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TROPICAL ARCHITECTURE IN THE MODERN DIASPORA
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Tropical Architecture, South of Cancer in the Modern Diaspora

The cover of this docomomo journal 63, showing the sun path diagram from 12th, Libóro, Angola, 1959, is an homage to Francisco Castro Rodrigues (1926-2015), one of the modern diaspora's architects who believed in a new world. Having Le Corbusier (1887-1965) and modern Brazilian architecture as role models, he struggled for a truly modern architecture, which meant contributing, through urbanism and architecture, to a democratic, healthy, and happy way of living. Through his architecture, he explored the principles of the Modern Movement, combined with local concerns in social, economic, and climatic terms. Besides urbanism and architecture, he organized exhibitions, created an Anthropology Museum, actively published in journals and magazines, was head of radio and cinema clubs, and a Professor at various levels of education, continuously contributing to the cultural evolution of the city of Libóro and its people.

Seven years after our issue on Modern Architecture in Africa, Df 48 (2013), the theme of this docomomo journal 63 is “Tropical Architecture in the Modern Diaspora”, gathering from the Global South, from Australia to Singapore, the thoughts of a range of skilled researchers on this subject, with the aim of updating the discussion to “fill the gaps” identified by Jane Drew (1911-1996), Maxwell Fry (1899-1987) and Otto Königsberger (1928-1999), within a reflexion on its broader diaspora. Getting back to the point of “Tropical architecture,” architecture in the humid tropics is collaboration with nature to establish a new order in which human beings may live in harmony with their surroundings.” As publications at the time concentrated on French and British colonies, to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the Modern Movement diaspora, it is essential to revisit, analyse, and document the important heritage built south of the Tropic of Cancer, where the debate took place and architectural models were reproduced, and in many cases subjected to metamorphoses stemming from their antipodal geography. Notable for the modernity of its social, urban, and architectural programmes, and also its formally and technologically sustained research, the modern architecture of these latitudes below the tropics constitutes a distinctive heritage.

As the editors argue, the "fresh new ideas from the periphery began to question the limited vocabulary of tropical architecture", and this issue presents unexplored examples of groups who settled in different countries—from Thailand, Philippines, Mexico, Indonesia, Hong Kong, Macau, and across the Pearl River Delta, to Angola, Australia, Brazil, India, Congo, and Hawaii. The approach of the architects to the ecology, environment, and culture of the countries below the Tropic of Cancer revealed their ability to adapt to new worlds. This was further demonstrated in their efforts to deal with health problems related to tropical diseases, and their recognition of the importance of traditional and vernacular building in a new context. docomomo journal 63 shows how the cross-fertilisation of subjects generated by tropical architecture combine with echoes of the Modern Diaspora to propose new narratives. Lourdes Cruz’s essay bring us this vision through Kenzo Tange’s (1913-2005) Japanese Embassy in Mexico (1973-1976), developed with Pedro Ramirez Vazquez (1916-2013) and Manuel Rosen Morrison (1926-2018). Settled Sopandi analyses the work of Indonesian architects on tropical climate and environmental design. Jean-Claude Girard presents the fascinating work of Leonor V. Locsin (1905-1991), Penglove Lasus celebrates the 150th anniversary of the Makkasan Train Factory opening in Thailand, as well as the efforts to protect the complex. Moritz Henning, Sally Below, Christian Hilger, and Edward Kogel, report on Encounters with Southeast Asian Modernism against the backdrop of the Bauhaus centenary (1919-2019), celebrated in docomomo journal 61 – Education and Reuse (2019).

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the launching of docomomo journal 63, which was scheduled to be presented during the 16th International docomomo Conference in Tokyo in 2022, has had to be postponed to 2023. In fact, the theme of the Tokyo Conference, “Inheritable Resilience: Sharing Values of Global Modernities”, is clearly linked with the overall concept of South of Cancer and of Tropical Architecture, and formerly outdated ideas of physical isolation and natural ventilation are now re-emerging as more important than air-conditioned spaces, in the context of dealing with COVID 19.

Lastly, docomomo International is grateful to Pedro Gueved and Johannes Widodo who accepted the demanding role of guest editors for this docomomo journal. Thanks to their perseverance, aided with the contribution and commitment of the professionals, scholars and researchers who generously collaborated with their knowledge, it is with great pleasure that we are launching this journal.

Notes
INTRODUCTION

South of Cancer: Modern Architecture’s Tropical Diasporas

BY PEDRO GUEDES AND JOHANNES WIDODO

Over twenty years ago in the shadows of an architectural conference in the USA several of us from outside the American/European axis left early, finding the mainstream presentations and discussions boring, predictable and stuck in the rut of well-worn paths. We were aware that in the wider world genuinely new ideas were emerging, with rich traditions at play, altogether less constrained by self-conscious architectural production. We were keen to find a name for these new approaches emerging across latitudes below the Tropic of Cancer and settled on “South of Cancer” as a suitable catch-all for these diverse tendencies.

Sometime before 2010, Fernando Lara, one of our group of conference dissidents, took a world map and plotted locations of “sentinal buildings” identified in “Global” overviews of architecture. The map was very telling, it showed dense clusters of these buildings in North America, parts of Europe and Japan with the rest of the world mostly untouched, a *tard maghita*, except for small enclaves like Brasilia, Chandigarh and Sydney’s Opera House. Things have changed since then but the vast majority of buildings and architects providing benchmarks and canonical exemplars remain on their lofty perches supported by well-known, unchallenged narratives that easily blend into tables.

We felt that we needed to bring attention to the unnoticed architectures developing in the blank, uncharted areas of this “Global” map. Consequently, in Australia, during our Antipodean summer of December 2019, some of us at the University of Queensland in Brisbane, decided to host the 7th conference of the International Network of Tropical Architecture (INTA), inviting participants from many tropical and subtropical countries in Asia, Africa, and the Americas. Our debates and discussions ranged across a broad spectrum of issues informed by markedly different local experience and visions for diverse futures.

For this issue of docomomo Journal we invited contributions with a focus on the architecture of warm countries during pivotal periods in the 20th century. We felt that this less-trodden area of discourse and scholarship might question what was already “known” and that these contributions from outside the mainstream might provide new and unique solutions for a global architectural culture. A small start perhaps to our lofty ambitions.

Our many discussions circled around aspects of modernism and its diaspora across cultural boundaries. Modernism was not developed in a vacuum but evolved through sustained development of its ideas along a historical timeline. We agreed that our broad umbrella would cover the ideals of Modern architecture disseminated to remote places by displaced yet talented individuals bringing with them fresh ideas. Often these were Europeans exiled for their beliefs, their race or as victims of conflict who interacted with local architects keen to make their cultures resonate with present change and future difference.

Far from metropolitan centers, these semi-autonomous manifestations of modernism could be seen as another form of displacement not only of individuals but also of ideas and emphasis. However, instead of repeating the limited, orthodox vocabulary of European modernist architecture in its pre-war and post-war reconstruction periods, new vigorous strains of modern architecture were emerging overseas transcending the “modernist transplant” by becoming autonomous modernisms rooted in different cultures.

The truth of the matter may now be very different, with the peripheries of any such center contributing to its revitalization. New ideas with less circumscribed expectations are being forged in these environments. Perhaps the real future of our planet is being made not in collapsing post-industrial rust belts but in the rapidly urbanizing warmer countries with unchecked population growth and the explosive dynamism of Asian industry.

In commissioning the essays for this issue of docomomo International we focused on architectural themes from that “periphery.” We made our selection based on historical accounts and speculations spanning from about the late 1920s to the 1970s when architectural ideas, developed in times of uncertainty and rapid change, hoped to improve life in the tropics.

In his paper Pedro Guedes chooses examples that fall outside any narrow definition of modernity, bringing together two themes often intertwined in the diasporas of modernism. In combining the celebration of local identity with tempering of the sun’s heat architectures evolved that resonated with local culture, fully adapted to harsh physical environment. Other, very different examples, demonstrate how European colonial architects and engineers saw the tropics as environments that only needed their “advanced” technical solutions.
Margarida Quinta's essay studies the role of climate research in Angola, focusing on the post World War II period when the main climate types of the country were characterized based on empirical data. The study tracks the development of this research and the individuals involved in setting up institutions, educating technical personnel and producing publications, arguing that this work was contemporaneous with that of well-known English language authors. The work and influence of Vasco Vieira da Costa (1911-1983) in setting up the Engineering Laboratory of Angola (L.E.A.) and Henrique Novais Ferreira (1922-2016) in building research are highlighted.

Vandana Baweja tracks Otto Königsberger's serial relocations and multifaceted career across several continents and disciplines. From Germany to Egypt and Switzerland, he then became the chief architect of Mysoor, India. There his work expressed a commitment to modernism alongside his adaptations to local expectations and the use of local building techniques. After an ill-fated mass housing project in Indi, Otto Königsberger went to London to undertake several consultancies and founded the Architectural Association's (AA) School of Tropical Architecture training architects and planners for nations emerging from their colonial pasts.

Tom Avermaete's essay follows several projects of Michel Focard (1925-1985) working in post-colonial Africa where the architect designed buildings to suit local aspirations and climates. In university projects, new nations sought buildings embodying identity linked to ideas of progress. An approach Focard explored at the University of Yaoundé was for buildings with a firm order of framing elements with all of the more elemental local materials and craftsmanship.

Elizabeth Musgrave's essay looks at architectural responses in tropical Northern Australia, where the sparsely populated warm tropics were perceived as another world separate from the more temperate south of the continent. After World War II, pressures for development combined with the modernist ideas of major architects helped create responses that broke the mold inherited from British colonial paradigms for building in climatically hostile regions. This produced an expanded modernist architectural vocabulary.

Laura McGuire focuses on the domestic interiors of Alfred Preis (1914-1993) who brought his Viennese design sensibilities to Hawai‘i, where he arrived in 1938 soon after graduating and escaping from Nazi-occupied Austria. McGuire traces Preis' blending of Viennese tendencies with the tropical climate's need for openness. He created spatially vibrant and colorful environments suited to the islands he had made his home. Her designs thus became Hawaiian, combining careful attention to natural ventilation and the creation of comfortable environments in harmony with the landscape.

Rui Leão and Charles Law focus on Hong Kong and Macau, former British and Portuguese colonies in the estuary of the Pearl River Delta in China. They study parallel developments in post WW II architecture in these tropical cities, where architects prioritized the deployment of solar control devices such as the base solar and perforated blocks to temper the sun and facilitate cross ventilation to create comfort in hot, humid environments. The authors track local and international influences as well as the educational backgrounds of key architects practicing in these cities.

With the smoke of Australian bushfires still on the horizon, the INTA conference closed in December 2019 and, only a month or so later, our entire world was turned over by the COVID-19 pandemic. All our futures were further threatened and completely unpredictable.

Upon reflection, similar disasters that had changed the lives and careers of the people and places in our essays had also opened up new beginnings and opportunities for them. It is likely that any future for our Anthropocene will be played out South of Cancer for the simple reason predicted by the Swedish/American inventor Captain John Ericsson in Scribner's Monthly of 1879. He did not foresee the oil age that took us from then to now, but he did imagine an end to our dependence on fossil fuels.

Due consideration (...) cannot fail to convince us that the rapid exhaustion of the European coalfields will soon cause great changes with reference to international relations; in favour of those countries which are in possession of continuous sun power. (...) The time will come when Europe must stop its mills for want of coal. Upper Egypt then, with her inexhaustible sun power, will invite the European manufacturer to remove his machinery and erect his mills on the far bank along the sides of the alluvial plain of the Nile, where an amount of motive power may be obtained many times greater than that now employed by all the manufactories of Europe.¹

Notes

¹ The previous INTA conference took place in Florida soon after Hurricane Maria had ravaged Puerto Rico and, in many parallel ways, we were again in an extreme situation where time was running out, leaving us with ever-narrowing options for equitable or even viable futures.

² As a background for readers of this document, INTA was founded in Singapore in 1964 by academic staff from the Departments of Architecture and Building Sciences at NTU with the aim of establishing a networking platform for international students, academics, and policymakers, so they can collaborate and learn from each other about problems and solutions pertaining to architecture, regional planning, urban design, and building technology in tropical and sub-tropical regions in the tropics.


Pedro Guedes

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Behind the Veils of Modern Tropical Architecture

BY PEDRO GUEDES

While orthodoxy was consolidating its hold on modern architecture in the 1930s, fresh new ideas from the periphery began to widen and question its limiting vocabulary. This study looks at projects emerging before the end of that decade that paralleled the much publicized work of Le Corbusier and Brazilian innovators in developing ideas for bracing the sun in warm climates. The story focuses on a forgotten speech given in Rangoon which enthused about a soon to be forgotten but effective method of solar control and triggered a yearning for architecture widening its scope to engage with attributes of national identity.

At the Rangoon Rotary Club – January 1930

In early January 1930, Basil Ward (1872-1976) addressed the Rotary Club of Rangoon on the subject of “Architecture in Burma”. A New Zealander, recently appointed Managing Partner with Thomas Oliphant Foster (1881-1942), the Burmese Government’s Consulting Architect, he was new to this Asian boom town.

His journey had been circuitous, the young architect worked his passage to England as a seaman in 1924 with Amyas Connell (1921-1982) in search of wider horizons. From London they visited Paris in 1925, where Le Corbusier’s Pavillon de l’Esprit Nouveau fired their enthusiasm for the freshness of the Modern Movement.

Inspired, they set their sights on the highest prizes available in Britain to young architects embarking on their careers. They were both successful with Amyas Connell taking the Rome Scholarship and Basil Ward the Venice traveling scholarship.

The Rotary Club speech, reported in extenso in The New Burma, was an exhortation for a new architecture with quotations from Bruno Taut (1884-1938) and Le Corbusier. Basil Ward made a plea for modern materials, better planning at various scales and an abandonment of “the amazing circulations of Architectural motifs of a dozen dead styles.” The only part of the talk referring to an actual building was one being built under his direction, the New Port Trust Office.

There is a difficult problem in this city, when a facade faces the sun, the verandahs take up much valuable space, they must be eliminated where possible, the life of verandahs or louvres is not long. The New Port Trust Office has a feature which appears to solve the problem admirably. A screen of terra cotta tiles of certain thickness forms a honeycomb pattern as a protection against the sun and monsoon. This was designed to obviate the wasteful veranda space.

The Rangoon audience included the Burmese elite, British expatriates, colonial officials and members of immigrant communities. His lecture had an immediate effect:

U Ba Pe, a leading political figure in colonial Burma, gave a rousing speech in the Burma Legislative Council proposing a design for the new City Hall by a Burmese architect that combined Art Deco modernism with classical Burmese ornamentation. Along with examples from elsewhere, U Ba Pe drew on Ward’s lecture (... to highlight Burmese architecture’s compatibility with modern civic architecture and adapt the argument.)

The City Hall project to which he referred, had been designed by Arthur G. Bray in classically inspired, typically colonial style. It was interrupted by WWII, revived in 1925 and was well on its way to completion by 1930.

All the sections, with the exception of those facing north, have verandahs on both sides (...). No concessions whatever appear to have been made to the native style of architecture; for this is the Classical style (...). The columnar style (...) has proved itself on this occasion to be quite capable of being adapted for the architecture of a tropical climate.

However, U Tin (1892-1972), designer of the much-admired Burmese pavilion at the 1924 Empire Exhibition in London, proceeded to replace Arthur G. Bray’s workaday classical facades with a treatment inspired by the ancient buildings of Pagan. In particular, he adapted traditional tiered mingalaret roof forms to crown the prominent towers of his composition and dispensed with verandahs and colonnades. When completed in 1935, U Tin’s building was acclaimed as a “striking success (...) inaugurating a new era in secular Burmese architecture.”

Basil Ward’s Port Trust Office building, also mentioned in his lecture, was considered important enough to be featured in Country Life under the title “An Architectural Innovation in the Tropics.”
Tropical Building Research: the Angolan Case

BY MARGARIDA QUINTA

This paper investigates how the notion of "tropical architecture" was established in Angola by looking at the local development of scientific knowledge on climate during the 20th century. It focuses on the processes that gave rise to a growing understanding of the geography and climate of the country, namely through the creation of local research institutes.

Between the 1950s and the 1970s, increasingly more climatic data was collected in the country. This data was later combined with studies in building physics, giving rise to original research developed by the local institutions, such as the Public Works Department of Angola (1950s), disseminated this knowledge, eventually influencing not only the design methods of local architects but also the development of specific products in the construction sector. The 1950s became a research and education organization of great relevance in Angola during the 1960s and the 1970s, as well as a symbol of modernity and the quest for scientific knowledge.

The first Western discourses on the climate of Angola emerged in the late 19th century through the records of the expeditions of Portuguese explorers — such as Brite Capelo (1841-1917), Roberto Ivens (1875-1905), and Henrique Carvalho (1843-1909) — who presented early descriptions of adverse weather conditions, putting forward various prejudices and ambiguities regarding the tropical nature of the country. However, the colonialist exoticism of the first reports on the landscape and climate of Angola yielded to a more in-depth understanding of the territory in the mid-20th century. It was only in the aftermath of WWII, and particularly during the Angolan War of Independence (1961-1974), that an effective, analytical, and interpretative knowledge of the various local climates started to emerge.

Recent scholarship has often framed the architecture produced in Angola in the second half of the 20th century as "modern and tropical." Yet "tropical architecture" suggests that the climate responsiveness of a building is one of the main characteristics binding a vast body of work that involves different authors, periods, and territories. Furthermore, the label "tropical", as some authors have argued, suggests that this architectural legacy resulted mostly from a process of Western othersness in regard to local realities.

However, in the Angolan case, local architects and engineers often drove the progressive investigation of the country’s climatic conditions. In fact, the majority of the small group of architects living in Angola in the 1960s and the 1970s shared the same concerns regarding environmental comfort and argued for an architectural practice adapted to local climates. Together with modern methods of construction resulting from new building materials and techniques, architects also demanded that building activity would take specific Angolan conditions into account.

In 1988, the architect José Pinto da Cunha (1921-1988) wrote an article in the magazine Cultura on the housing shortage in Luanda, the city where he was based. Besides addressing his social concerns and drawing attention to the dichotomy between the formal and informal city, the architect argued that a new method for architectural practice should be invented in Angola. He stated that everything needed to be recast, starting with a different legal code and a new way of building adjusted to Angolan conditions:

A new technique, resulting from new materials and construction processes, must respond to a sound body of legislation (...) that allows freedom of design and the possibility of providing the city with technically certain solutions and better architecture. (...) From ventilation and aeration, to sewage systems, to thermal insulation, to standard ceiling heights, to construction systems, etc., everything should be re-established based on new models that could fit Luanda’s tropical character.

At the same time, in the late 1950s, building regulations and technical systems were mostly imported from Portugal, and knowledge of the climatic characteristics of Angola was still just beginning to be gathered. Even if the first meteorological observations had been performed at the Observatory of Luanda in 1879, it was only in 1952 that the Weather Service of Angola was established and became part of the Portuguese Meteorological Service. The first comprehensive reports on the country’s climatic characteristics were then published in 1955 by Fernando Leal and in 1962 by Mario Silva. It was from the climate classifications of Koppen-Geiger (1931-1936)
Otto Königsberger and Global Architectural Histories

BY VANDANA BAWEJA

Otto Königsberger was a German émigré architect who worked as the state architect in princely Mysore in British India in the 1940s. Upon emigration to London in 1951, he subsequently became an educator of Tropical Architecture (1954-1971) at the AA School of Architecture. This paper examines how Otto Königsberger's career can illuminate "global" as a paradigm in Modernist historiography.

Organizations such as docomomo International, GARTC (Global Architectural History Teaching Collaborative), IASTE (International Association for the Study of Traditional Environments), and INATA (International Network of Tropical Architecture) are actively engaged with "global" histories of Modernist architecture and its preservation. How do we theorize global as a paradigm with respect to architectural histories, particularly the history of Modern Architecture? Architectural historians have engaged with global as a paradigm through the histories of "non-western" architecture, a problematic Eurocentric term which defines regions outside Europe and North America with respect to lack of the "West." As a geographic meta-category, "non-western architecture," comprises geographic, political, and cultural categories such as tropical architecture, colonial architecture, Asian architecture, South-Asian architecture, Chinese architecture, Middle Eastern architecture, African architecture, Latin American architecture, and Islamic architecture - each of which have entangled historical, socio-political, and geographic trajectories. With respect to Modernism, it became obvious that "non-western" as a paradigm simply reinforces the diffusionist narrative of Modern architecture, which is founded on the ideological trajectory of modernization and the "non-western" or the formerly colonized, underdeveloped world. Sebastian Conrad in his book, What is Global History? envisages the paradigmatic methods of global history - one, global histories do not exclusively constitute macro-narratives; two, global histories reject political units, such as nation states, as empires; and three, global histories are "inherently relational," that is they are based on the premise that any civilization, Empire or a nation state never develops in isolation; four, global histories eschew the notion of endogenous chronicles and instead rely on narratives of networks of circulation and exchange; five, global historians place emphasis on synchronic events across political territories and ideological divides; and six, global historians recognize that networks of exchange are fluid - that is the networks are constantly transformed in time and space - as their geographic boundaries change with time and shift in centers of power, older networks overlap and intermingle with newer networks. As a paradigm, global architectural histories of Modernism are not bound to a place as a spatial unit of analysis based on political boundaries, such as a nation state. Further, these histories unsever how Europe was entangled in a highly globalized milieu that relied on the colonial mobility of goods, raw materials, people, ideas, and aesthetics - therefore, architectural Modernism emerged in this context ought to be influenced by the cultural encounters with colonial territories and intercolonial networks across Empires. A multilateral flow of ideas and mobility are crucial to understanding the global paradigm in Modernist histories.

Émigré and Immigrant Architects as Agents of Global Narratives of Modernism

As agents of globalization and the mobility of Modernism, émigré and immigrant architects have played a significant role in cross-pollination of ideas, experiments with new forms, emergence of novel idioms and hybrid discourses. Émigré and immigrant architects who moved to the USA such as Walter Gropius (1883-1969), Josef Frank (1885-1957), Mies Van der Rohe (1886-1969), Marcel Breuer (1902-1981), Josef L. Sert (1902-1983), Rudolph Schindler (1887-1953), Richard Neutra (1892-1970), and Julius Posner (1904-1996) are credited with transforming American Modernism. However, the life experiences and transformation of émigré architects such as - Bruno Taut, Bernard Rudofsky (1905-1988), Ernst May (1886-1972), Erich Mendelsohn (1887-1953), and Otto Königsberger - who emigrated numerous times offer a unique lens into how travel, multiple sequential exiles, and sustained culture contact with different societies exposed these architects to the limits and polemics of Modernism and modernization. Bruno Taut initially emigrated from Germany to the Soviet Union.
A facultés
B cité universitaire
C école polytechnique
D centre universitaire sciences de la santé
E sports
Monuments of Country, Climate and Culture: Michel Écochard and the Design of the Postcolonial Tropics

BY TOM AVERMAETE

The French architect and urban designer Écochard was one of the numerous architects that designed buildings and cities for newly independent nations in the post-war era of decolonization. Many of these young nation states were in search for urban and architectural projects that would articulate a “proper” model of modernization that differed from that of the former colonizer. This essay argues that the principles of tropical architecture would play a key role in representing and monumentalizing such an alternative model of modernization.

Although the architecture of the buildings will express modern teaching and scientific requirements, the university will reflect the influence of traditional and local environmental conditions.

These words by French architect and urban designer Écochard, written in 1962 at the occasion of the presentation of his project for the University of Karachi, illustrate the paradoxical condition in which many architectural professionals were working during the post-war era of decolonization. Numerous architects and urban designers started to perform under the flag of “development aid.” Commissioned by national governments or international organizations such as the United Nations, but also in cooperation with the governments of young nation states, they designed buildings, neighborhoods and cities that reflected the local aspirations of modernization.

However, many of the young nation states were explicitly in search for urban and architectural projects that would represent a “proper” model of modernization that differed from that of the colonizer. They were seconded by designers like Écochard, for instance, who argued on the new city of Karachi:

Pakistan being a young State should construct a town that will be in the forefront of progress and take account of the errors made by the West in the beginning of the machine age.

Finding time and time again, an architectural and urban expression for an indigenous idea of modernity would become one of the main challenges for international expert architects and urban designers as Écochard.

Against this background, the knowledge field of tropical architecture, which was originally articulated by architects and urban planners in the French colonial context of the 1930s, would gain a renewed importance in the decolonizing condition of the 1950s and 1960s. Through the insistence of the theories of tropical architecture on the responsiveness to local conditions, the opportunity was offered to be reinterpreted: not as a matter of hygiene or comfort, but rather as the prime expression of local logic and identity. This would also become the case in the work of Écochard who in the late 1950s and the early 1960s practiced simultaneously in such different decolonized contexts as Pakistan, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Congo, Senegal and Cameroon.

Though not heavily theorized, the principles of tropical architecture would become an integral part of Écochard’s urban design approach, which was based on such a parameter as the “direction of wind,” “the provision of shade” and the relation to “topographical conditions.” In the city of Karachi, for instance, Écochard insisted that

In a country where the wind plays such an important part in the comfort of the inhabitants, the right orientation of houses will be the principle factor in the arrangement of the urban district.

In order to deploy this knowledge on tropical architecture within his urban design projects in various countries, Écochard worked with a specific set of tools. He gradually developed a toolbox for urban analysis and intervention that allowed him to mediate between the generalizing character of his transnational practice and the specific tropical properties of the various cities in which he worked.

Diagramming the Local

The first tool that relentlessly appears in Écochard’s practice is the diagram. When arriving in a new context Écochard always drafted diagrammatic representations of the encountered condition. From the late 1940s he developed
"Our Cinderella North"  
The Modern Diaspora's long reach into Australia's tropical zones

BY ELIZABETH MUSGRAVE

Modernism in tropical Australia is testimony to the tenacity and optimism of individuals and communities in the vast "empty north" of the continent, but also reflects a young nation's strategic and commercial need to develop and make visible this region in the years following WWII. As practitioners, academics and public servants, the Modern Diaspora introduced and promoted Modernism as a climate responsive solution to building in the tropics. The result is work that is inventive, frequently of modest material means and expressive of its tropical circumstances.

Emigré architects from Continental Europe were not attracted to settle in the vast, and from a European settler perspective, "empty north" of Australia preferring instead the cosmopolitan cities of Sydney and Melbourne in the southern states. Equally, the tropical north is not where the young nation chose to erect iconic works representative of its emerging identity. It is, however, where to find a Modern architecture often of very modest means, often original in its response to climate and materials scarcity, aesthetically and structurally inventive, it is through commissions from forward thinking individuals and communities and as conduits, advocating for and promoting modern ways of thinking and working that emigre and migrant architects, usually located in cities to the south of the Tropic of Capricorn, impacted architecture in the tropical north.

The first and most notable of these individuals was Karl Langer (1923-2009), the Viennese emigré who arrived in Brisbane, Queensland in 1939, and was pivotal in the development of tropical Modernism. Also important is Ukrainian, Roman Pavlyshyn (1922-2019), who arrived in 1949 and, as Director of the Queensland Department of Public Works, commissioned public works in north Queensland. Most influential is Harry Seidler (1923-2006) who was educated at Harvard by emigré architects from Continental Europe and who after travelling to Australia to design his parents' house decided to stay. The list might also include a number of graduates of Australian programs who left to further their education overseas, and who fell into the orbit of the Modern Diaspora elsewhere. Into this category fits Balwant Singh Sant (1920-), who worked in the office of Le Corbusier in Chandigarh and after returning to Australia made influential contributions as an educator and researcher.

North of the Tropic of Capricorn

Variously referred to in government reports as the "Forgotten North", the "Neglected North" and "Our Cinderella North", tropical Australia comprises a vast area across several state jurisdictions including the northern portions of the states of Queensland and Western Australia and the Northern Territory, and is administered from cities located in the south, north Queensland from Brisbane, north Western Australia from Perth and the Northern Territory, which until 1978 when the powers of self-government were transferred, was administered by bureaucrats located in Canberra. Remoteness and the prioritizing of projects in more populous areas meant that government funding for projects in the north was limited.

The tropical region is not homogeneous in climate or character. In the post-war era, the socially and culturally segregated north was characterized by a higher proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples than southern states, with Pacific Islander workers in Queensland centers, the descendants of the Macassan traders in Darwin and Broome and established Chinese communities throughout. Apart from the Top End of the Northern Territory (Darwin and Katherine) and the Queensland coastline east of the Great Dividing Range, most of tropical Australia is arid and sparsely populated, beset over the period of European colonization by problems of distance and isolation. The most densely settled coastline of Queensland is conditioned by hot humid and warm humid climates, whilst the Top End is a tropical savannah with marked Wet and Dry seasons. Narratives of Australian mid-century tropical architecture overlook the Top End and are illustrated with work located in the narrow strip of Queensland's populated coastline, much is actually located in Brisbane, well south of the Tropic of Capricorn. Narratives also under-represent the
Alfred Preis and Viennese Modernism in Hawai'i

BY LAURA MCGUIRE

Preis, who was a Viennese emigre and refugee architect with no early experience designing for tropical climates, went on to become one of the most prolific mid-century regionalist and modernist Hawai'i designers. Although he is best known for his award-winning design for the USS Arizona Memorial (1962)—one of the ships infamously sunk in the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Preis's earlier institutional and residential commissions are arguably his most compelling.

His Viennese roots directly influenced Preis's approach to design in Hawai'i. By engaging numerous precedents from Vienna, he eventually forged a novel idiom for Hawai'i's domestic design. This article will examine the interiors of two of Preis's more than 100 single-family houses—the Scudder Residence (now the Scudder Gillmor Residence) (1939-1940) and the Dr. Edward and Elsie Hau Residence (1951)—in order to highlight some of the ways in which Preis transported Viennese modern design ideas of the first three decades of the 20th century some 7,616 miles from Austria into the middle of the Pacific Ocean. His interior designs for these houses evidence strong relationships with the ideas of earlier Viennese modernists about spatial planning, the aesthetic uses of materials, furnishings, and color. Perhaps more than any other influence, Preis's Viennese experience culminated in modern architecture that was as sensationally pleasurable as Hawai'i itself.

The Influence of Vienna Modern Design

Alfred Preis (1911-1993) years as a young man in Vienna laid the groundwork for a rich career in Honolulu. The 1910s and 1920s in Vienna were critical years for the development of a particularly Viennese Modernism, which balanced some of the more austere interior designs of the German Modernism with traditional Viennese domestic comfort. Vienna developed its own, indigenous form of modern design that significantly differed from other idioms on the continent. The work of architects like Frank, Adolf Loos (1870-1933), and many others, forged a Wiener Wohnkultur. This was a mitigated modernism that generally rejected the more severe and functionalist form languages prevalent among the German avant-garde, and instead embraced a modernism of domestic comfort and livability.

Some key examples of Wiener Wohnkultur design—typified in expositions like the Vienna Werkbund Housing Exhibition of 1932—were the boldly colored and playful textile designs of Frank and others. Also significant to this idiom was Loos's early invention of the Raumplan—a spatially composed interior architecture of complex spaces with the use of rich materials, bold colors, changes in levels, and processionial sequences that embraced spatial expansion and contraction along with a highly curated series of interior views.

In his recent book, The New Space: Movement and Experience in Viennese Modern Architecture (2016), Christopher Long demonstrates this distinctly Viennese approach to modern design. He argues that 1910s-1930s Vienna modernists explored procession, tactile, and visual interactions with architectural interiors specifically for their experiential effects. Viennese designers like Loos, Frank, Oskar Strnad (1870-1935), and Jacques Gries (1892-1962), for example, composed spaces that were not always strictly "functional." Instead, they created innovative procession paths and interactive moments with features like built-in furnishings, staircases, bold colors, and materials. They achieved interior compositions that purposefully created spatial complexities, such as interior views from multiple levels. Functionally ambiguous twists and turns, and moments of haptic compression and release. There was, indeed, a theatrical quality to Viennese Modernism of this period, in which...
Tropical Modernity: a Hybrid-Construct in South China

BY RUI LEÃO AND CHARLES LAI

Parallel to the discourse of Tropical Architecture and the work of its architects in the British colonial territories in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia at the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries, the use of bricks and other materials, including perforated cement bricks, sun shading screens, courtyards, etc., started to emerge in modernist buildings. This article focuses on the case of Macau and Hong Kong since the 1930s, discussing the development of a new hybrid form of modern architecture that placed emphasis on local identity and culture.

The adoption of Modernism in European Colonial Territories had a multi-layered agenda. From the perspective of the state, it was understood as a method for optimizing the exploitation of these places for more profit. The introduction of the lift, the high-rise, the brise-soleil, the fan, and the air conditioner and other climate control devices throughout the 20th century, were all seen as urgent innovations to boost the economy and the spending up the means of production. To understand the role of architects in spinning the ambivalence of cultural production through architecture, the technological innovations of passive energy are of particular interest to us, such as the brise-soleil, the perforated cement bricks and shading screens, and the use made of these technologies to explore the "vernacular" and "regionalism" to signify both the environmental functionality of a building and express cultural meaning.

In places like Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand, the advent of Modernism and the access to new construction technology led many architects to look back at traditional techniques and environmental control, to develop new approaches to cultural discourses, aiding the upbuilding of identity politics on the post-colonial globalized world. With these projects, these architects were re-accessing their local design culture, and testing how Tropical Architecture could be used to assert regional differences.

In the case of Hong Kong and Macau, the introduction of Modernist architecture didn't give rise to a re-appropriation of the vernacular and proto-tropical traditions, due to the strict colonial and colonial conditions in both places.

In 1958, Hong Kong born, London-trained, Shanghai practiced, migrant architect Luke Him Sau (1924-1991) designed the Saint Joseph's Chapel for the Kowloon Wah Yan College with in-fill screens made of perforated cement bricks as a brise-soleil facade. It synthesizes both Christian symbolism and modern "Chineseness" with the rectilinear geometry of architectural modernism. Rather than defining it as an isolated architectural event, Luke's use of brise-soleil bears certain resemblance to British architects Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew's designs in Ghana since the late 1940s. Their use of perforated cement screens or balustrades as brise-soleil devices was quintessential to Tropical Architecture, an architectural discourse reinforced by the 1933 Tropical Architecture Conference, and the establishment of the Department of Development and Tropical Studies in the 1940s led by Otto Königsberger. Devices of Tropical Architecture such as brise-soleil and perforated cement blocks became a design culture that had made its mark across the entire British Commonwealth from Ghana to Singapore to Hong Kong.

Across the Pearl River Delta, in the same year in Macau, the design for the Rainha Dona Leonor Housing Block (1952) was underway, led by architect José Le (1916-2005), a Hong Kong-trained architect from Macau. The block adopts a modernist vision for dwelling, with a stacking of the duplex typology, the use of brise-soleil, ventilated concrete blocks and naturally ventilated circulation. The 1951 block represents the first intentional effort to signify local modernism relating to the sub-tropical climate of the region and producing a localized cultural artifact to respond to a larger scale modern commission. Le applies to this tower project several of the innovations on solar protection systems from Le Corbusier's research for the Marseille Unité d'Habitation of 1952, adapting it to a more compact urban situation.

Background, Knowledge Gap, and Initial Findings

When examined against the broader framework of the Tropical Architecture discourse, the work of Luke and Le can be seen not only as devices of the function-driven "environmental design", but a branch of modern architecture that...
The Japanese Embassy in Mexico: a Fortunate Association, a Threatened Heritage

BY LOURDES CRUZ

An examination of the architectural value of the Japanese Embassy in Mexico, designed by Kenzo Tange, Pedro Ramírez Vázquez and Manuel Rosen Morrison, which is in danger of being demolished. The context of mid-century Mexican architecture is addressed in order to situate this work within its historic moment, thus confirming its importance. This building was the result of an intellectual encounter between one Japanese and two Mexican architects, who exchanged ideas, concepts and criteria, resulting in a building with an innovative formal design, due to the use of reinforced concrete, and the flexibility of its structural concept, which allowed it to be adapted to different sites. This article is essentially based on the archive of the architect Manuel Rosen Morrison held by the Archive of Mexican Architects at the National Autonomous University of Mexico's Faculty of Architecture.

A brief look at the architectonic environment of mid-century Mexico City

Ever since the fourth decade of the 20th century, the Modern Movement had been patronized by the post-revolutionary Mexican government as a way to project an image of the power and progress that it consolidated following WWII. Mexico presented an image to the world of a prosperous country, full of opportunities that would not come twice.

The rationalism that accompanied this architecture was based on the myth of an orderly, scientific society that admired technology and the machine. In those years, architects believed in a universalist world, in which distances were shrinking and knowledge was expanding through the use of modern means of communication. This explains their convictions regarding the use and adaptation of technological systems and materials that were used abroad.

The global conflicts provoked by WWII were of decisive importance for the Mexican economy, which began to produce products that had previously been imported. Mexico slowly began to develop industrially, which led to the concentration of its population in its major cities. The growth of the cities required housing for all sectors of the population and, therefore, educational, commercial, cultural and recreational infrastructure.

Towards the end of 1962, the foreign press began to discuss the “Mexican miracle,” as the country enjoyed international prestige and an apparent internal stability. The desire to present an image of progress and modernity was manifested in Mexico’s major cities through the use of an architecture in line with the avant-garde of developed countries. Functionalism underwent a transformation and the International Style, which had its first domestic appearance in the 1940s, became practically a construction norm in the 1950s and 1960s in urban areas.

Mexican architecture was internationally renowned, thanks to foreign magazines that showed off the country’s enormous urban architectonic complexes as proof of the government’s achievements. For example, the primary example of this in the field of education, remains to this day, University City (1952-1954), in the field of health, the most outstanding project was the construction of the National Medical Center (1952-1962), led by Enrique Yáñez (1908-1995), in which, like University City and other government buildings, the concern with affirming Mexican nationalism was manifested by the presence of artistic interventions. There were also housing projects of considerable magnitude, such as the residential units designed by Mario Pani (1911-1993) and Alejandro Prieto (1924-1996). Likewise, it is worth mentioning the series of museums designed by Pedro Ramírez Vázquez during the Adolfo López Mateos (1959-1969) administration (1958-1964), which formed an important part of the government’s cultural program, which will be discussed in greater detail below.

The many athletic facilities built in Mexico for the 1968 Summer Olympics were the most important construction projects at the governmental level during the Gustavo Díaz Ordaz (1944-1970) administration (1964-1970), expressing the government’s desire to show off its prosperous economy to the rest of the world. The design of these sports facilities revealed that Mexican architecture had entered another phase, in which certain concessions were made to the Modern Movement in terms of the search for technological innovations and experiments with reinforced concrete. In this sense, Manuel Rosen Morrison's
The Nature of Tropical Architecture in Indonesian Modernism

BY SETIADI SOPANDI

The idea of environmental design - or loosely referred to as "tropical architecture" - is an ever-present but underlying discourse in modern Indonesian architectural history. Despite being tentative and at times, overshadowed by other concurrent issues, the quest for climate-related environmental tropical design is apparent in almost every generation of Indonesian architects.

Too often we come across the two-word phrase "tropical architecture" to conjure up preconceived ideas illustrating a building or a complex of buildings dominated by the presence of the roof, frequently lacking walls, and surrounded by lush tropical gardens and water bodies. The term "tropical" is a synonym in Indonesian architectural history. It potentially addresses the complexity of the tropics - ecologically, environmentally, and culturally - and how it has been interrelated to architectural discourse. The term, despite being omnipresent in every historical period, tends to be only tentatively present in almost every architectural discourse throughout the 20th century.

Architects and engineers (as well as scientists) throughout the 20th century have been occupied with the prospect that architectural design and building mechanical services might help people to deal with undesirable climatic conditions, not only to overcome discomfort but also to provide better protection against growing unsanitary, pollution-infected, and hazardous environments. Architecture, it seemed, swung from an artistic discipline towards a scientific and technological domain. In the light of technological development in architecture, a fellow architect-researcher, Lai Cher Kien, suggests, in the working paper that he wrote in 2002 entitled "Tropical Tropics", that "tropical architecture" was started as a colonial project, when infrastructure development in the tropics where most colonial exploitation occurred was necessary for European enterprises and institutions to work. During the post-war decades, it became a fashion where technological transfers, aid, and business investments were delivered from the First and Second World countries to the rest of the world. This is not entirely new within the scholarship of the Modern Movement, but it highlights the global extent of modern architecture, its various historical precedents in the former colonial states, and, more importantly, in post-colonial development.

Along with the development of colonial cities and infrastructure in the Dutch East Indies, the earliest discussion concerning the tropics was related to the alarming health problems in towns and villages caused by hygiene-related "tropical" diseases. Interestingly, the earliest accounts on the issue did not come from architects, but from a retired Dutch army general and engineer, G. W. M. Vos. In 1945, he submitted the only entry in a competition held by the Royal Institute of Engineers and the Association for the Promotion of Medical Sciences on developing a hygienic living environment in the Dutch East Indies. His proposal, titled "Indonesian building hygiene, a test of an application of medical sciences to building in the Dutch East Indies", addressed concerns based on modern medical principles on health-related hazards in traditional and vernacular building practices. One of Vos's strongest comments on vernacular building practices was the use of excessive verandahs which caused dark and damp domestic space interiors.

There were also medical concerns about the effect of tropical heat on the white population. An article written by a Dutch doctor published by Dr. Julius de Gans, in 1891, reports that heat may harm the general health status of the white people in the Indies. It said to endanger Europeans' well-being and diminished their productivity. Engineers sought inspiration from abroad to overcome this problem; however, for many, the idea of mechanically air-conditioned spaces (in buildings and train carriages) was considered a ridiculous solution at that time.

By 1928, air-conditioning installations were already quite common in institutional buildings, such as hospitals. Several engineers based in Surabaya reported their implementation of mechanical air-conditioning in the colony in a prestigious engineering journal, De Ingenieur in Nederlandsch Indie. It was reported that air conditioning was a necessity in hospitals as it enabled desired conditions for operating, nursing, as well as other health care activities. Due to the increasing popularity of air-conditioning, electrical engineer P. Timmerman warned the electricity supply companies to promote and anticipate the surge of electricity in the near future. The architect-engineer B. de Vistasini welcomed the use of air-conditioning in the country. He predicted that it would decrease the height of office spaces and consequently its volume; therefore more floors could be fitted into the same building height, making office spaces in the tropics not so different from the ones in Europe. The climate-controlled buildings would benefit from air-conditioning, since the windows would be closed all the time, which would reduce street noise. In a larger context, the air-conditioning of indoor spaces would reduce the distance between buildings. Vistasini, however, warned that the perimeters of buildings should be designed to protect users from the temperature difference between indoors and outdoors. He also asserted that the external skin of a modern air-conditioned building - walls, windows, and doors - should be strongly built, becoming more solid than usual.

Before air-conditioning became the norm, engineers and architects had to rely on local vernacular practices and models, whilst, at the same time, creatively employing modern architectural elements to provide desirable conditions for habitation. C. E. de Bruijn, another Dutch general from the Dutch army corps of engineers, expanded and republished Vos's book in 1926 as a volume set. The first volume addressed 15 infectious tropical diseases and suggested ways to eradicate them. Diseases were considered to be closely related to environmental issues and were seen as avoidable through good planning measures. De Bruijn indicated seven aspects of environmental planning: air, natural sunlight, water, ground, water supply, drainage, and sewerage. In the second volume, he explored and reconsidered the common use of building materials and construction. He mentioned the hygienic and functional requirements demanded by various building types such as houses and housing, sports facilities, schools, factories, abattoirs, prisons, markets and police, and military buildings. The book provided instructions and models on how to design and build, not limited to health and hygiene but also to achieve comfort and avoid problems specific to tropical conditions.
DOCCUMENTATION ISSUES

Religious Tropical Architecture: the churches of Leandro V. Locsin in the Philippines

BY JEAN-CLAUDE GIRARD

The focus of this contribution is on the importance of tropical architecture in the work of Leandro V. Locsin in the context of post-war in Asia. Based in the Philippines, Locsin is immersed in the Christian tradition - the main religion of a country that was colonized by the Spanish crown from the mid-16th century to 1898, and where the Catholic Church remained powerful across much of the archipelago today. Attention is focused on Locsin's religious buildings and projects where he succeeded in giving a new treatment to the tropical architecture of that island, through the integration of climate considerations and the reinterpretation of vernacular architecture of the Philippines.

Leandro V. Locsin is a Philippine architect who has produced a rich catalog of more than 245 projects located mainly in his country, of which half were completed. He started his career in 1963, in a post-colonial context that had left the country faced with fundamental questions of identity, in all fields, and in particular, in architecture. His entire production is associated with the attempt to define a new Philippine architecture, which he proposed in this article to focus more specifically on the question of religious buildings because they demonstrate Locsin's formidable capacity to adapt a model, by definition established according to rigorous and inflexible rules, to the local cultural and climatic conditions of his country.

The Philippines: climate, history and religion

The Republic of the Philippines, located north of the equator and south of the Tropic of Cancer, is subject to a tropical climate of two main seasons, the dry season from December to May and the rainy season from June to November. Comprising more than 7,107 islands, the archipelago is part of Southeast Asia, the history of which is characterized by a series of colonizations and commercial exchanges that have left their mark on local cultures.

The Philippines underwent two major periods of colonization, the first by the Spanish who governed the Philippines for more than 350 years (16th-1898), to make way for the Americans who settled in the early 20th century (1898-1942). While the Americans focused on questions of political, infrastructural and educational organization, the Spaniards, for their part, introduced and imposed Catholicism as a lasting way, making the country an exception in the region.

Thus, it is interesting regarding the question of religious architecture and, more particularly, of the churches in the post-colonial context, where the Filipinos maintained their adherence to the rule of the Vatican, and to what extent these sacred spaces were interpreted and redesigned to meet local conditions.

The arrival of Locsin on the architectural scene

In 1969, an edition of the “Exchange” journal sought to take stock of the question of Philippine identity in all art forms, by giving voice to various aspects of the archipelago's cultural scene. Philippine architect Locsin, then 31, was asked to write the chapter on the built environment. Establishing a historical panorama of the country, he introduced, from the outset, the question of cultural mixing that took place in his country. The chapter then returned to the environmental question to refute the merits of imposing structures unsuitable for local climatic conditions, as the Americans had done by trying to impose a neocolonial model based on a formal historicism. Despite his age, Locsin had already constructed numerous buildings whose central question was the search for a new Philippine identity. For him,

(...), the first achievement of the Filipino builder and certainly the most evident in his architecture, which is also an outgrowth of man's desire to protect himself from the elements, in the climate and resulting from (...) the fact that the Philippines is in the tropical belt and therefore subject to humidity have not only modulated the development of architecture, but also have limited our knowledge of its history by leaving little to imagine of the past.

He thus put forward an approach, fundamental, which had previously tended to be ignored:

Church renewal in the aftermath of WWII

At the beginning of the Spanish period, existing buildings were repaired and enlarged, in order to provide sufficient space for the gathering of the faithful. However, the successive destruction caused by typhoons and earthquakes led to the re-evaluation of the construction method. Church structures, still arranged on a basilica plan, were built of stone and stabilized by lateral buttresses. The plan reflected a form of organization imposed by the European, the profile was stockier, and the bell tower separated, in order to resist telluric movements.

After independence in 1946, new religious construction proposals arose, in particular, to the energy of Father Comair (1917-1954) whose desire to integrate modern art in religious construction was illustrated in the realization of the Saint-Dominique Chapel by American architect Antonin Raymond in 1932, in Victoria (Negros Island). This is considered to be the first modern church in the Philippines. Although the plan remains traditional, with the altar positioned at the end of the nave, light falls from the ceiling through an expressive structure of reinforced concrete beams covered with a mosaic by the artist Adolfo de Beruete (1941-1982). The side walls are made of movable wooden panels which allow cross ventilation.

Locsin and his vision of the Church

Locsin was a poor man who chose the theme of the church for his diploma work, obtained in 1953 at the University of Santo Tomas in Manila. That same year, even before graduation, he began designing a chapel in Victoria, adjacent to that of Antonin Raymond, but which was eventually built in Manila. The theme inspired him so much that he went on to design some twenty religious buildings, ranging from churches to museums, and even a memorial park. His first production was the Holy Sacrifice Chapel (1958) and his last, the Monastery of Transfiguration (1993).

The typological choices are radically different in these projects, ranging from a basilica plan for the church of Cagait (1960) to a central and axial organization for the chapel located in Parañaque (1964). These different conceptions show how Locsin's interest in the liturgical question led him to seek...
Makkasan Train Factory: an attempt to preserve Bangkok’s urban heritage

BY PONGKWAN LASSUS

The Makkasan Train Factory, opened 110 years ago, is the first industrial estate in Thailand and used to be the biggest hub for train production in Southeast Asia. Nowadays, this huge land sits right in the business center of Bangkok, that attracts real estate investors. A third of the land set aside at the end last year for the development of a mixed-use commercial project as part of the High-Speed Train project. As this land is the last big area of public land in the capital, civic groups for urban heritage conservation and the environment tried to point out its tangible and intangible heritage value hoping that there would be a proper master plan to preserve these values for future generations.

History of Thai Railways and the Makkasan Train Factory

During the reign of King Chulalongkorn (Rama V), when Thailand became a buffer state between the expanding British and French colonial empires, His Majesty recognized the tactical importance of developing rail transport in the country. In 1866, the Royal State Railways of Siam (RTS) was founded under the Department of Public Works and Country Planning and the construction of the first Royal line, Bangkok- Ayutthaya railway, started. It was inaugurated in 1866, followed by the construction of more lines. A first repair facility for steam locomotives and rolling stock was established at the Bangkok Railway Station in the center of Bangkok, and another one at the Bangkok North Station on the left bank of the Chao Phraya.

In 1905, the Bangkok Railway Station started to become too small to cater to the new railway lines, and plans were made to build a bigger, more modern and spectacular-looking station. The Thai Railways Maintenance Centre was moved to Makkasan in 1915, and its former site was used for the new Huampong Railway Station, which opened in 1916. Makkasan became a repair center for locomotives and all kinds of vehicles. In 1917, the Government decided to merge the Northern and Southern Railway Department and incorporate all the repair factories into the Makkasan Factory. Its area was expanded and new buildings were built.

A second wave of expansion and improvement of the Makkasan Factory started in 1928, with new buildings hosting repair shops for diesel locomotives, electrical appliances, tracks, and so on, as well as a train engineering school and welfare housing for Makkasan Factory crews and officers. However, the construction was cut short with the outbreak of WWII. Deemed to be an unsafe location, most of the repair equipment was moved to temporary factories, near the Klong Khlo Junction Station area and the Nakhon Ratchasima Station during the war, leaving Makkasan with only secondary equipment.

The Makkasan Factory was bombed four times during the war, and some buildings and structures were severely damaged. The first repaired and continued construction after the war. On top of the existing Makkasan Factory and Makkasan Station, the Bangkok Railway Hospital was established in 1946 for the train officers and their families, and a Makkasan welfare housing community was built in 1947 for the workers affiliated with the Makkasan Factory. In 1949, a rail welding factory was created. In an effort to decentralize repair work, additional repair factories were built in other districts, leaving the Makkasan Factory with the main tasks of repairing and replacing diesel locomotives, carriages, and wheels.

In the meantime, in 1941, the Royal State Railways of Siam became a public enterprise under the name of the State Railway of Thailand (SRT). With this new structure, the SRT had control over the whole railway system and pushed for its modernization. The Makkasan Factory became the biggest hub of train production in Southeast Asia after 1967. In 1982, the SRT discontinued the use of steam engines, replacing them with diesel locomotives. And in 1985, as imports were less costly than domestically produced trains, the government ceased production.

Makkasan Train Factory to become a mega project development

Thailand faced the financial crisis in 1997. The SRT, with its poor performance and resistance to reform, was obliged by order of the Thai cabinet to reduce the staff such that only 30% of the employees could be hired for every 100 retirees.

There has never been a clear official explanation why rail transport in Thailand was not properly developed like in other developing countries. What we can note is that there was a more rapid development in the construction of highways to serve cars, buses, and trains made in the USA and Japan. The SRT seems to be an organization that is forced to be in debt by the obligation to give a low-cost public transport service and running at a "loss". The Thai government should actually be subsidizing this "loss" but instead they consider that the SRT has a big debt to pay back from decades of operation. So the financial pressure pushed the SRT to want to develop their big plot of land in the center of Bangkok in order to pay the debt.

In 2015, the Thai Government allowed the SRT to construct a mass rapid transit line, the Airport Rail Link (ARL), to connect the new Suvarnabhumi Airport to the City Terminal at Makkasan and Phayathai Station in the center of Bangkok. The SRT also planned to move the train factory and maintenance plant in Makkasan to Klong Khlo in Nakhon Ratchasima Province in order to develop Makkasan into a mixed-used commercial complex. In 2023, the SRT drafted a development plan to turn the plot into the Makkasan Complex, an ambitious project for commercial use. The plan was to maximize land use, with a set of skyscrapers. The SRT and its stations opened in 2016, Makkasan station becoming the biggest rapid transit station in Bangkok. The Makkasan Complex plan, however, was shelved and then dusted off in 2012. For the reason that Bangkok, despite being the capital, lacked green spaces, public parks and cultural infra structure, the redevelopment proposals drew criticism from the civic sector which warned to keep the maximum of area for public parks, an exhibition center and museums.

I began to be involved in this project in 2013, when I was a chairperson of the Architectural Conservation Committee of the Association of Architects under Royal Patronage (ASSA). One of the Architectural heritage buildings in Makkasan, which
Encounters with Southeast Asian Modernism

BY MORITZ HENNING, SALLY BELOW, CHRISTIAN HILLER AND EDUARD KÖGEL

Against the backdrop of the Bauhaus centenary in 2019, Encounters with Southeast Asian Modernism examined the history, significance, and future of postcolonial modernism in the region, with partners in four cities – Jakarta, Phnom Penh, Singapore, and Yangon. The project provided a historical perspective on the societal and political upheaval that accompanied the transition to independence after the colonial period, and also showcased current initiatives in the fields of art, architecture, and science that are committed to the preservation and use of Modernist buildings. In 2020, the project will continue with an exhibition and accompanying program in Berlin.

Regional Modernist styles emerged, which harmonized the design ideas of a universal Modernism with specific cultural references, building traditions, and the climatic challenges of building in the tropics. Today, many of these structures are considered insignificant and obsolete, have been destroyed or are threatened with demolition. Likewise, Southeast Asian Modernism is not present in relevant Western works on architectural history. Although the former colonial powers have occasionally addressed architecture in these countries, the focus has mainly been on their own (European) architectural heritage. In the region itself, however, a lively discourse on Modernism and Modernity has developed in recent years, which attempts to overcome Western-oriented historiography and to describe a "non-Western Modernism". With a few exceptions, this discourse is relatively unknown in Europe. Encounters therefore aimed to increase its visibility and to strengthen the discussion. What can past architectural solutions contribute to meeting the challenges of the present, and how are Modernist works being evaluated today? Can Modernist ideas still serve as reference? How can their acknowledged achievements be brought into the current discourse - or how can such a discourse be initiated and accompanied?

Encounters addressed both a specialist audience and a broader, culturally interested public. A major goal was to "popularize" existing knowledge and to foster the dialogue between regions and disciplines - with visual artists, filmmakers, architects, photographers, curators, activists, teachers, and students. The cities of Phnom Penh, Jakarta, Singapore, and Yangon, which represent very different scenarios in their discontinuous history, also open up references to developments in other Asian countries.

The project launched in August 2019 in Berlin: A symposium brought together the regional curators, further international speakers, and the Berlin audience to discuss the history and present state of Modernism in Southeast Asia for the first time in Germany.

"Southeast Asian Modernist Spaces" (SEAM Spaces) formed the heart of the project in the four cities between October and December 2019. Each SEAM Space was developed and run by local curators. This resulted in very different exhibitions and events, which in their diversity reflected the specific situation in the participating cities. Contributions from the other cities complemented the exhibitions. There were presentations, lectures, interviews, discussions, film screenings, and architectural tours. Representatives of the German embassies and local branches of the Goethe Institute – Germany's cultural institute – took part in the dialogue.

Folding Concrete

The program in Southeast Asia started on 12th October in Cambodia's capital with Folding Concrete. The contribution was curated by Pen Senycopap, an architect, independent researcher, and director of the Vann Molyvann Project, together with Vath Lima, an artist, curator, and artistic director at Svay Sarth Projects. The title refers to the characteristic folded structures that have become a landmark of New Khmer architecture. It also refers to the variety of disciplines such as art, culture, architecture, urbanism, industry, and technology, from which Cambodian Modernisms have developed. The venue that hosted most of the activities and the exhibition, was an apartment in a typical townhouse building in the city's Chinese quarter. The unconventional location reflected the fact that Phnom Penh does not have many spaces available for urban discourse. And the large number of visitors, among them many young people, showed all the more how important these cultural exchanges are.

While architecture and urbanism were the main focus of the exhibition, overlaps with the fields of art and visual culture were also highlighted. Drawings from archives, research projects, and artworks revealed the richly textured architectural and cultural language that helped shape and was also shaped by Cambodian Modernism.

A large part of the projects on display was based on the work of initiatives, artists, and young architects, many of whom have been addressing the heritage of Modernism independently. One such example is the Reapong Project, initiated by a group of young architects and architecture students.
Tribute

Towns are made from houses
Jean-Pierre Watel (1933-2016)

By Richard Klein

When describing the history of towns through the distorting mirror of modern urban design, historians barely attempted to find out what simple material was used to build towns in the past. The answer was obvious: however, towns were made from houses. It was houses that made towns. If we had remembered this obvious fact, then the urban sprawl would not have taken us by surprise.

Jean-Pierre Watel (1933-2016) has not been forgotten in the history of contemporary architecture. Gérard Monnier recounts the architect’s success in the 1960s, his single-family houses and “a domestic modernity largely linked to his design of North European-style houses”, a central living room, an assumed horizontality and large sections of glass. His main constructions were mentioned or featured in the professional journals as well as in the more mainstream press creating recognition from his peers and the aspirations of potential clients.

The houses grouped together into new towns were also lavishly commented on for their stylistic affiliations:

Forming harmonious ensembles of contemporary Nordic design these elegant brick houses were built with factory-prepared elements — a modern frame and brick cladding. Their outer plan is a good example of the assimilation of a proven formula in Denmark.

Jacques Lacan underlines the rigor of the proposal’s within the context of the multiplicity of town house projects: “Pierre Jenny and Vera Gaudet photographed them from all angles to such an extent that Jean Pierre Watel is one of the most represented architects in photographic archives.” Two buildings illustrate a text devoted to him in the dictionary of the 20th century architecture. Finally, for Daniel Le Corre, Jean-Pierre Watel’s architecture falls within the scope of Modernism naturalist like that of the Sallier, Courtois and Lajus team in Bordeaux or Christian Girotet in Bourges; examples of architectural forms often developed far from Paris, compilations of Japanese, American and North European references which renewed the regional genre of domestic architecture.

Even if Jean-Pierre Watel’s buildings served industrial, commercial and service programs as well as some housing estate projects, it was his houses that made his reputation. Individual family houses, the most spectacular of which were newly built like the best American examples of the time, or small housing estates in which he specialized, the dialog with his clients and the examination are also conditioned above all the architect’s interest in this program, in the plan and interior.

His father, Jean Watel, was an architect. He graduated in Lille in 1923 and was active from 1924 to 1972. He was closely linked to the regional Catholic community and designed the Sacred Church of Our Lady in Mouscron (1964) with Maurice Novergins.

Jean-Pierre Watel was trained at the Fine Art School and at the Saint-Luc School Art School in Turnhout. At Saint-Luc, the classes he attended benefited from the input of Jean Dubuisson, Pierre Humblot and Pierre Vago. He readily retained from Jean Dubuisson his capacity to “design a postage stamp” but also, it would seem, his focus on Northern Europe. Jean-Pierre Watel created his agency in Brussels in 1953 and in 1954, won the competition for the “European house” commissioned by the Belgian National Housing Institute and the City of Strasbourg. Then he was selected for the Villages in Saint-Michel sur Orge by the Ministry for infrastructure. The dwellings he designed in 1956 for the Villages with La Construction Horizontale were clearly different from the other models presented. The L-shaped houses, structuring in zigzag fashion offered an early component to the simultaneous expression of individuality and the collective, by placing the openings onto gardens facing South. His participation in the Villages in Wattignies in the North was based on a more radical mode of innovation, since the housing groups illustrated the idea of a horizontal collective based on a continuous surrounding enclosure with a passageway which lead, after a turning gate, to the annexes and interior gardens of the dwellings.

At the time of the first Villages, houses with patios were already fashionable in Europe. Exempt from the architectural journal Resonance present material from a manual titled New houses with patios and demonstrated their historical roots that go back to the Roman Empire. The national generally taken up by practitioners was to pursue a version of modern architecture with its roots in the long tradition of family houses.

These trends were to find a favorable context in the new towns. In Villeneuve d’Ascq, the collaboration between Jean-Pierre Watel and the designer of the essays (Real estate study and implementation company) resulted in the commercial success of the project. From 1966 onwards, the different areas of the Briggod housing estate between the old villages of Arsines and Ascq were developed on the basis of an urban plan conceived by Gerard Deltinne, Jean-Pierre Watel, but also other designers such as Yaeck Wadoc-Sawicki, designed five hundred houses in hamlets in a recomposed landscape round a golf course.

The Jean-Pierre Watel formula became a signature style which was reproduced several times the white brick walls formed a screen on which the vegetation grew on a sculptural
BOOK REVIEWS

Arquitectura Viva Japonesa
Editor: Ruth Rivera
Publisher: Guadernos de Arquitectura
Year: 1991

Japon ‘60, el hombre y su arquitectura
Editor/Author: Fernando Barbá Zaíma
Publisher: Editorial Herencia
Year: 1995

Japan in Mexico
The presence of Japanese architecture in Mexico was fundamental in 1960. On one hand there was a joint effort by the Universidad Veracruzana and the Japanese Embassy to present the exhibition "Living Japanese Architecture", accompanied by a series of conferences under the same title. These conferences were collected by the Department of Architecture at the Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes (National Institute of Fine Arts), under the supervision of Ruth Rivera (1991-1996) in number 3 of their Guadernos de Arquitectura [Architecture Notebooks]. In addition, Fernando Barbá Zaíma (1928-2023) held a conference series at the Fine Arts Palace, "Japanese man and his architecture: the title of the book which he would write a little later. In fact, between 1959 and 1960 he had visited that country with an official invitation from the Japanese government to familiarize himself with the architecture and to undertake some studies at Waseda University, in Tokyo, and at the University of Kyoto. Therefore, it doesn’t come as a surprise that these good relations would culminate a decade later in the construction of the Japanese Embassy in Mexico by Kenzo Tange in partnership with Pedro Ramírez Vázquez and Manuel Rosen Morrison.

It is necessary to highlight that the Vice-royalty of New Spain was the first Western state to come into contact with Japan, having sent a group of Jesuits as missionaries to preach the Gospel, even if their effort was short-lived. Only commercial relations were maintained through the Manila Galleons for almost a century, while in 1874, a group of Mexican astronomers traveled to Japan, enabling Mexico to become the first country to sign, in 1888, a Treaty of Equality. This circumstance was so favorable that, on 2nd September 1912, during the festivities for the Centenary of the Mexican Independence, president Porfirio Díaz (1852-1915) and ambassador Kunitake Horiuchi inaugurated The Japanese Pavilion, a large exhibition in what is today known as the Museo del Chopo. In a way these precedents allow us to glimpse into the cultural importance of the events mentioned above and their repercussions on the architectural culture.

In this way, it finally seems interesting to analyze the book "Arquitectura Viva Japonesa", that has an introduction by Ruth Rivera and four articles: the first one is a historical outline on the culture of the country: the Rising Sun by Jorge Shistro followed by a brief comparison of "Japanese and Western Cultures" undertaken by Alberto Hajar Seriati (1938), Salvador Funes Pinto (1932-2007) and Rubén Vargas Salgado, both architects, who analyzed architectural works: the former focusing on traditional buildings and gardens while the latter surveyed the Modern Movement in that country, from a theoretical viewpoint. In essence it was a concise publication that offered Mexican architects a vision of a distant land in a moment when interest about Japan was growing. It also had the virtue of belonging to the novel series Guadernos de Arquitectura.

The book "Japon ‘60, el hombre y su arquitectura", is especially interesting because of its focus and the abundance of graphic materials. At that moment, in Mexico you could read news about the prosperous and characteristic Japanese architecture through foreign magazines so, having a volume that put it in perspective was very attractive. In particular, because the author had lived and studied for a time in the main Japanese cities, he was able to contribute relevant comments, accompanied by photos and blueprints, collected first hand by him during his stay in that country.

The publication begins with an introduction written by Félix Candela, who was already recognized internationally. In the introduction he explains the circumstances that brought the author to undertake the book, emphasizing that this is "the version of the person, emerging from the personality of the author." Likewise, it is illuminating to see that Fernando Barbá Zaíma thanked around fifteen Japanese architects for their support and friendship, among whom we can highlight Kenzo Tange (1902-2003) and Kenchōko Tatsuno (1928-1995), a fact that confirms his closeness to the architectural profession of that country. The book is made up of six chapters, with the first two devoting to "Japan" and "Men", as a vast preludium to better understand the contributions in the field of architecture to which the remaining four chapters are dedicated.

The third chapter is a valuable analysis of the "Principles and elements" to guide the reader through the values of Japanese architecture, its main physical characteristics and some spiritual qualities as in the sections: "The abstract and the symbolic", "Tradition" and "Peace". Likewise, we find the first approach to nature and the gardens that are so significant to that country in the fourth, titled "The past", the author makes a concise but enlightening review of what can be considered the classic architecture of Japan that is clearly the basis for some of the buildings of modernity. Here we appreciate temples and religious buildings as well as palaces and houses, with a good dose of photographs and blueprints.

Thus, we come to the part that interests us in particular, the Modern Movement, which Fernando Barbá Zaíma titles "The present", with a vast and motivational text that introduces us to the architecture of the first half of the 20th century. Through this review we learn that 1960 was the year of the Meiji Restoration that clearly marks before and after in local culture, but especially in regards to architecture. For him "the new word, Japanese architecture, appears and the old word, architecture, disappears", with a sense of the presence of engineers and architects that came from Europe and America. Since the early 20th century was under way, a distinguished group of abroad architects emerged more or less tied to the Western vanguard, but also looking to find their own local language. The author then proceeds to review what he visited, making a critical analysis of the works and finding that the use of concrete makes them excessively heavy and rigid in a marked contrast to traditional Japanese architecture that is light, delicate, subtle and slender." In any case,
he recognizes that some architects are well on their way to finding their own voice, among whom Kenzo Tange stands out, a present manner that he will find the truth that he is seeking. He has all it takes, especially a great frankness and sincerity. Hopefully the Olympic Games of 1994 will bring him the opportunity to find himself and to show his ability to the world. As a conclusion he points out: "I believe that Japan and Mexico share the same problem. The difference is that Japan has already seen it and understood it, whereas in Mexico we are running, a blind eye and we believe we have no problems."

Following these affirmations, it does not surprise us that the last chapter is titled: "The future", where novel projects of what will become Metabolism emerge, presented here, in an accurate way, are not works of architecture but the original and visionary drawings of Kikutake. Kikutake, a first glance of what would a little later occupy the pages of the leading international magazines. Therefore, it is worth reviewing Fernando Barba Zentia’s book to appreciate, guided by the author, the main works of the Modern Movement in Japan.

Notes
1 Rich Woolse (1921-1993), was the first woman to graduate from the College of Engineering and Architecture at the National Polytechnic Institute in Mexico, besides which she was the daughter of celebrated painter Diego Rivera.
3 Fernando Barba Zentia (1919-1993), studied at the National School of Architecture, EIAM. Among his publications in the book Materialidad y arquitectura, Madrid, EIAM, 1952.
5 The Marta Gallons is the little prince of a series of commercial trips between Arcosanti and Martha. (1967-1968).
6 It is the case with New Art of Architecture, Asta, New York, 1969.
7 "(Es) la versión de la posibilidad de un arquitecto, el hombre, que quiera, que puede llegar a ser lo que quiera, que puede llegar a ser lo que quiera." Ibid., 24.
8 "(...) hay arquitectura tradicional japonesa (que es) ligera, de escuela, muy esbelta." Ibid., 26.
9 "(...) hay arquitectura tradicional japonesa (que es) ligera, de escuela, muy esbelta." Ibid., 24.
10 "(...) hay arquitectura tradicional japonesa (que es) ligera, de escuela, muy esbelta." Ibid., 24.
11 "(...) hay arquitectura tradicional japonesa (que es) ligera, de escuela, muy esbelta." Ibid., 24.
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46 "(...) hay arquitectura tradicional japonesa (que es) ligera, de escuela, muy esbelta." Ibid., 24.
47 "(...) hay arquitectura tradicional japonesa (que es) ligera, de escuela, muy esbelta." Ibid., 24.
BOOK REVIEWS

Selected Writings on Modern Architecture from Asia
Edited by Yasushi Zemura and Jagan Shah
Publisher: Aeta
ISBN: 4-002330-10-1
Language: English
Year: 2000

Tropical Modernity - Life and Work of C. P. Wolff Schaemaker
Author: Jan Van Dulleman
Publisher: Sun
ISBN: 978-0-85268792
Language: English
Year: 2009

Charles Prosper Wolff Schaemaker (1882-1949) was the Frank Lloyd Wright of Indonesia. Between 1919 and 1945, he designed numerous buildings in Java, including Villa Koli and Hotel Prangger in Bandung, which are among the highlights of Dutch colonial architecture. This publication presents his complete oeuvre. Histories of Dutch architecture often pass over the architecture of Dutch architects in the former Dutch East Indies. Wolff Schaemaker and Henri Maclaine Pont were the main architects in Indonesia in the 1920s and 1930s. They determined the architectural landscape and the discussion of it.

From the publisher

Introduction to Architectural Science: The Basis of Sustainable Design
Edited by Steven V. Sadowsky
Publisher: Routledge
3rd Edition
ISBN: 978-0-415881926
Language: English
Year: 2014

The publication Introduction to Architectural Science: The Basis of Sustainable Design intends to provide the fundamental bases of physics applied to architectural design. Translated into numerous languages, this third edition is completely updated to the present. We are becoming increasingly aware of the potential of renewable energy (solar, wind, and so on) and the need for indoor environments that are comfortable with little or no energy use.

With these environmental questions in mind, the author aims to help the reader to develop his critical capacity to use the knowledge acquired in his work to fully use the potential of a sustainable and bioclimatic design. In fact, basic design decisions regarding size, orientation, and form have a great impact on the sustainability, cost, and comfort of a building. The goal is to stimulate a conscience and better educate architects designers for future generations.

The book is divided into four parts: "Heat, the thermal environment"; "Light, the luminous environment"; "Sound, the sound environment" and "Resources, energy, water and minerals". In each one, physical principles are assessed, followed by a debate on their relationship with humans and their comfort and by an examination of the relation of passive and active controls in buildings to their use of energy. Every chapter is concluded with data and method sheets related to the theme, describing some calculations and procedures of the project.

Andrea Giacolevski
BOOK REVIEWS

mASEAN Project 2017: Modern Living in Southeast Asia – The Report of mASEAN project 2017: 4th & 5th International Conferences
Edited by: mASEAN Project
Publisher: docomo Japan
Language: English
Year: 2018

The book mASEAN Project 2017: Modern Living in Southeast Asia – The Report of mASEAN project 2017: 4th & 5th International Conferences compiles the 4th and 5th international conferences of the mASEAN (modern ASEAN architecture) Project. The four conferences took place in Jakarta between 30th and 31st January 2018, followed by the fifth conference, which was held in Tokyo on 10th March 2018.

The Jakarta conference, Modern Living in Southeast Asia: Between Universality and Locality, took place in the Istiqlal Mosque with three sessions (“Sports and Modern Urbanism”, “Modern Projects: Changing Lifestyles, Resilience” and “House Types and Forms”). These sessions had contributions from the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia, Singapore and Myanmar. The Tokyo conference, Modern Life and Urbanization: Modern Architecture in Japan and Southeast Asia, took place in Jaya Great Moonchikin Lounge Hall, and had contributions from Japan, Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines.

The book is organized in two parts. Part 1: modern living in Southeast Asia contains 23 papers from both conferences organized around the themes of the first conference. Part 2: Inventory of modern buildings includes an inventory of modern architecture from the cities of Yangon (Myanmar) and Jakarta (Indonesia). Beyond those two hundred buildings exhibited with images, name, address, construction year, function and architect, and an introduction about each city, this edition is finalized with a report of the mASEAN Project from 2017.

Silvia Alos

mASEAN Project 2018: Materiality, Technology and modern movement in the Southeast Asia – The Report of mASEAN Project 2018: 6th & 7th International Conferences
Edited by: mASEAN Project
Publisher: docomo Japan
Language: English
Year: 2019

The book mASEAN Project 2018: Materiality, Technology and modern movement in the Southeast Asia – The Report of mASEAN Project 2018: 6th & 7th International Conferences compiles the 6th and 7th international conferences of the mASEAN Project – a five-and-a-half-year project directed by researchers in Southeast Asia and Japan which reunites cooperative research on modern architecture in Southeast Asia.

The 6th conference was held in Bangkok, Thailand, between 25th and 27th October 2018 and had five sessions about the theme “The Future of the Past: Materiality and Resilience of Modern Architecture in Southeast Asia”, the 7th conference was conducted one year later on 10th February in Tokyo, Japan, with two sessions about the “Materiality, Technology and modern movement in the Southeast Asia & Japan”.

The publication is arranged in two parts. The first has the same subtitle of the theme of the Japanese conference, approaching questions including the new conservation in modern architecture, material selection (such as wood and concrete) and the struggle between design and optimization. The second part is a conclusion with reports on the Phnom Penh and Bangkok Inventory Workshops and their achievements. I am certain that these will be referred to whenever the modern architecture of Southeast Asia is studied.

Andrea Gonçalves

This is the most recent report from the mASEAN Project. The publication sums up the mASEAN Project 2018: 6th & 7th International Conferences which were held between 25th October and 27th November 2019 in Singapore and on 10th February 2020 in Tokyo, Japan, respectively.

The eighth conference, in Singapore, took place in the Urban Redevelopment Authority Centre with three panels ("Modern landscapes and the everyday", "Community and ground-up initiatives" and "Technology and systems"). The conference had contributions from Singapore, Indonesia, Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, the U.K. and the U.S. The ninth conference, in Japan, took place in Mori Tengo Sankei Yuen with Jan Aoki and Ho Weng Hin as keynote speakers. The session was titled “Progressive Once More” and included a discussion session. The conference had contributions from Singapore, Malaysia, and the Philippines.

This report is organized in two parts. Part 1: “Progressive Once More” is organized in 6 sections with papers from both conferences. Part 2: Inventory of modern buildings includes an inventory of modern architecture from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and Singapore. This edition is finalized with images of mASEAN Project activities.

Silvia Alos