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## Crossing Geographies

### Introduction

Migrants and migrations played an integral role in the global diffusion of Modernism between World War I and World War II. They were crucial for the emergence of diverse contemporary modernist tendencies in architecture, urban planning and design alike, in the transfer of knowledge and ideas, as well as in the creation of international professional networks. This was also the case of pioneer women architects whose lives and practices are discussed in this sub-topic “Crossing Geographies”.

Caterina Verdickt, in “How a Young Girl Went to Wales during the Great War, to Become the Leading Lady at ‘La Cambre’ Institut Supérieur des Arts décoratifs in Brussels”, presents the case of Marie and Elisabeth De Saedeleer, the elder daughters of Belgian artist Valerius De Saedeleer, who became accomplished and successful at weaving, binding and tapestry while they were living and working in Wales. She examines the causes of emigration of Belgian artists’ to Wales shortly after the outbreak of WWI and sheds insights into Elisabeth’s professional activity after her return to Belgium.

Veronica Bremer, in “Dahl Collings (1909–1988) and Her Itinerary: Australia, England, and Back”, traces Australian artist and designer Dahl Collings’, overseas experiences in London. Bremer focuses on Collings’ collaboration with Laszlo Moholy-Nagy on the interior design and presentation of the Simpson’s Department Store in Piccadilly, as well as on her contribution to the development of Australian Modernism.

In “‘Creating order amid chaos’: Architect Lotte Beese in the Soviet Union, 1932–35”, Hanneke Oosterhof reconstructs the working experience of German urban planner and architect Lotte Stam-Beese’s in the Soviet Union between 1932 and 1935. Oosterhof takes into account Stam-Beese’s recollections of the period and compares it with architectural historians’ understanding of the work of western architects, who were active in the Soviet Union.

This selection of case studies demonstrates how living abroad provided women architects with new professional opportunities for developing their skills and expanding horizons. Their contacts with internationally famous architects played an important role in their training and also influenced the diffusion of modernist ideas about architecture, urban planning and design in their home countries.