

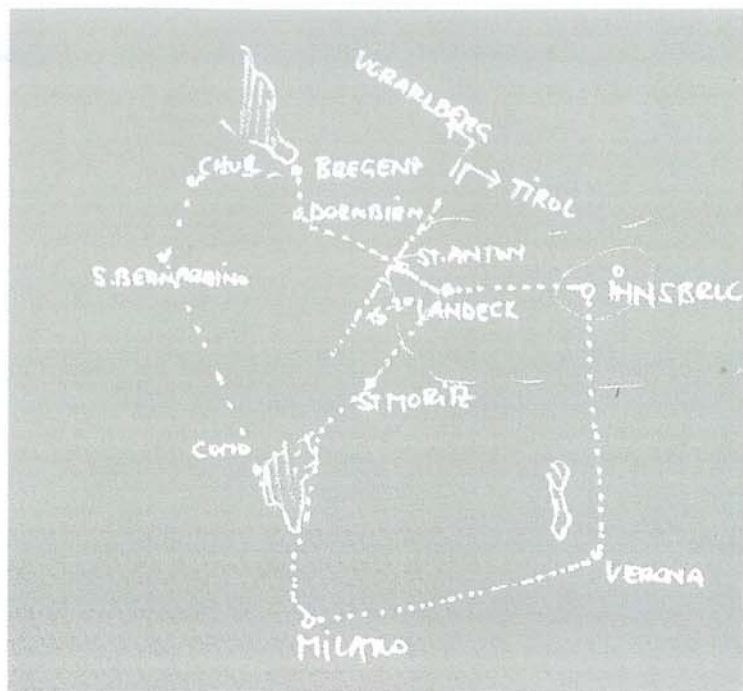
Architecture in the Tyrol is no longer Tyrolean. In the imagination of travellers, the Tyrol, a favoured holiday destination nestling under Alpine peaks, has always seemed a naturalistic Arcadia in the heart of Europe: a theme park on a regional scale – the soft belly of southern Austria – set in a landscape which, despite the effects of major transport routes and the amenities of a well-developed holiday industry, has remained remarkably true to its traditional indeterminate “Alpine” identity.

The Inn Valley is the backbone of a mostly mountainous region whose peaks form a backdrop to the busy-ness of man-made transformations that have turned a long-established farming economy into a hard-working tourist and industrial district unevenly overlaid on a picturesque landscape of woods and peaks. The money-spinning stereotype of unchanged tradition in fact conceals, being picture-postcard scenery, all the problems of a rural culture that has transformed into a post-industrial one at a pace that has brought to the region the speeded-up of globalisation, the thrust of mushrooming development, and the painful social and urbanistic side effects that inevitably arise when the pressure on the land is so great. The uncontrolled spread of large-scale construction and the intensive exploitation of naturalistic resources have resorted to an improbable “Alpine style” as a bulwark against the technological brutality of mindless construction, creating for architects the double bind of innovation without concepts and tradition without feelings.

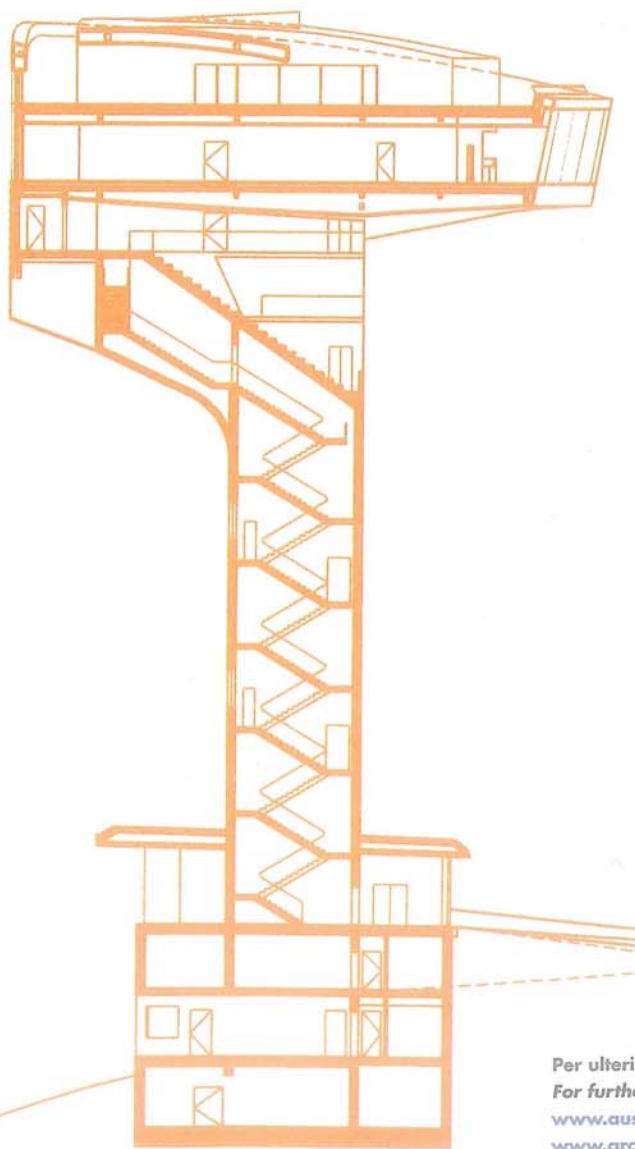
For a region tormented by history attacks to the integrity of its identity, all this is quite sufficient to turn what is a usually just a nagging thought in all Western countries into more persistent and painful reflection on the need to integrate past and future in the here and now. It is certainly no accident that this is precisely the theme that has dominated the working agendas of the more recent of Tyrolean architects who since the 1980s have been shaped by the training they shared at Innsbruck University, and since 1994 by the dialectical focus of the *Architekturforum*. The sense of belonging to an architectural community has helped to animate a lively and unconventional artistic scene that is doing away with hackneyed images of felt and lederhosen.

Bearing silent witness to these architects’ refusal to resign themselves seeing the Tyrol turned into a theme park, their schools, houses, housing estates, supermarkets, shopping malls, shops, hotels and sport facilities, though designed differently by different architects, share the same critical view of landscape and countryside. Shunning any suggestion of the conspicuous gesture, they put typologies and technologies to the test by fitting buildings into the sumptuously baroque streets of Innsbruck and the clotted medieval spaces of Hall, or siting them strategically at transport intersections, as if trying to weld them to the continuous backdrop of mountain peaks.

This is an “unfamiliar image”, according to Roger Riewe in *Architektur Aktuell*: a Tyrol outside the Tyrol that is winning minds (if not hearts) by distancing and subtracting itself from the more familiar Tyrol everyone is used to. And yet, the new Tyrol is still keeping faith with a civil notion of construction, comfort and dignity linked to a lifestyle culture that is taking great pains to interpret the modern scenario in locally appropriate terms. F.I.



Peter Lorenz, schizzo/sketch.



Zaha Hadid, trampolino per il salto con gli sci (sezione), Innsbruck/Zaha Hadid, ski jump (cross-section), Innsbruck.

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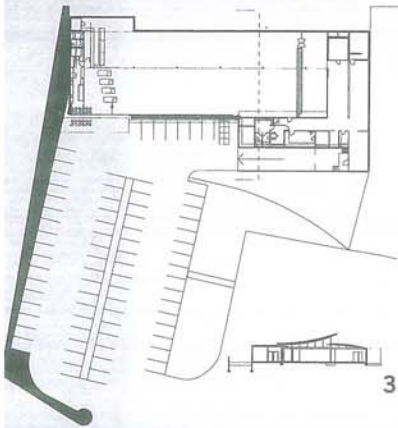
to Karl Heinz



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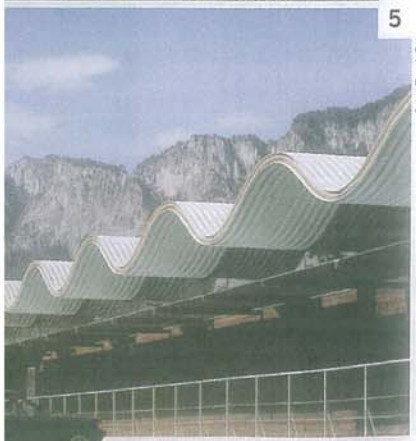


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foto Paul Ott



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MPreis: un fenomeno commerciale su basi umanistiche

M.G.Z. "Hansjörg Mölk [direttore della società dei supermarket MPreis] è un committente colto che affronta il tema del commercio con approccio profondamente umanistico, che pone il cliente e il desiderio di farlo sentire bene al centro di qualsiasi operazione. E, visto che i prodotti in vendita sono gli stessi degli altri supermercati, l'atmosfera accogliente, il parcheggio interno e il bar sono elementi che fanno la differenza". In poche parole Peter Lorenz spiega il successo (in continua ascesa) del marchio MPreis, che ha alle spalle una storia familiare tutta tirolese. Era il 1933 quando Therese Mölk prometteva alle casalinghe di lavorare per il loro interesse e apriva i suoi negozi alimentari; negozi che negli anni Settanta sono stati trasformati nella catena di supermercati MPreis (dove la M sta per Mölk), ora diretta da Hansjörg Mölk con il cugino Anton. Una catena che capillarmente puntegge l'intero territorio del Tirolo (e in tempi brevi potrebbe leggermente "sconfinare") con edifici che, spesso richiesti dagli stessi clienti, raggiungono (nel rispetto dei regolamenti urbanistici) la superficie massima di mq 500 nei centri con meno di 10.000 abitanti e di mq 800 in quelli più grandi. Poiché "i supermercati sono frequentati più spesso di altri luoghi pubblici e non si può quindi restare indifferenti alla qualità degli spazi", dall'inizio degli anni Novanta i Mölk - convinti dall'architetto Heinz Planatscher che ha dimostrato come buoni progettisti avrebbero loro permesso di realizzare con gli stessi costi e in tempi brevi edifici più funzionali e apprezzati dal pubblico - si sono connotati come la piattaforma di lancio per i giovani architetti austriaci coinvolti nell'innovazione tipologica. Ne risulta un sorprendente panorama che, rifiutando la ripetitività dell'immagine dei supermercati, ha portato a sottolineare la qualità della nuova architettura tirolese. Una strada che si è rivelata vincente.

MPreis: humanistic business success. "Hansjörg Mölk [director of the MPreis supermarket company] is a cultured client with a profoundly humanistic approach to commerce. He places customers and wanting to make them feel good at the centre of everything he does. And seeing that the products on sale in his supermarkets are the same as those on sale in others, a welcoming atmosphere, an indoor car park and a bar are what make the difference". It doesn't take Peter Lorenz long to account for the (ever-increasing) success of the MPreis brand, which has a very Tyrolean family history, dating from 1933 when Therese Mölk promised local housewives that she would work in their interest and opened her first food shops, which in the 1970s became the MPreis supermarket chain (M stands for Mölk) now run by Hansjörg Mölk with his cousin Anton. The chain has stores throughout the Tyrol and may soon start making discreet inroads into neighbouring territories. Sometimes it is the customers themselves who ask for a supermarket to be built. In conformity with local planning regulations, the building have a maximum area of 500 sqm in towns of less than 10,000 inhabitants, and 800 sqm in larger ones. Since "people spend more time in supermarkets than in other public places, so you have to take an interest in the spaces", in the early 1990s the Mölks took the advice of the architect Heinz Planatscher, who had shown that commissioning good designers would enable them to build more functional, customer-friendly buildings at the same cost and in a much shorter time. Thus it was that their supermarkets became a springboard for young Austrian architects involved in designing new building types. The result has been a repertoire of buildings that reject the visual repetitiveness of most supermarkets and draw attention to the quality of new Tyrolean architecture. The success of the initiative shows that the family's decision was the right one.

M.G.Z.

MPreis, Telfs-Puite

Progetto/Architect Peter Lorenz

Collaboratori/Collaborators

K. Leitner, M. Smoly, W. Rzehak, J. Vargas, M. Painer

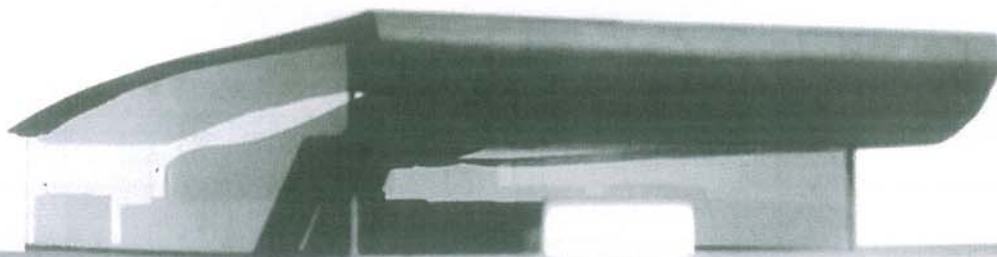


foto Thomas Jantscher

Il progetto del nuovo Super-M (mq 1000) è il punto di origine di un nuovo sviluppo di Telfs, un quartiere con piano urbanistico dello stesso Lorenz, che realizzerà la chiesa e un blocco residenziale. Il supermercato s'impone per il suo valore di segnale grazie alle grandi superfici vetrate – per proteggere le merci dal sole, il fronte sud ha una doppia pelle di vetro che racchiude una griglia ed è ombreggiato dall'aggetto della copertura – e alla copertura curvilinea ispirata al nodo di Moebius. L'aumento dell'altezza (m 7) rispetto agli altri edifici MPreis ha permesso di realizzare una vetrata panoramica che dall'interno inquadra l'intera montagna, un'area sopralcata per il personale – per la prima volta lasciata completamente a vista – e un mezzanino da adibire a ristorante. La struttura di cemento grigio a vista è antivalanga.

MPreis, Telfs-Puite. The design of the new 1000 sqm Super-M is the starting point for new development in Telfs, a district planned by Lorenz himself who is also to design the church and an apartment block there. The supermarket serves as a landmark because of its large glazed surfaces – to protect goods from direct sunlight, the south front has a double glass skin enclosing a grid and is shaded by the roof overhang – and a curving roof inspired by the Moebius strip. The fact that, at 7 m, it is higher than other MPreis buildings has made possible a huge picture window which from the inside frames the entire mountain, plus a platform area for staff – for once left totally visible – and a mezzanine for use as a restaurant. The raw grey concrete frame of the building is avalanche-resistant.



foto Fulvio Irace

MPreis, Wattens

Progetto/Architect Dominique Perrault/Perrault architecte

Architetto associato/Associate architect RPM Architekten

Collaboratori/Collaborators C. Dieling, R. Lavedag, A. Speicher, A. Aschmann

foto André Morin



foto André Morin

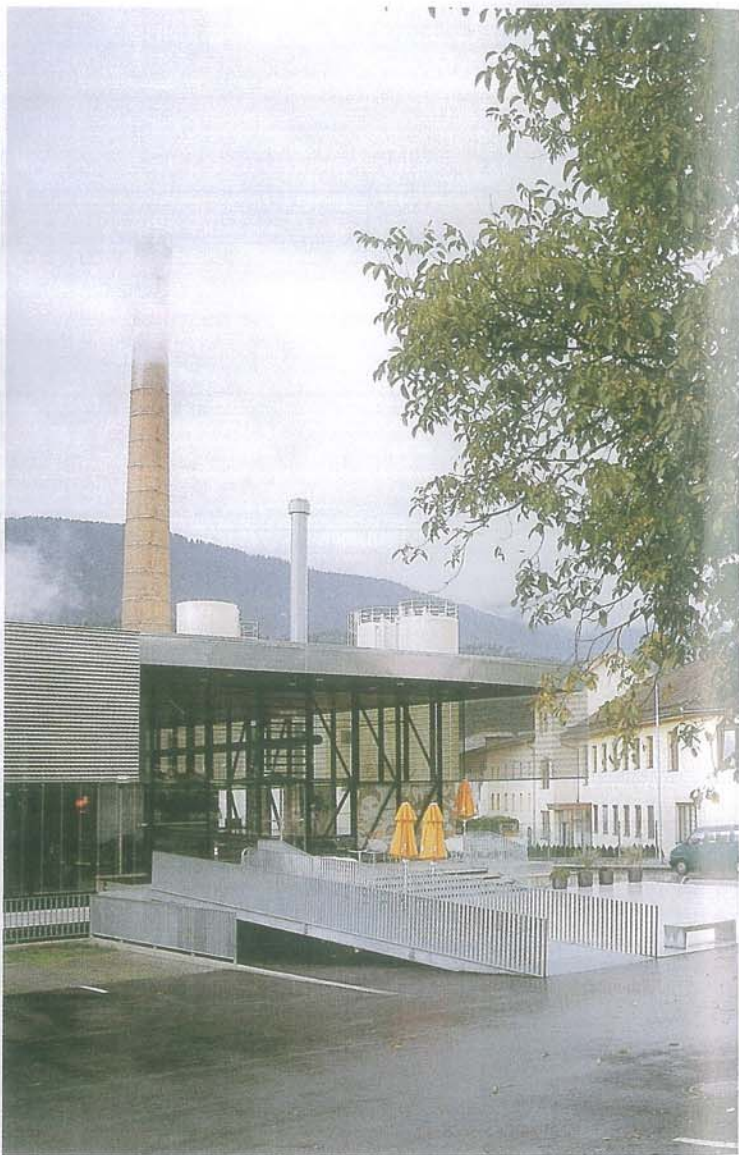


foto Fulvio Irace

Il secondo supermercato progettato a Wattens dall'architetto francese gli ha fatto ottenere nel 2003 il Premio per l'architettura della Provincia del Tirolo. Esso è parte integrante del progetto di un edificio a uso misto che riunisce anche piccoli negozi e la stazione di polizia; un edificio concepito come un elemento "galleggiante" sul parcheggio sotterraneo (illuminato con luce naturale), accessibile con rampe a inclinazioni diverse e organizzato intorno a un patio alberato. La facciata continua dell'edificio raggiunge la massima trasparenza nel supermercato, dove la griglia metallica che ritma le facciate diventa un filtro solare.

MPreis, Wattens. The French architect's second supermarket in Wattens won him the Tyrol Province's 2003 Architecture Award. It is an integral part of a mixed-purpose building that also accommodates small shops and the police station. The building, which seems to float over its naturally-lighted underground car park, is accessed by a variety of ramps with different pitches, and is laid out around a tree-planted patio. Its unbroken façade achieves maximum transparency in the supermarket, where the patterning of the metal grid helps to keep the sun out.