

THE PAPERS
OF
Paul Engelmann (1861-1965) and Yehuda K. Unger (1907-1989)



[“A True Style: in Memory of Adolf Loos,” by P. Engelmann and Y. Schächter, Tel Aviv, 1946]

The Architectural Heritage Research Center
Department of Architecture and Town Planning
The Technion - Israel Institute of Technology
(Arrangement & Description by Shira Wilkof, October 2016)

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FINDING AID

1 DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY

Creators: Paul Engelmann (1861–1965) and Yehuda K. Unger (1907–1989)

Title: The Papers of Paul Engelmann and Yehuda K. Unger

Dates: ca. 1917–late 1980s [bulk: 1930s–1980s]

Abstract:

The materials in this collection reflect the individual and collective work of two of Adolf Loos' close disciples, Paul Engelmann and Yehuda K. Unger, in connection with promoting his heritage in Palestine and beyond from the 1940s to the 1980s. Holdings include extensive textual documents related to their advocacy work as well as architectural materials concerning collaborations with L. In addition, the collection contains a small quantity of materials related to U.'s and E.'s individual professional careers as architects. Additional collections of Engelmann's papers can be found at the [National Library of Israel](#) and the [Forschungsinstitut Brenner-Archiv, Universität Innsbruck](#).

Subjects:

National Socialism ; Jews -- Germany -- History -- 20th Century ; Jews -- Austria -- Vienna -- History -- 20th century ; Jews -- Czechoslovakia -- History -- 20th century ; Loos, Adolf, 1870-1933 ; Architecture, Modern -- 20th century -- Europe ; Architecture, Modern -- 20th Century -- Philosophy ; Architecture, Modern -- 20th century -- Israel ; Palestine -- Emigration and Immigration -- 20th Century ; Zionism

Languages: German [bulk]; Hebrew; English; Czech

Quantity: 1 Box (21 Files)

Repository: The Architectural Heritage Research Center, Department of Architecture and Town Planning, The Technion – Israel Institute of Technology

2 BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Paul Engelmann

Paul Engelmann (1891-1965) was a Viennese-Israeli architect, designer and philosopher, and one of Loos' closest pupils. Born in Olmütz (today Olomouc in the Czech Republic), in 1909 he began to study architecture at the *Technische Hochschule* Vienna, but he never completed his studies. In Vienna, he became closely associated with Loos and the satirist Karl Kraus, and in 1912, when Loos opened his private school, Engelmann became his first student and later colleague. Loos left an enduring impact on Engelmann, and Loos' spatial philosophy remained

with him for the rest of his life. For health reasons, Engelmann spent World War I at his family house in Olmütz, where he befriended the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, who was stationed there as a soldier.

After the end of the war, between 1918 -1933, Engelmann maintained an active career as an architect in Europe and designed private houses in various cities. This included, inter alia, the Villa Guttmann in Ostrava (1929) and the Villa Gross in Libenitz near Olmütz (1928), as well as 10 buildings in a housing development for Dr. Liebermann in Stanislav (today Ivano-Frankovsk, Ukraine, 1930–1933). In 1925, he was commissioned by Margaret Wittgenstein-Stonborough, Wittgenstein's sister, to design and build a townhouse in Vienna. The resultant project, Haus Wittgenstein (also known as the Stonborough House), was completed in 1928. In effect, the project was a collaboration between him and Ludwig Wittgenstein, who was trained as a mechanical engineer, and it reflected Loos' spatial concepts. Engelmann designed two other houses that followed Loos' design principles: the first was the Vladimir Müller Residence in Olmütz (1926–1928) and the second was for Dr. Yedlin on Mount Carmel, Haifa (1936).

In 1934, Engelmann emigrated to Palestine, where he reduced his architectural work in order to dedicate more time to writing. Between 1935-1955, he designed only four one-family houses, all in Israel. During those years, he also designed furniture for "The Cultivated House" in Tel Aviv, in which capacity he collaborated with Yehuda Unger on several projects. In 1937, the two took part in the Haifa Marketplace Competition, and in 1947, Engelmann designed the interiors of the Jordanian Parliament and the throne hall of King Abdulla in Amman.

As a thinker, Engelmann's writings span a wide range of interests, including Judaism, Zionism, politics, and architecture. Between 1944-1949, he published a series of pamphlets (*Gedanken*) dedicated to the works of his close friends Adolf Loos, Karl Kraus and Ludwig Wittgenstein. In Hebrew, he published in the journal *Prosdor* (to which both Martin Buber and Hugo Bergmann were regular contributors). As well, he left several unpublished manuscripts.

Engelmann was the only member of his nuclear family to survive the Nazi period. From 1934 until his death in 1965, Engelmann lived with his friend, the dramatist Max Zweig (1892–1992), in a modest rental in the attic of a Tel Aviv building.

Yehuda K. Unger

Yehuda (Kurt) Unger (1907–1989) was an Israeli architect and interior designer. A close apprentice of the modernist architect and theorist Adolf Loos, Unger dedicated his professional life to advocating Loos' architectural ideas. Unger was born in Falkenau (today Sokolov) in the Czech Republic to Ludwig and Ludmila and he studied architecture at the Deutsche Technische Hochschule Prague between 1924-1931. Following his meeting with Loos in 1930, during Unger's final year of studies, Unger became Loos' assistant on several design projects, none of which was ultimately realized (among them being their plan for Dr. Fleischner's House in Haifa). At the invitation of Loos in 1931, Unger spent a few months living with Loos, as they worked together on a hotel reconstruction project in the French Riviera. Later that year, Unger

was conscripted into the Czechoslovakian army. In 1935, Unger designed the house of his parents in Falkenau on the Eger. This was the only project which he was able to realize in the spirit of his mentor.



Unger (left) with Loos, Cannes, June 3, 1931 [Warhaftig, 2007]

The following year, in 1936, he fled to London and then, in 1937, to Palestine, where he settled on Mount Carmel in Haifa. Between 1941-1945, he served in the British army. Both of Unger's parents were sent to concentration camps, where they eventually found their death (his father in 1942 in Theresienstadt and his mother in 1944 in Auschwitz-Birkenau).

Unger returned to Haifa after World War II, where he continued to work as an architect and interior designer. For several years, he taught at the school of architecture at the Technion in Haifa, where he tried to promote Loos'

heritage. Unger was a friend of Paul Engelmann, one of Loos' closest pupils, and the two collaborated on various design projects throughout the years, as well as working together on promoting their mentor's ideas within the local architectural community and abroad. Unger passed away in Haifa. A virtually unexplored figure, this collection illuminates his various activities in connection with his lifelong promotion of Loos' heritage as well as his own architectural work.

Further Reading

Warhaftig, Myra. *They Laid the Foundation: Lives and Works of German-Speaking Jewish Architects in Palestine: 1918-1948*. Tübingen/New York, N.Y: Wasmuth, 2007. pp. 356-358 (Unger); 246-249 (Engelmann).

Somavila, Ilse (ed.). *Wittgenstein – Engelmann: Briefe, Begegnungen, Erinnerungen*. Wien/Innsbruck: Haymon, 2006.

Unger, Yehuda Kurt. "Meine Lehre bei Adolf Loos." *Bauwelt* 42 (1981): 1882-1892.

KIT "Architekten im Exil 1933-45" Project: <http://kg.ikb.kit.edu/arch-exil/282.php>

3 SCOPE AND CONTENTS

The collection reflects the life's work of U. and E. in preserving and promoting the legacy of their mentor, Adolf Loos, a pioneer of architectural modernism. While there is no record regarding the receipt of the collection in the archives, the collection seems to have been maintained by Unger, who incorporated Engelmann's papers (d. 1965), while continuing to update and expand the collection until Unger's death in 1989. The original filing system has been mostly kept intact.

The majority of the collection includes documents from two periods. First is the period during 1930s–1940s, reflecting the efforts by Engelmann, Unger and other recent German-speaking émigrés to instill Loos' concepts within the emerging local architectural community. Second is the period from the 1960s onwards, when Loos was already considered a subject of historiographical inquiry. The documents reveal the active contribution of the two individuals in shaping the historical knowledge about Loos. These materials include manuscripts and published works by both Engelmann and Unger, correspondence with scholars of Loos (mainly by Unger), as well as collected printed matter regarding the growing discourse regarding Loos' legacy, including newspaper clippings, exhibition catalogs and scholarly articles. A relative small quantity of materials is from interwar Europe, and include both architectural materials and printed matter on, and by, Loos.

Note on the marking of files: File titles with consecutive Arabic numbers all belong to one original folder, which was then separated due to its size. Titles written in quotation marks reflect the original file name given by the creators of the collection themselves and were preserved in this way in order to reflect the original intention and manner of organization.

SERIES I: MATERIALS ON ADOLF LOOS' LEGACY

This series contains materials regarding the diverse activities of Engelmann and Unger in promoting Loos' legacy in British Mandate Palestine and later in Israel, from the 1940s through the 1980s. The series includes a collection of essays of and about Loos in Hebrew, "A True Style: in Memory of Adolf Loos," (*Signon Emet: Le-zikhro shel Adolf Loos*) published by Engelmann and Yosef Shechter (Josef Schächter) in Tel Aviv (1946), manuscripts by Engelmann concerning Loos' legacy (1960s) and Kurt Unger's lecture on Loos (1964). Furthermore, the series include a vast correspondence between Unger and scholars of Loos (1960s-1980s) including Reyner Banham, Myra Warhaftig, Yehuda Safran, Elazar Benyoez, A. Opel, Dr. M. Zweig, and an especially robust correspondence with Dietrich Worbs and Karin Carmen Jung.

As well, the series contains architectural materials (sketches, floor plans, sections, perspectives, isometrics and photographs of sites) regarding an unrealized project of Loos for a private house in Haifa (Dr. Fleischner House), which later was adapted by his pupils for a project in Jerusalem. The series contains a collection of various printed matter about Loos, spanning five decades (1930s-1980s), including scholarly work on and by Loos, journal articles, exhibition catalogs, historical newspaper clippings and flyers, as well as copies of Loos' architectural drawings.

SERIES II: PAUL ENGELMANN

This single-folder series contains a handwritten list of projects by Engelmann, first in Europe (1918–1933) and later it was expanded to include projects in Palestine and Israel (1933–1955). As well, the folder includes several photographs and postcards of projects, mainly of interiors.

SERIES III: KURT Y. UNGER

This series contains Unger's materials regarding his public campaign against a building plan in Haifa in the 1970s. His activity included correspondence concerning his filing of a legal objection to the planning committee, as well as public outreach, including his architectural drawing for an alternative proposal and advocacy work. The folder also contains planning and architectural materials regarding other projects in Merkaz Ha'Carmel (Central Carmel).

4 CONTAINER LIST

SERIES I: MATERIALS ON ADOLF LOOS' LEGACY

Subseries I: Manuscripts by Paul Engelmann

<i>Folder</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Date</i>
1	(1946) "סגנון אמת לזכרו של אדולף לוס" "A True Style: in Memory of Adolf Loos" (1946)	1946
2	"Städtebau statt Wirtschaftsplanung" (1963) (1)	1963
3	"Städtebau statt Wirtschaftsplanung" (1963) (2)	n.d.
4	Manuscripts and Correspondence by Engelmann	1960s

Subseries II: Manuscripts by Kurt Y. Unger

<i>Folder</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Date</i>
5	Lecture on Loos	1964

Subseries III: Correspondence on Loos' Legacy

<i>Folder</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Date</i>
6	"Löcker Verlag Wien"	1980s
7	Correspondence of Unger with Loos' Scholars (arranged alphabetically) (1)	1960s-1980s
8	Correspondence of Unger with Loos' Scholars (arranged alphabetically) (2)	1960s-1980s
9	Correspondence of Unger with D. Worbs and K. Jung (1)	1970s-1980s
10	Correspondence of Unger with D. Worbs and K. Jung (2)	1970s-1980s

Subseries IV: Projects in Palestine by Loos and his Pupils

<i>Folder</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Date</i>
12	Dr. Fleischner House (2)	1930s-1940s

Subseries V: Collected Material on Loos--manuscripts, printed matter and architectural drawings

<i>Folder</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Date</i>
13	"Nah und Fern: Das 'Chicago Tribune'-Projekt 1922 von Adolf Loos"	1985
14	"Loos Dokumente" (1)	1930s-1980s
15	"Loos Dokumente" (2)	1930s-1980s
16	"Loos Dokumente" (3)	1930s-1980s
17	"Loos Dokumente" (4)	1930s-1980s
18	Miscellaneous	1930s-1980s

SERIES II: PAUL ENGELMANN'S ARCHITECTURAL PROJECTS

<i>Folder</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Date</i>
19	"Architectural Works 1917-1934"	1917-1955

SERIES III: YEHUDA K. UNGER'S PLANNING OBJECTIONS

<i>Folder</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Date</i>
20	Objections to projects in Central Carmel (1)	1970s
21	Objections to projects in Central Carmel (2)	1970s