate to sports, transportation, and tourism, all of which are receiving increasing attention in the region. They address a variety of pressing factors such as national identity and pride, the rapidly growing importance of the transportation sector, and the search for new national sources of income. There also is a category dedicated to commercial projects. Only three projects are presented here, but this is misleading. The categories that follow, which are grouped according to scale, thus addressing the urban rather than the architectural, include significant commercial facilities. The same applies to tourism. Even though only three projects are presented under this category, many of the multiuse and urban-scale projects featured here include significant tourism-related components.

The categorizing system used features a number of urban-level categories. This is partly to emphasize their significance in the making of the region's built environment. These categories start with high-rise and low-rise multiuse complexes that take up the equivalent of a city neighborhood. The next level includes urban-level master plans, which present new developments or address preexisting urban city cores, each of which takes up the area of a whole city district. The book ends with new cities, some of which are in the planning stage and others are under construction. These increasingly common mega-projects present the most ambitious plans currently taking place regarding the region's built environment.

It also should be noted that the introductory essay that precedes each category discusses its projects collectively and presents them within a wider set of contexts, not only architectural and urban but also social, economic, cultural, and political. While the individual project entries are intended as being more informational than critical,

the introductions present a more critical outlook.

Postscript

The year 2011 has brought with it a tsunami of popular uprisings that have spread across the Arab world, including the Arabian Peninsula and the Levant. Whatever their final outcome, these uprisings clearly will have a transformative effect on every aspect of life in the region, whether political, cultural, or economic. It is also worth noting that they have taken place in the region's cities and have been intimately connected to the spaces and buildings of these cities. Any full understanding of these uprisings accordingly cannot be achieved without a careful examination of the evolution of the region's built environment. The projects featured in this book present the state of that built environment on the eve of these popular uprisings.

Note on Transliteration

For the Arabic names of people and places, I adopted the transliterations used by the relevant architects and clients, since these usually are the most widespread. In a few cases, particularly where these transliterations diverge considerably from common transliteration systems, I have added in parentheses a transliteration that follows a simplified version of the system used by the *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*.

Notes

The status of projects specified as unbuilt or under construction was last updated in December 2009, at the end of the first decade of the new millennium.

1. The countries included in this study are Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, the Palestinian Authority, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

2. See Hassan Fathy, *Architecture for the Poor: An Experiment in Rural Egypt* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973).

3. A clear line of division separating the region's countries follows levels of oil wealth. One group consists of the members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). These include Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. They are commonly referred to as the Gulf countries. They have considerable oil wealth, and those that don't, such as Bahrain and the Emirate of Dubai, are economically heavily integrated with those that do. They consequently enjoy relatively high per capita income levels. Syria and Yemen export oil, but these exports are not sufficient to significantly raise their gross domestic products or per capita incomes. Jordan, Lebanon, and the Palestinian Authority are net importers of oil.

4. See Matthew Brown, "Dancing Skyscrapers Grow along Man-Made Creek in Persian Gulf," *Bloomberg News*, April 3, 2008, http://bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=email_en&refer=muse&sid=aY0dodSvzbzso.

5. Regarding the ubiquity of construction cranes in Dubai and the comparison of construction activity between Dubai and Shanghai, see

the 2007 essay entitled "The Cranes of Dubai" by Stephen S. Roach, chief economist at Morgan Stanley, in Morgan Stanley's online publication, *Global Economic Forum*, <http://morganstanley.com/views/gef/archive/2007/20070223-Fri.html>.

6. See Tom Wolfe, *From Bauhaus to Our House* (New York: Washington Square Press, 1981), 107.

7. The developers of these projects clearly are concerned about such controversy. For example, Dubai's Nakheel has devoted a complete section of its website, which it refers to as "Blue Responsibility," to addressing the environmental impact of its projects. See http://nakheel.com/en/blue_responsibility.

8. It also should be noted that there are a few projects that initially were intended for inclusion in this book, but the clients and architects responsible for them did not wish for some reason to have those projects featured. They therefore would not provide textual or visual information that could only be obtained through them. Other clients and architects did not follow through in terms of providing the needed images or data. The lack of an adequate comprehensive set of information about those projects, particularly visual data, resulted in their exclusion.