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International Norms and Local Design Research: ICSID and the Promotion of Industrial Design in Latin America, 1970-1979

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Abstract: The International Council of Societies of Industrial Design (ICSID) was founded in 1957 to raise the professional status of designers and to establish international standards for the profession. While the organisation expanded to include member societies from developing economies in the 1960s and 1970s, it was predominantly led by Western members, and design mainly promoted as a tool for industrial development, due to ICSID's close collaboration with the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO). Examining ICSID's early promotional activities in developing countries, in particular its first congress in Latin America 'Industrial Design for Human Development', held in 1979 Mexico, this paper appraises the reception of Western design precepts by a circle of Latin American designers and theorists, whose design methodology, which promulgated the primacy of local needs, resources and expertise, paved the way towards a more multifaceted understanding of design within ICSID and beyond.

Keywords: ICSID; Promotion; Latin America; Local/Global

Introduction

The International Council of Societies of Industrial Design was founded in London in 1957 by designers from Europe and the United States, to raise the professional status of designers and to establish international standards for the profession, at a time when a collective need existed for a "greater recognition of [designers'] value to business, commerce and society" (Woodham, 1997, p.175). ICSID's expansion from members from eight countries in 1957 to 37 countries by 1980 included the entry of member societies from developing countries, whose diverse expectations, coupled with the international community's heightened concern for development in the 1970s, resulted in ICSID's growing interest in the contribution of design in the peripheries. The council as such established the Developing Countries Working Group, and through its close collaboration with the United Nations

Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), set out to promote the benefits of industrial design to countries in the course of industrialisation. However, ICSID was primarily governed by Western designers and its alliance with UNIDO, whose agenda aimed at accelerating industrial development on a world basis, led the organisation to promote industrial design as a close ally of science and technology, within a Western narrative of progress.
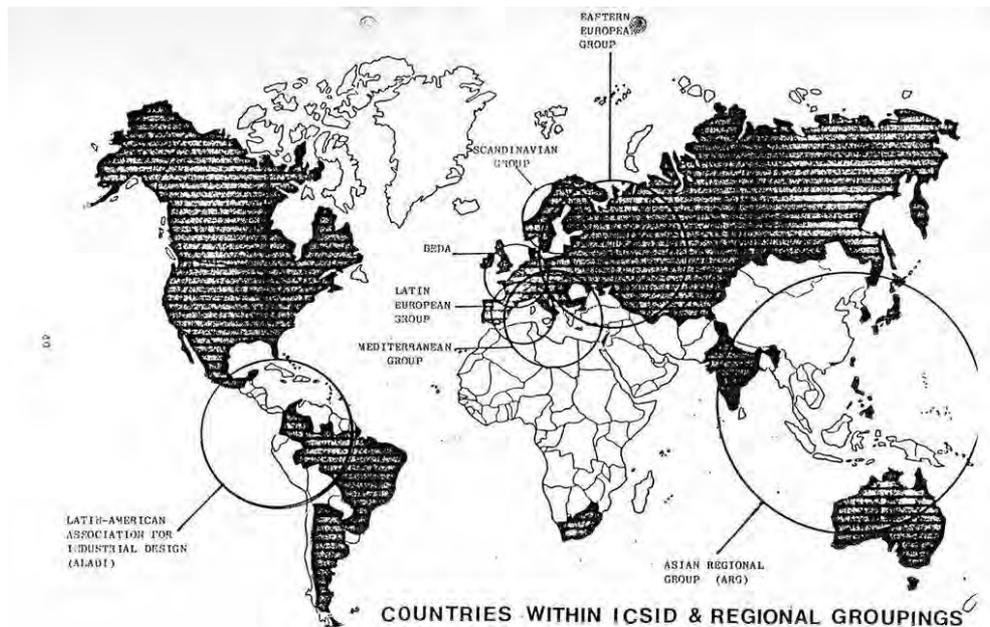

Figure 1   ICSID's membership in 1980, Working Group on the Future and Structure of ICSID, 1981, p.40, ICD/6/10/12, ICSID Archives, University of Brighton Design Archives.

Diverging visions on the contribution of industrial design in developing countries however emerged in the same period, particularly in Latin America, where the profession's Western ethnocentrism and ICSID's vision of developing countries were a source of growing discontent. These critiques culminated during ICSID's first congress held in a developing country, in 1979 Mexico, where a circle of Latin American designers promulgated the need for a design approach answering the diversity and specificities of the Latin American context, in line with local needs, resources and expertise. The group's discontent resulted in the creation of the first Latin American design association, ALADI (Asociación Latinoamericana de Diseño), which alongside the establishment of other regional groupings, led to ICSID's decentralisation in the late 1970s. Thus at a time when debates on regionalism and identity prevailed, ICSID's expansionist endeavour aimed at the "global development of industrial design", as its President Kenji Ekuan expressed in 1977 (Ekuan, p.32, 1977), had reached its limit, and ICSID's survival lay in the fragmentation of its activities. The development of local design research, which countered the dominant design approach, promulgated by industrialised nations, in turn reverberated upon design institutions, through which it played a key role in promoting a multifaceted understanding of the profession.

For Bruce Archer, one of the founders of the discipline of design research, whose systematic approach of the discipline assisted in theorising the practice (Pavitt, p.2012, p.131), design research is a "systematic search for and acquisition of knowledge related to design and design activity" (Archer, 1981, p.47). For the design historian Jonathan Woodham, the study of ICSID on the other hand has "much to offer to historians seeking to research a more comprehensive and inclusive geographical and cultural spread of industrial design activity" (Woodham, 2005, p.263). This paper, through a close examination of the production of ICSID's design precepts and their reception in Latin America, specifically in Mexico, thus posits that the production of design knowledge acted as a key articulation of power in the meeting between developed and developing nations in the 1970s, and that the examination of ICSID's activities in developing countries allows for a better understanding of these dynamics. The production of international design standards indeed assisted ICSID in raising its status, in reinforcing the young profession, and in legitimising its activities in developing countries, a process which took similarly place in the latter. Indeed, while ICSID's design precepts were "translated", and thus actively assimilated in the peripheries, as the design historian Anna Calvera suggests (Calvera, 2005, p.374), this paper argues that the development of new local design methodologies impacted upon ICSID's aims and functioning, where they challenged the supremacy of a design research arising from industrialised nations.

This paper will start by examining how the development discourse produced by international agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) after the Second World War impacted upon ICSID's mission in developing countries, alongside its attempt to establish industrial design as a fully-fledged profession. The mixed reception of ICSID's presence in Latin America will thereafter be treated through an examination of ICSID's congress in Mexico, where the redemptive powers of foreign expertise were both praised and shunned, and ultimately led to the creation of ALADI, which reinforced the position of advocates of independent design research. It must be noted that although terms such as 'Third World', 'Less Developed Countries', and 'Periphery' have been used to designate the area that includes the larger parts of Africa, Latin America, South and South East Asia, and the Middle East (Er, 1994, p.8), as ICSID employed the term 'developing countries', the latter will be used in this paper. This decision arises from the anthropologist Arturo Escobar's vision of terms such as First and Third World, which for him reinforce 'the production of differences, subjectivities, and social orders', ultimately preserving dynamics of colonialism (Escobar, 2011, p.9). The use of ICSID's terminology will thus assist in highlighting the binary understanding ICSID's nurtured towards the peripheries, where the organisation regarded its contribution in the act of assistance.

Development and the Rhetoric of Assistance

Recent scholarship on international non-governmental organisations often presents NGOs under a neo-colonial light, as organisations furthering Western thinking and interests. For the sociologists John Boli and Georges Thomas, NGOs are indeed "transnational bodies

employing limited resources to make rules, set standards and propagate principles […] vis-à-vis states and other actors" (Boli & Thomas, 1997, p.172). Development furthermore offered a key arena in the 20th century for international organisations to "raise their profiles as actors in their own right, build legitimacy and thereby extend their authority" (Frey, Kunkel & Unger, 2014, p.4). As a consequence, the involvement of NGO in developing countries intensified after the Second World, and their discourse, as the historian Kevin O'Sullivan writes, "like colonialism carried [a] familiar subtext: that western agencies were bringers of all that was "modern" and "advanced"" (O'Sullivan, 2014, p.301). For Escobar, this discourse lay in a very western imagining of the Third World, in which

> "poverty became an organising concept [which] brought into existence new discourses and practices that shaped the reality to which they referred. That the essential trait of the Third World was its poverty and that the solution was economic growth and development became self-evident, necessary and universal truths." (Escobar, 2011, p.24)

Such a politic of truth relied on areas in which "the generation, validation and diffusion of development knowledge" was organised, which included professional practices (Escobar, 2011, p.45). Professionalization and development were in fact closely intertwined and together, as Escobar suggests, constituted "an apparatus that organises the production of form and knowledge and the deployment of forms of power", through conferences, consultancy and local implementations (Escobar, 2011, p.46). For Boli, Thomas, Meyer and Ramirez, the development of normative expertise is a central component of professionalization, as experts "develop transnational accounts and models, yielding a self-reinforcing cycle in which rationalization […] institutionalizes professional authority" (Meyer, Boli, Thomas & Ramirez, 1997, p.166). The development of rationalized and universalistic knowledge in turn strengthens a professional discourse as by "turning local and parochial practices into universally applicable principles [it can be] rationally adopted […] and copied by modern entities everywhere", as such securing its perpetuation (Meyer & David Strang, 1993, p.502). At a time when ICSID aimed at becoming the leading international organisation, and design remained a relatively young profession, its promotion of design as a "universal problem-solving activity" (General Assembly Minutes, 1963) was coupled with a rhetoric of assistance, which implied that design knowledge originated from industrialised nations. Indeed, as ICSID's Secretary General, Josine des Cressonières, expressed at an Executive Board meeting in 1970:

> "The only justification of ICSID is to help. We must do it with all the assets and means particular from ICSID which derive from its international status and allow for: A) exchange and information (which we can do better than anyone). B) a channel of assistance of more advanced countries, no longer in need of help (Sweden for instance) towards those who <u>need</u> (sic) it acutely." (Des Cressonières, 1970)

As found in the meeting's minutes, ICSID's Past President Henri Viénot furthermore suggested that as ICSID acted as "a platform favouring comparisons, it could give more assistance to countries where industrial design is least developed" (Viénot, 1970). The

board member André Ricard similarly employed a vocabulary of assistance and emergency, and described ICSID's educational mission using military terms. Indeed for Ricard,

> "It is ICSID's duty and privilege to make people think of what they are doing- we must intensify the reasons, philosophy and direction of their work. In this connection, particular assistance must be brought to countries where industrial design is in course of development. These people badly need contacts, they need to discuss and communicate. We should send "ICSID commandos" [sic] where they are most needed, organise seminars and small regional meetings in between congresses, especially in developing countries." (Ricard, 1970)

The council in turn rapidly set out to assist developing countries by subsequently establishing the Developing Countries Working Group to produce events, exhibitions and publications promoting the benefits of industrial design in developing countries, as well as with establishing closer ties with UNIDO. While a shift from 'good design' to 'scientific operationalism' had taken place in ICSID under Tomas Maldonado's presidency in the late 1960s, which favoured the close collaboration between designers and industry, mixed opinions towards a design model adapted to developing countries existed within the organisation. For Gui Bonsiepe, while industrial design ought to act as an instrument for industrial development, it was not to be developed for the peripheries but rather in and by the peripheries, which for him constituted the only path towards the regions' technological independence (Bonsiepe, 1976). Spearheaded by Victor Papanek, a second group privileged the sociocultural needs of developing countries, in stark contrast with the "high-tech bias of design expansionism felt to be desirable by some in ICSID" as Papanek recalled a few years later (Papanek, 1983, p.46). Indeed while Bonsiepe located the liberation of developing countries in indigenous technology, Papanek's condemnation of the West's mass production, brought him to promulgate the development of designs answering the real needs of men and women, in harmony with local resources, in a primarily grass-root approach (Papanek, 1972). ICSID's close collaboration with UNIDO, which culminated in the signing of the Ahmedabad Declaration in 1979 towards design promotion in developing countries, however led the council to present design as an ally of industrial development. For UNIDO, whose 1975 Lima Declaration aimed at increasing industrial output in developing countries from 7% to 25% by 2000 (Osmańczyk, 2003, p.1325), the "historical role" of the designer lay in his capacity to apply "design creativeness to increase production" in developing countries (Kayalar, 1977). Thus the experts dispatched to developing countries by ICSID and UNIDO in the 1970s introduced methods to rationalise and increase the production of goods, with the ultimate aim for these to enter international markets (Soloviev, UNIDO-ICSID Meeting, 1979, p.21). As seen below, this rhetoric of growth was countered by a group of designers during ICSID's congress in Mexico, whose design method, by turning its gaze to the local with the aim to answer ethnic specificities, offered an alternative path to capitalist growth. However, as seen below, for the committee charged

with organising ICSID's first congress in Latin America, foreign expertise constituted the cornerstone of a successful design implementation.

'Industrial Design and Human Development'

Many reasons prompted Mexico to be selected as the host of ICSID's 1979 congress. To begin with, the country could boast an active design scene, ranging from two design organisations, the College of Industrial and Graphic Designers of Mexico (CODIGRAM) and the Technical Political National Institute, a national Design Centre, and thirteen design programmes (Mullin, 1978). These developments were followed closely by ICSID and were well regarded upon, such as by its Secretary General Yoshio Nishimoto, for whom "watching the young designers of Mexico is like watching the latent energy of an unerupted [sic] volcano. There is a future in design in this country" (Nishimoto, 1979). Mexico was also a good location as it bore similar traits to the Indian context, which was to come under scrutiny during the Ahmedabad Declaration. The country similarly faced the need to spur collaboration between manufacture and industrial production as 75% of Mexican products remained hand-made, and craft was Mexico's second source of income (Novelo, 2003, p.29).

As ICSID's president, Yuri Soloviev, shared in the event's opening address, holding the congress in Mexico represented a decisive step for the organisation and "a new step in the history of industrial design in developing countries, [in which] the unity of industrial design experience and national cultural traditions become a very important factor for further success". ICSID's president subsequently informed the audience that:

> "at present it is possible to use design much more efficiently. This is due to the new level of technological basis, provided by modern scientific and technological revolutions [of which] it is particularly important that countries with growing economies can profit" (Soloviev, 1979).

As such, while the cultural heritage of developing countries was to be preserved, industrial design could only be implemented through the import of scientific and technological innovation modelled in developed countries.

The congress' organising committee was headed by the president of the Technical Political National Institute, Alejandro Lazo Margáin, under the supervision of the architect Pedro Ramírez Vázquez. Both men had close ties with the Mexican government as Margáin's father, the architect Carlos Lazo was the recipient of numerous national commissions and his godfather was the minister of Tourism and past president, Miguel Alemán Valdés. The Instituto had acted as a political party and lobby group for industrial and graphic design since 1973, whose main aim was to create social designs through means of technical and industrial development, in allegiance to the Partido Revolucionario Institutional, which since 1928 ruled the country (Lazo, undated). Vázquez on the other hand was a central figure in the fields of architecture, whose career included the orchestration of Mexico's image in numerous World Fairs and of the highly mediatised 1968 Olympics (Almeida, 2013). By the time Mexico was to host ICSID's XIth congress, Vázquez had designed the political campaign

of the president José Lopez Portillo, and acted as Minister of Public Settlements and Public Works, underlining his strong ties with the head of state and active role in national policies. The congress thus quickly received support from the President and from the majority of the state secretaries, whilst financial support was granted from Alemán Valdés (Lazo, 1977). The organising committee's close bonds to the party thus secured financial resources, prestigious locations and the inauguration by the President Lopez Portillo, which resulted in the high visibility of the event.

The theme of the congress 'Industrial Design and Human Development' was selected by the organising committee under the supervision of ICSID's Board in 1976 (des Cressonières, 1976). As the designer Claudio Rodriguez, member of the organising committee, stated in interview, the topic was chosen as it resonated with the wider interest in development, and reflected ICSID's humanistic ideals, as such securing a wide attendance to the congress (Rodriguez, personal communication, 7 May, 2015). Incidentally, the topic also answered the Mexican government's agenda, which, while it may have moved closer to the interest of the middle class, was awash with social discourses and programmes aimed at gathering the support of workers and peasants (López, 2010, p.278). This inclination is reflected in the event's promotional materials sent to the press, companies, travel agencies, airlines, and embassies, which displayed a populist aesthetic through hand-drawn images of craftsmen and a logotype inspired from pre-Hispanic Huichol designs.

The sovereignty of foreign design expertise however loomed over the event's preparation and unfolding. To begin with, Margáin and Vázquez publicised the benefits of design and the congress as closely related to the government's extensive industrialisation plans launched in 1976, of which the Alliance for Production plan had constituted the core of Lopez Portillo's presidential campaign (Mirón, Pérez & Fernández del Castillo, 1988, p.35). Margáin indeed presented industrial design as the 'fundamental element for the success of the Alliance for Production plan' to design students in 1979 (Lazo Margáin, 1979), while Vázquez stressed the relation between designers and "all the areas where they can serve the country with proper technology, as is essentially the National Industrial Development Plan" in the paper he presented at the congress (Vázquez, 1979). However, whilst these plans aimed at the country's economic independence, they relied on the import of foreign technology purchased through the revenue of newly discovered oil reserves in Mexico (Small, p.14, 2004). This strategy had existed since Echeverría's presidency between 1970 and 1976, during which a new legislation had been adopted which facilitated the purchase of foreign technology and technology transfer agreements (Haas, 1997, p.238). The government favoured the export of technical products such as transportation equipment and other machinery, capital-intensive methods were thus imported to Mexico (Grayson, 1981, p.106). Indeed, "Mexican elites, bitter over a legacy of U.S. discrimination [saw] in shiny new equipment a sign of the country's technological machismo, while labor-intensive techniques betoken backwardness" (Grayson, 1981, p.107). A joint exhibition promoting the interchange of technology, engineering and research between the United States and Mexico, Techno-Transfer '79, was thus organised and publicised during the event, revealing the

congress' instrumental role in the government's industrial policy (Mexico ICSID Oct '79, black brochure, p.89).

Also of significance, the committee's promotional travels were mostly undertaken in Europe and in North America, where its members prioritised visits to national chambers of commerce and industry and well-established companies such as Philips, Braun, Knoll International and Olivetti, later invited to exhibit their most innovative products at the congress' Exhibition of Technological Innovations (Lazo Margáin, First Preparation Report, 1978). Indeed while the event's social character was addressed by the international student competition which featured projects around the topics of education, health and childhood, objects such as the newly released Mercedes Benz C-111 3 were displayed, which embodied the height of Western technical achievements.

Figure 2   *Pedro Ramírez Vázquez sitting in the Mercedes Benz C-111 3 at the Exhibition of Technical Innovations, 1979, Personal archive of Alejandro Lazo Margáin.*

Finally, although the conference aimed at favouring exchanges between designers from developed and developing countries, the selection of speakers for plenary sessions, undertaken once again under ICSID's supervision, featured a majority of well-established designers from Europe and the United States, with one contribution only from a national of a developing country, by Vázquez himself (Mexico ICSID Oct '79, golden brochure, p.24). This phenomenon was replicated in the panel sessions, in which only four out of 26 coordinators were nationals from developing countries. Of great significance, the American designer Arthur Pulos was appointed to lead the round-table on professional practice (Mexico ICSID Oct '79, golden brochure, p.24), which further implied that design experience remained the monopoly of industrialised nations, and which, by suppressing professional dialogue, positioned designers from developing countries as mere recipients.

Design for Latin America

The large scope of the event however offered a forum for diverse design visions to meet, at a time when wider doubts existed towards the profession's capacity to act beyond a Western-centric perspective and commercial interests (Clarke, 2015, p.3). Critics included the designer Ettore Sottsass, for whom the congress' focus on development was irrational as it promoted the idea that design could surpass the logic of markets to answer the "real needs" of society, while for the designer Oriol Bohigas, developing countries were to avoid the trap of mass-consumption, if a sustainable future was to be achieved (Press Release n°16, 1979). Bonsiepe on the other hand warned against the belief that the centre possessed the "universal magic formulae of industrial design", which prevailed in both developed and developing countries (Bonsiepe, 1976, p.18). This vision was shared by some of the Mexican speakers who attended the event, whose discourses were informed by the Appropriate Technology movement and the Intermediate Technology Development Group, which alongside Alternative or Radical Technology, promulgated the use of second and third rate technology (Madge, 1993, p.153). The concept of appropriate technology, born from 1960s counter-culture, had indeed gathered a wide interest in former colonies since the mid-twentieth century, where the introduction of foreign production systems, grounded in energy-intensive machinery, were regarded as resulting in pollution and unemployment (Oropallo, 2014, p.533). In his paper titled 'The Role of the Industrial Designer in the Framework of a New Productive Structure', the founder of the left-wing National Autonomous Metropolitan University's design programme, Horacio Durán, promoted the teaching of intermediary technology to produce semi-artisanal capital goods, which ultimately could be exported to developing countries in large quantities.

For Durán, who mainly produced furniture using local materials, drawing from traditional Mexican forms, this production was to take primarily place in the rural context, where cheap manpower existed and employment would be secured, as such countering Mexico's lack of advanced technology and exploitation of the country's resources (Press Release n°2, 1979). A more radical proposition was voiced by the head of the university's graphic design programme, Jesús Virchez, for whom the development of national design expertise could only by achieved by limiting the entry of foreign designers in Mexico and through the use of national design curriculums. In his view, the country's widespread lack of self-confidence had resulted in the prejudice of "malinchism" (Mexican term for a preference for all things foreign), which prevented it from developing a design practice beyond 'factors of power and speed' (Press Release n°13, 1979). As seen next, these ideas informed the creation of a regional association by a group of Latin American designers, which beyond favouring collaboration, aimed at circumventing the grip of industrialised countries on Latin American design practice.

The formation of ALADI

A growing disbelief towards ICSID's activities in Latin America had spread amongst a group of designers from Argentina, Mexico, Uruguay, Peru, Salvador, Brazil in the 1970s, for whom the former did not answer the regions' diverse sociocultural and economic conditions. Many of them met during ICSID's first Interdesign workshop in Latin America in 1978, titled 'Alternative Energy Sources: Wind and Solar Energy for Use in Rural Areas in Mexico', where the creation of the Asociación Latinoamericana de Diseño, the Latin American Association of Industrial Designers (ALADI) was discussed. Its future members indeed regarded the workshop as ill fitted for communities where acute poverty and lacks of expertise prevented the installation of alternative technology, which furthermore did not reflect the larger Latin American context (Polo, personal communication, 10 June 2015). For ALADI's future president, the Colombian designer Rómulo Polo, the event provided an "utopian or idealistic" solution to such communities, which revealed how "the priorities and approaches of some international forums, did not match the situation of developing countries" (Polo, 1980, p.17). The Argentinian Basilio Uribe, Brazilian José Abramowitz, Polo and Bonsiepe consequently met in Bombay during the Ahmedabad Declaration and together drafted the association's objectives, many of which formed part of its constitution. In their views, the association needed to offer a communication network to Latin American designers, promote industrial design policies to governments (Polo, 1980, p.18) and intensify technical cooperation between developing countries, while acknowledging the specificities of each nation (Buitrago, 2014, p.160).

Members of the group met during the congress in Mexico, and as one of ALADI's founders, the Chilean designer Fernando Shultz stated in interview, the 1979 congress was highly problematic in their views, as it "did not address the Latin American reality in its regional diversity" and assisted ICSID in importing a Western lifestyle, ultimately serving the interests of multinational corporations (Shultz, personal communication, 10 May, 2015).

Figure 3   Photograph of the meeting of ALADI's founders during the Mexico Congress, 1979, Personal archive of Alejandro Lazo Margáin.

Shultz then taught at the Autonomous Metropolican University, where most of the group's representatives in Mexico worked. With colleagues, he had published the book *Against a Dependent Design* (*Contra un Diseño Dependiente*) in 1976, which defended the need for a place-based design methodology, and which included a contribution by the philosopher Enrique Dussel, for whom the liberation from the centre's cultural, military, and economic domination could only be attained by reclaiming the cultural inheritance of developing countries. Indeed for its authors:

> "If we take into account the operational or functional criteria governing technological processes that produce industrial design in the "centre", we discover that these were born from a well-defined cultural and economic context. Take for example the operational criteria of design and of highly developed technology: the scarcity and high price of labour causes these designs to use the maximum of capital and technology, which impacts on scientific research and technical discoveries of the countries from the "centre". This criterion aims to be universal and imposed on the international market. Therefore, accepting this technology […] means implicitly accepting this criteria which, when applied, would fall into contradiction in countries where there is abundant fairly skilled labour to low price. Even if the indiscriminate use of imported technologies would be fruitful, […] the immediate effects being unemployment and social pressures, make it a sufficient reason to dismiss it." (Gutierrez et. al., 1977, p.2)

The text subsequently encouraged designers to make use of local technology, materials, and expertise applied to large and small-scale industry and to craft, and most importantly offered a design methodology titled the 'General Model of Design Process', grounded in an interdisciplinary approach. For its authors, a design problem was indeed to be approached through an initial analysis of factors ranging from the anthropometric to the technological and the social, rather than by the product itself, in order for the artefact to answer the specific needs of the producer, the designer and the users (Rodríguez Morales, 2004, p.36). This method was most certainly applied by the UAM's design students at the aforementioned student exhibition, as reflected in the conception of a didactical appliance aimed for young children, most certainly made out of locally sourced materials (see figure 10).

Figure 4   Display of the UAM Student projects at the International Student Exhibition, 1979, Personal archive of Alejandro Lazo Margáin.

The UAM's 'General Model of Design Process', which counts as one of the few developed in Mexico, remains in use today, as it constitutes the base of the university's design programme (Rodríguez Morales, 2004, p.38), and has since 2009 encouraged the development of Mexico's national design policy (Frías, 2010, p.35). The aspiration of ALADI's members to produce a local design knowledge, challenging the dominant model was in turn reinforced through the organisation, whose impact upon ICSID, paved the way to a more place-based understanding of design.

The congress resulted in the signing of a proposal for the regional design organisation by 98 attendees (Buitrago, 2014, p.160), and epitomised a wider movement within ICSID towards the creation of regional groupings, at a time when wider doubts existed towards the council's centralised structure and capacity to answer local specificities. Regional groupings were indeed formed in Asia and Europe at the time, leading ICSID's Executive Board to face the shortcomings of its universalising mission. It consequently set up the Working Group on the Future and Structure of ICSID in April 1980, which a few months later reported that "the difference of culture, need and orientation of our membership have to be recognised and harnessed, not eliminated and submerged" (Working Group on the Future and Structure of ICSID, 1980). ICSID's Executive Board was in turn urged to distribute responsibilities to member societies and to facilitate regional activities (Working Group on the Future and Structure of ICSID, 1981, p.43), recommendations which were implemented throughout the 1980s (ICSID, 1987). The primacy of locality remains today, as although ICSID's current project 'Renew ICSID' promotes the role of design for a "Better world", it is grounded in "what is happening at a regional level" as its current president, Brandon Gien, announced in February 2015 (Gien, 2015).

Conclusion

To conclude, this paper has shed light on the dissemination and reception of ICSID's design precepts in Latin America, which as it has revealed, were inextricably linked with the rhetoric of assistance produced by NGOS and international agencies in the post-war period. As it has shown, ICSID's understanding of its role in developing countries was heavily affected by these discourses, which led its members to disseminate a design approach grounded in raised industrialisation or inadequate alternatives to assist developing countries to "catch up" with Western standards, to use the term of the design historian Guy Julier (Julier, 1997, p.2). In this context, the production of design research which grappled with local specificities was crucial in countering Western design doctrines in the 1970s, and the creation of ALADI participated in shaping a more cosmopolite design vision within ICSID, which continues to influence contemporary practices. Indeed, the methods developed by ALADI's members participated in challenging the traditional boundaries of the profession along other movements which called for increased "relocalization, decentralization and local cosmopolitanism" (Clarke, 2015, p.3), the approaches of which crystallised in larger institutional formations, as this paper set out to highlight.

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