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Transcultural Tropicality

Modernist architecture in Honolulu, USA, and Gold Coast, AU

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Since the early twentieth century, modernist architecture incorporated specific regional features, while at the same time encompassing international trends in terms of transcultural influences. In this evolvement, climatic considerations were naturally significant, which led into various forms of regional architectural expressions across the world. In tropical and sub-tropical contexts, too, there were various attempts to adjust the so-called international style to better reflect local climatic and cultural contexts, in which transculturalism played an important role, along with regional idioms. Therefore, this paper explores the relationship of modernist tropical architecture and its transcultural paradigm – when understood as the wider umbrella of critical regionalism. To illustrate this phenomenon, the paper examines two sub-tropical settings: Honolulu, USA, and Gold Coast, AU. These cities are comparable in many other ways than their climate as well, primarily because most of their urban fabric was built after the 1940s, because they represent new kind of built environments designed for seaside mass tourism, and because they featured architecture of emerging tropical regionalism. More specifically, the paper analyses mid-century modernist house designs of Vladimir Ossipoff in Honolulu, Hawaii, and those of Hayes & Scott in the Australian Gold Coast.

Regionalism vs. Transculturalism

Much has been said and written about mid-century regional modernism, though less about its applications in tropics and subtropics. However, after the concept critical regionalism was introduced by Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre in 1981, and was further promoted by Kenneth Frampton,[1] more light has been shed onto architectural

[1] E.g., FRAMPTON 1983, 1987.

responses in non-Western contexts, especially concerning the search for identity in the developing world and in the former colonies, of which many are located in the (sub)tropical climate zones.[2] As the two contexts discussed in this paper were experiencing colonisation in one case (Hawaiʻi, even if not always regarded as such) and decolonization in the other (Australia, to some extent) in the turn and course of the 20th century, the focus here is to examine the role of mid-century regionalism, which led to critical regionalist interpretations a few decades later.

The critical regionalist views in the 1980s were obviously closely related to the controversy over postmodernist architecture, but also to the growing awareness of ecological and cultural concerns. The discourse was reminiscent of regionalism in architecture in the early and mid-20th century, which, in the US, was led by Lewis Mumford who addressed regional issues, at first, in his *Sticks and Stones: American Architecture and Civilization* (1924), followed by his numerous publications criticizing the so-called international style as well. This was similar to the views among the European regionalists of the era, most notably Alvar Aalto, who in the 1980s became regarded by Frampton as *the* critical regionalist (although the term was yet to be established in Aalto's lifetime). Furthermore, the introduction of critical regionalism in architectural discourse shed light into numerous other architects sensitive to a specific regional context, such as Geoffrey Bawa and Minette de Silva in Sri Lanka, Balkrishna Doshi and Charles Correa in India, Richard Neutra primarily in California, Paul Rudolph and other representatives of the Sarasota School in Florida as well as those in the San Francisco Bay Area, Luis Barragan and Juan O'Gorman in Mexico, and many, many others too numerous to list here. It is rather surprising that the critical regionalists, fifty decades after Mumford's first publications, found inspiration in him, as well as in Paul Ricoeur's writings on universalization, particularly his "Universal Civilization and Natural Cultures" in *History and Truth* (1965), which served as the theoretical framework of critical regionalism, including criticism on the Euro-America centred world views, specifically in terms of decolonial, feminist, indigenous and other emancipatory interpretations of architecture.[3]

However, it is important to note that these views were not intended to support any nostalgic return to a preindustrial past, but rather to acknowledge the global interface, including, but not limited to, the influence of Japanese culture. To some extent this was apparent already in the career of Frank Lloyd Wright, which also found echoes in Australia in the works of Walter Burley Griffin and Marion Mahony Griffin, who had both worked as Wright's apprentices in Chicago and established their practice in Melbourne and Sydney, after their competition-winning masterplan for the new federal capital of Canberra in 1911 (mainly completed in the 1940s and afterwards). Also, take Villa Mairea (1937-9) in Finland by Aino and Alvar Aalto, for example, in which we see themes characteristic of early modernism, Finnish vernacular, Japanese and Mediterranean traditions, local as well as imported materials, and so on, in a harmonious collage of modernist expression.

Keith L. Eggener was one of the first scholars who started to critique critical regionalism, especially Frampton's definition of it as a form of *resistance*, as well as analyses which "on more than one occasion led to an interpretative flattening of diverse cultural materials, and a misunderstanding or devaluation of their founding intentions

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[2] See, e.g., TZONIS and LEFAIVRE 2001, 2003, 2011.
[3] For more, see, e.g., SARVIMÄKI 2011.

and most immediate meanings".[4] By quoting Jane M. Jacobs, he goes even as far as describing critical regionalist rhetoric as "a revisionary form of imperialist nostalgia that defines the colonized as always engaged in conscious work against the 'core'".[5] In this article "Placing Resistance: A Critique of Critical Regionalism", he points out that "it is ironic that writers discussing the places where these designs appeared so often emphasized one architect's interpretation of the region over all others […] In other words, a single correct regional style was implied, or imposed, sometimes from inside, more often from outside 'the region'."[6]

In making his point, Eggener refers to Latin America in order to elucidate the meaning of critical regionalism from the viewpoint of Argentine Marina Waisman, according to whom "the Latin American version is quite different from that proposed by Kenneth Frampton, or Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre". She goes on stating that the Latin American culture, as part of "the general movement of history", is a "unification of the spirit of times and the spirit of place" and, hence, Latin American contemporary architecture should be "understood as a movement of *divergence* rather than resistance (the term which Frampton prefers)".[7]

In a rather recent *Transcultural Architecture: The Limits and Opportunities of Critical Regionalism*, Thorsten Botz-Bornstein continues the discourse by regarding critical regionalism as a subcategory of transculturalism by analysing designs in a few non-Western contexts. He points out that "Eggener's (as well as Marina Waisman's) idea that regionalism is not always a response to the West but more often a consequence of local conditions can well be integrated into my defence of Critical Regionalism as a form of transculturalism" and goes on arguing that "Transculturalism is more than the arbitrary combination of several cultures but transcends all particular cultures in order to invent a new common culture that is not meant to be new universalism".[8] In addition:

> Transculturalism is not *necessarily* critical while Critical Regionalism is. Vice versa, all Critical Regionalism is transcultural because it overcomes one culture by critically reflecting it against another culture […] and it is important to specify differences in order to distinguish transculturalism from multiculturalism and other strategies destined to synthesize different cultural elements.[9]

Accordingly, this paper interprets regionalism specifically from a transcultural perspective. As both contexts examined below are not only climatically fairly similar, but presently also highly multicultural (though the analysis excludes the indigenous cultures, which I apologise), the attempt here is to analyse the modernist tropicality of these two settings in Honolulu, Hawai'i, US, and the Gold Coast, Queensland, AU.

21° North, 158° West

Honolulu on the island of O'ahu, literally "the gathering place", refers to its role among the 2400 kilometres long archipelago, stretching from the Island of Hawai'i

[4] EGGENER 2002.
[5] EGGENER 2002.
[6] EGGENER 2002.
[7] WAISMAN 1994, quoted in SARVIMÄKI 2011.
[8] BOTZ-BORNSTEIN 2015.
[9] BOTZ-BORNSTEIN 2015.

in the south, commonly known as the Big Island, through the other main islands of Lana‘i, Maui, Moloka‘i, Kaua‘i, Ni‘ihau, and the uninhabited Kaho‘olawe, in addition to numerous smaller islets and atolls in the northwest. The amalgamation of Hawai‘i was completed by King Kamehameha V who united the islands in 1872, after centuries of battles between independent kingdoms. At the same time, Western influence, especially by means of missionary activities and establishment of plantations in the 18th and 19th centuries, eventually resulted in the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom in 1893, preceded and followed by various attempts to colonise Hawai‘i. Without going to the complex issues regarding this history, here we focus on only the climate-responsive architecture of the 20th century. Significant in the Hawaiian climatic context is that elevation and position of a site on any particular island greatly affects its microclimate, varying from the rainy windward side, arid leeward coast, rainforests of the highlands in the middle, and other specific circumstances that require corresponding design solutions.

One response to Hawaiian climate is seen in the works of Vladimir Ossipoff, who himself is an interesting cosmopolitan personality: he was born in 1907 in Vladivostok, Siberia, spent most of his childhood in Japan where his father was the Russian czar’s military attaché, stayed in exile in Tokyo with his family after the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, studied architecture in 1927-31 at the University of California at Berkeley, and after his graduation mainly worked in Hawai‘i till his death in 1998. It is worth noting that his career coincided with the transition of the annexed Territory of Hawai‘i into the statehood in 1959, making Hawai‘i the 50th state of the United States, which also increased the development of tourism industry on the islands. In this process, place making was momentous in the creation of the new identity of Hawaiian Islands. And Ossipoff’s architecture was part of it, contrasting to the federal historicism of the earlier colonial period, as described by Dean Sakamoto in *Hawaiian Modern: The Architecture of Vladimir Ossipoff*:

> Ossipoff participated in the appropriation of the principles and materials of modern architecture and transformed them into a specific local geographic manner that was adapted visually and ecologically to a sound engagement with the environment and with the cultural reality of the region.[10]

Among Ossipoff’s numerous public and private buildings, of which more than 800 were completed, only a couple of his house designs are discussed in the limited space here. This is because in residential architecture the climatic considerations in providing comfort are most significant, which is not to say that he would not have considered those in his other projects. One of the first houses designed by Ossipoff, since he established his private practice in 1945, after the attack on Pearl Harbour in 1941, followed by the traumatic years of WWII and the declaration of a martial law in Hawai‘i until October 1944, is the Liljestrand House completed in 1952-7. It, perhaps more than any of his residential projects, embodies the main ideas of Ossipoff’s design methodology. It also is presently the most accessible of his house designs, since it is now maintained by the Liljestrand Foundation and open for public for tours, sometimes led by Bob Liljestrand, who spent his childhood in the house.[11]

Ossipoff designed the Liljestrand House for Bob’s parents, Howard and Betty Liljestrand, who after graduating from medical school in the US were planning to move

[10] SAKAMOTO, BRITTON, and MURPHY 2007.

[11] See https://www.theliljestrandhouse.org.

to China, where Howard had spent his childhood. They were waiting in Hawai‘i for the Chinese political chaos in the 1930-40s to pacify, but because that did not happen they decided to build a permanent residence in Honolulu. Due to their interest in East Asian culture, Ossipoff was an ideal choice as an architect. Not surprisingly, taking into account Ossipoff's background, in this residence, as in most Ossipoff houses, Japanese influence is seen in the indirect, understated approach, transitional entry porch (similar to the Japanese *genkan*), deep eaves and horizontal lines, open floor plan, indoor-outdoor connection through verandas, or *lanai* in Hawaiian, natural ventilation, timber members, built-in cabinets, and siting that, in this case, opens into a magnificent view over the city. These, as well as other carefully designed details, which hide and reveal the interior and exterior features, as well as the ambiguous spatial articulation, are clearly analogous to Japanese design methods, such as the much-discussed time-space concept of *ma*, but also are suitable in any hot and humid climate. Indeed, in his article "The Japanese House" in *Hawai'i Architect* (March 1986) Ossipoff states that "Japanese house is better suited to Hawai‘i than it is to Japan". Given the impact of the Japonisme movement on modern architecture, these features can, of course, be seen as integral part of modernism in general.

Significant in Ossipoff's projects was careful analysis of both the macro- and microclimate of the site, leading to excellent siting and to the maximization of the prevailing trade winds which provided passive cooling by means of natural ventilation. No air conditioning was needed due to the clever application of the Venturi Principle according to which the flow of air from smaller openings on the windward side of the building, with larger openings on its leeward side, allows constant ventilation through the house without causing too strong draft.[12] In the Liljestrand House, this was achieved by narrow louvers above the corridor windows on the mountainside in the northeast and wide sliding doors on the other side of both floors. Although Ossipoff later adapted to such modernist features as flat roofs, seen in the Paulig House (1957) among many others, instead of the double-pitched roofs of his early projects, the basic environmental principles and sensitivity to the context and the site did not change.

Ossipoff was also actively participating in the public discourse on the development of Honolulu and appropriate design principles in the subtropical Hawaiian context. When he was elected second time as the president of the Hawai‘i Chapter of American Institute of Architects in 1964 (his first term was in 1941), Ossipoff declared the so-called "War on Ugliness" with some of his colleagues, criticizing especially the overdevelopment and commercialization of the Waikiki district. Interestingly, their call for "making this place more beautiful place to live and work", as described in an article published in the *Honolulu Advertiser* on 17 December 1964, echoes many environmental concerns and regionalist principles of Lewis Mumford in his report *Whither Honolulu?* which Mumford submitted to the City and County Park Board in 1938.[13] Although Mumford's report had little impact on the forthcoming development of the urban landscape in Honolulu, his role in regionalist thinking, and then subsequently in critical regionalism, is undeniable and was reflected in the designs of many modernists, besides Ossipoff.

Even more interesting from our comparative perspective is that only four years earlier, in 1960, Robin Boyd had published his polemic book *The Australian Ugliness*, in which, as the title implies, he didn't have many flattering comments on Australian

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[12] SAKAMOTO, BRITTON, and MURPHY 2007.
[13] SAKAMOTO, BRITTON, and MURPHY 2007.

built environment, and saw very little positive in the development of the Gold Coast in the east coast of Australia: "It is a fibro-cement paradise under a rainbow of plastic paint. […] souvenir shops, wooden night-clubs with 'fabulous floor shows', bikini bars selling floral wisps of bathers and Hawaiian shirts […] signs, hoardings, posters, neons, primary colours – purple, green and orange straight from the brimming pot." And Boyd goes on and on, although he does acknowledge the natural scenery and the sandy beaches with prevailing wind "which is almost as effective as San Francisco's ocean breeze on the other side of the Pacific."[14] The latter point obviously applies to Ossipoff's design principles in Hawai'i discussed above and also to those of Hayes & Scott in the Australian Gold Coast discussed below. However, as many of the aspects in these then-new urban seaside resorts for mass tourism, such as tiki figurines, Aloha shirts, neon signs, and other "kitschy" features, are *now* regarded – at least by some – as important parts of the "sense of place" in both Honolulu and the Gold Coast, we must continue the analysis of the mid-century modernist tradition in these two cities by widening our scope into their meanings today, half a century later.

28° South, 153° East

The Gold Coast in south-eastern Queensland is one of the fastest growing cities in Australia, added yearly with millions of domestic and international tourists. It has developed from humble origins of "beach shacks" and B&Bs approximately seventy kilometres southeast from Brisbane, thus originally called South Coast, around present-day Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach. Gradually it was to cover 70 kilometres of coastline from South Stradbroke Island in the north to the southern Rainbow Bay and Coolangatta, where the Gold Coast International Airport is now located, into a true strip city. The Pacific Highway (current Gold Coast Hwy) basically split the expanse into the coastal area with beaches, motels, resort hotels and ocean-front estates along this north-south running throughway, while the canal developments were, and are, typical residential suburbs further to inland; only seven decades ago there was hardly anything else than swamps there. The city actually continues beyond this zone to the predominantly agricultural hinterland, even though most people associate only the coastline with the name Gold Coast, which it officially acquired in 1959 as a city[15] – the same year when Hawai'i became the 50th state of the US.

When this long stretch of beaches and swamps in a subtropical setting of Queensland started to be developed in the late-1940s throughout the 1950s, it became the quintessential Australian vacation and retirement destination. Modernist houses, motels and hotels were built along the shoreline, while the marshlands were dug and dried into canal developments, largely following Florida as a model.[16] This is reflected by place names such as Rio Vista, Miami Keys, Miami, Main Beach, Palm Beach, and the kind, not alone the name Gold Coast itself. When walking in the older suburbs, one can almost imagine being, for example, in Rio Vista in Fort Lauderdale, FL, with houses on the canal shores facing their private pontoon jetties for boats.

Like the United States, among many other parts of the world, post-war Australia faced the requisite to provide housing for the growing middle class. After the previous influences primarily from the United Kingdom, the Australians were looking at America for suburban housing models, such as the Californian Bungalow that was a

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[14] BOYD 2010 (1960). Boyd clearly was not familiar with Hawai'i, though it seems that the discourse there would have been even more relevant to his argument.
[15] BOSMAN, DEDEKORKUT-HOWES, and LEACH 2016.
[16] E.g., RICKARD 2013.

popular typology in Australian suburbs already in the 1920s.[17] While there were plausibly other sources of inspiration as well, most notably Scandinavian and Japanese architecture, one case in point – literally – in the US was the Case Study House Project in southern California that was launched in 1945 by the editor-in-chief of the *Arts & Architecture* magazine, John Entenza. The design proposals in this architectural competition demonstrated not only new, prefabricated industrial materials and their use in residential architecture, but also a novel lifestyle suitable for this architecture. Particularly persuasive was the Stahl House (Case Study House #22, 1959-60) by Pierre Koenig in the Hollywood Hills, not the least due to Julius Schulman's photographs, including the renowned one of two ladies in their cocktail dresses in the daringly cantilevered living room against the breathtaking night view of Los Angeles, which is one of the *Time* magazine's "100 Photos: The Most Influential Images of All Time".

Likewise, Australian popular magazines effectively promoted similar idealised lifestyle and modernist architecture in America and Australia, enforced by professional journals like *Architecture* (in 1955 renamed *Architecture in Australia*, now known as *Architecture Australia*), *Architecture Today*, and *Architecture and Arts*. The latter was a title adopted from Entenza's magazine and was a widespread publication during its lifetime in 1952-68.[18] No wonder, these widely published trendsetting residences changed the very concept of residing in Australia:

> In the 1950s, thousands of everyday Australians tried open plans, structural modules, new ventilation and heating systems, slab floors and heating coils, then bituminous, aluminium and steel flat roofing, metal sheet walling, wrought iron, steel roof trussing, concrete, cement block, cork tile, plastics and other industrial compounds in the materials of their houses, in combinations and places that would have caused horror before the war.[19]

One can continue the list with American style kitchen appliances, which completed the "American look" of a house's "control centre" with built-in cabinetry – a kitchen regarded as the "mechanised centre of the house […] like the engine of a car".[20] And speaking of the car, a lightweight carport often replaced the garage, which was caused by fire regulations and post-war building codes that restricted the maximum floor areas, until the latter were lifted in 1952, although the carport was there to stay. Inside the house, then, introduction of television in the 1960s started to change both the residents' lifestyle and the houses' layout with the family room.

The architectural language and the inherent technology of the Gold Coast houses was much influenced by the LA Case Study Houses among other American precedents, which was at least partially a result of rather similar climatic conditions in southern California, Florida, the Australian Gold Coast and also Hawai‘i, although canal developments were not as prevalent in the latter due to topographic restrictions (a rare exception is the Hawai‘i Kai in eastern Honolulu). Another contributing factor was the increasing American influence in post-colonial Australia, added with the global building boom after the World War II and the housing shortage of the "baby boomers" across the world. At the same time, national and international tourism "boomed" as well, with

[17] LONDON, GOAD, and HAMANN 2017.
[18] LONDON, GOAD, and HAMANN 2017. In the mid-1950s, the full title of the magazine was *Architecture and Arts and the Modern Home*.
[19] LONDON, GOAD, and HAMANN 2017.
[20] LONDON, GOAD, and HAMANN 2017.

leisure travelling especially to seaside resorts, which was facilitated by the convenience of jet plane travel. This was seen in the development of Waikiki in Honolulu, HI, simultaneously with the Gold Coast, AU, where new international airports were built in the 1950s (Honolulu terminal was modernised by Ossipoff in 1967-78, while the latter has been, and still is, improved and enlarged).

Not exclusively a south-eastern Queensland phenomenon, but overall significant in its subtropical climate, was the interrelationship between the house and the garden, also apparent in Wright's Usonian House from the 1930s till the 1950s, though in a very different climatic context. In terms of technological advances, this was usually achieved by the slab-on-ground method, which allowed circulation on grade without steps between the indoors and the outdoors – the now commonly (over)used indoor-outdoor concept – and worked particularly well in the flat topography of the Gold Coast. In much of coastal Australia, similar to Florida, southern California and Hawaii in the US, this led into the appearance of an 'outdoor living room' for entertainment all year round, preferably facing a swimming pool. Even the Hawaiian word *lanai* found its advent in Australian vocabulary,[21] depicting the transitional space between inside and outside, similarly to the veranda of traditional Japanese houses. The increasing post-war interest in Japanese culture and architecture, which had influenced early modernism in general, also was apparent in landscaping, which was reminiscent of the artistic gardens of Japan, although there also was a tendency for more naturalistic approach in bush settings with native plants in the turn of the 1960s, especially among the so-called Sydney School.

In the post-war Queensland, there were some attempts of contemporary applications of the traditional Queenslander typology, with elevated floors on stilts and wrap-around verandas under deep eaves, but generally speaking the Gold Coast houses were strikingly different regarding their architects' interpretations of international mid-century modernism. As stated by Alice Hampson: "An aspiring and rapidly developing aquatic playground, the Gold Coast of the 1950s had also become a fertile playground for architectural experiments."[22]

One example of Australian architecture specific to the Gold Coast is the Pfitzenmaier Beach House in Broadbeach by Edwin (Eddie) Hayes of Brisbane architectural firm Hayes & Scott. It was constructed in 1953 for businesswoman Ethne Pfitzenmaier (née Edwards), who together with her husband, Francis Pfitzenmaier, had built a prosperous hotel business in the 1930s, lost everything in the Great Depression, and successfully rebuilt their business in Brisbane. After her husband's death, Ethne bought an old Broadbeach house in 1950 as a holiday home for herself and her two children, but soon decided to hire Hayes who had earlier renovated the family's house in Brisbane's Herston. "The result was a 'breakthrough' building for a new domestic modernism",[23] according to Hampson, and was acknowledged by the Queensland Award for Meritorious Architecture in the year of its completion. Nonetheless, regarding the architectural partnership of Hayes & Scott that commenced in 1946, Hampson points out that:

> Although their work was locally the most influential of the period, it received surprisingly little coverage in the serious national press. The

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[21] LONDON, GOAD, and HAMANN 2017.
[22] HAMPSON 2005.
[23] HAMPSON 2005.

> pitchy publication coming out of the University of Melbourne, *Cross-Section*, hardly rated them a mention, and seldom did their work appear in publications such as *Architecture and Arts* or *Architecture*. Only non-professional women's journals gave their work the recognition which it deserved.[24]

Despite the lack of the recognition in professional publications, popular magazines might actually have been more influential in persuading the acceptance of new architectural features seen in the Pfitzenmaier Beach House, such as a butterfly roof (one of the earliest in Australia), spatial division organised around the inverted pitch, a rather sparse garden utilising the dune landscape, and a large outdoor room with a massive barbecue and gorgeous views of the Pacific Ocean. The cantilevered portion of the living area was resting on the ground floor with garages and storages, which was the only part Hayes kept of the original house, protruding above the sand dunes. Carefully considered breezeways, which contained the open deck and the sea-facing entry that functioned as an air scoop, as well as louvres and shading visors were responses to the house's specific setting, whereas the general layout is reminiscent of the bi-nuclear plan of many American and other modernist houses. As one sign of the departure from the British tradition, the bathrooms had no bathtubs, only showers.[25]

The influence of the LA Case Study House projects was particularly obvious in the Graham Beach House, also by Hayes & Scott of 1953 in Surfers Paradise. At a first glance, the colour scheme would have reminded us of both the Entenza House (Case Study House #9, 1945-49) by Charles Eames and Eero Saarinen, and the Eames House (Case Study House #8, also designed in 1945 and completed in 1949) by Ray and Charles Eames, next to each other in the Los Angeles suburb of Pacific Palisades. In the same way, the bright primary colours were used in the Graham Beach House where they contrasted against the stark white brick walls and black steel trims. De Stilj -inspired primary colours were, of course, the theme in many modernist buildings in Australia, such as the Rose Seidler House by Harry Seidler in 1950 and many designs by Robin Boyd, among countless other Australian examples, but here we discuss the Gold Coast only.

Compared to the above Case Study Houses in Los Angeles, the Graham Beach House was more in the vein of the Entenza House, as the brick walls in the ends of the rectangular plan *appear* similar to the loadbearing walls of the Entenza House with concealed steel frame and cross bracing, as opposing to the visible frame of the Eames House – the square mural in the west wall and the panel of the glass wall in the entry of the Graham Beach House, divided diagonally into red, blue, yellow and black triangles, was possibly a reference to the diagonal bracing. The interior had an open floor plan, which was rather easy to achieve in a small building with short spans, since the house was designed for a wealthy clothing manufacturer, Harvey Graham, as "a stylish entertainment and seduction pad for a sports-loving and martini-mixing bachelor", as London, Goad and Hamann wittily put it. Hence, all needed was a bedroom, a bathroom (again with only a shower), and a living room with an open galley kitchen. Owing to the slab-on-ground foundation, the house seemed to continue to the outdoors, making the patio a part of the interior. Inside, all floors were black, either the surface of dyed black concrete slab or black linoleum tiles in the kitchen, the bathroom, and the passage,[26] in

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[24] HAMPSON 2005.
[25] LONDON, GOAD, and HAMANN 2017.
[26] LONDON, GOAD, and HAMANN 2017.

order to heighten the spatial continuity.[27]

In addition to American influences, earlier seen in the Wright-inspired Australian designs as well, new ideas flew from continental Europe, as some of the first modernist architects in Australia were émigrés from Europe, including Harry Seidler and Karl Langer both from Austria. Langer, who was Edwin Hayes and Campbell Scott's teacher at the University of Queensland, was particularly influential in the region as a proponent of modernist architecture suitable for subtropics in the way he defined it in his *Subtropical Housing* in 1944. In the Gold Coast, he designed the Lennons Hotel in Broadbeach (1957, demolished 1987) in which the international style hotel wing (then-tallest building in the Gold Coast) was combined with a beach bar pavilion, beer garden, free-form swimming pool, and the kind, representing a new kind of concept for holidaying in Queensland. The practice of Hayes and Scott, however, can be regarded as departure from the earlier regional bioclimatic discourse by "responding to climatic responsive design […] whilst challenging Langer's critique of the Queensland house by demonstrating its potential for modern transformation."[28]

Thinking globally, acting locally

The above-described Hayes & Scott houses are now demolished, which is symptomatic to the rapid change of the Gold Coast as a result of property speculation as well as national and international migration and mass tourism, which requires – or justifies – higher density. Almost unnoticed modernist buildings have been demolished, even if some individuals are raising their concerns and sadness in social media about the loss of the area's identity.[29] Then again, others see the change itself as the identity of the Gold Coast.

Although Honolulu in the US faced comparable pressures caused by increasing land value and profitmaking development, which lead to similar densification of many areas than in the Gold Coast in AU, it is noteworthy that most Ossipoff-designed buildings still exist. Why were then the Hayes & Scott projects, in addition to the two houses discussed above, such as the iconic Carapark Motel (1959) in Gold Coast's Mermaid Beach demolished? As many of their designs exist in Brisbane, regulation of building industry – or rather the lack thereof – certainly explains some of it in the Gold Coast. And obviously the economic burden to increase density in such touristic hubs as Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach, where these two Hayes & Scott houses were located, is a partial reason for their demolishment, while most Ossipoff houses are in less urban areas of Hawai'i, as are the Hayes & Scott houses in Brisbane. Even so, this doesn't explain why, for instance, Ossipoff's IBM building (1962) in the heart of Honolulu downtown still stands there.

Regarding our global perspective, a defining moment in this discourse took place in the so-called 1990 Eindhoven Meeting in the Netherlands and the ensuing establishment of the DOCOMOMO as an international committee, which refers to the DOcumentation and COnservation the buildings, sites, and neighbourhoods of the MOdern MOvement. It brought together practitioners and scholars concerned about the rapid disappearance of early modernist architecture and correct preservation methods of

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[27] SARVIMÄKI 2018.
[28] MACARTHUR, VAN DER PLAAT, GOSSEYE, and WILSON 2015.
[29] See, e.g., 'Have you seen the Gold Coast' at https://www.facebook.com/Have-you-seen-the-old-Gold-Coast-280745045301771/ or @the_old_coast at https://www.yooying.com/the_old_coast.

this decaying architectural heritage, which was outlined in the *Eindhoven Statement* as the foundation in promoting the exchange of knowledge of the legacy through its national working parties in over 50 countries around the world. In Australia, DOCOMOMO was established in 1999, following a public meeting organised by the NSW Historic Houses Trust called *Opera House: Fibro House* in Sydney. As a result, the DOCOMOMO_AU now is active in Sydney and Melbourne, but not in Queensland or in any of the other states, although the National Trust of Australia as well as Australian ICOMOS with their regional activities are filling the gap to some extent, even if not specifically focusing on modernism. Among the regional chapters of the DOCOMOMO_US, on the other hand, the one in Hawaiʻi has been notably active since the 2000s by means of publications, walking tours, and other activities, which has increased the awareness of modern architecture, urbanism, and environmental design by research, documentation, and education of these principles in that specific context, including those apparent in the Hawaiian projects of Ossipoff.

From the perspective of transculturalism, as a wider theoretical framework of regionalism/ critical regionalism, it is worth considering the relevant mid-century modernist discourse regarding tropical and sub-tropical contexts. In the Ossipoff and Hayes & Scott projects discussed above, the climatic considerations were obviously in a major role in terms of tailoring modernist principles according to the macro- and microclimate of the site. However, these very limited examples also reveal how pertinent the sense of place, including a particular lifestyle of the context, as well as that of the client/s, was for the creative process of thinking globally, though acting locally, as critical regionalism can be summarised. These views undoubtedly appear as part of the creative process of regionalist modernism and its popularisation, which in today's globalising and decolonising world is perhaps even more relevant than ever, not the least due to the impact of global climate change.

Architectural publications have played a role, too, in the appreciation of the value of regional mid-century modernism. Contrary to the disregard of Gold Coast architecture, described above by Hampton, Ossipoff's projects were widely published both nationally and internationally, for example, in *Architectural Record*, *Architectural Forum*, *L'Architecture d'Audjourd'hui*, and *House Beautiful* in the 1950-70s. Moreover, there was local promotion, including the exhibition and accompanying catalogue *Hawaiian Residential Architecture* at the Bishop Museum in 1954, *A Guide to Architecture in Honolulu* published in 1957, and others highlighting projects designed by Ossipoff and other modernists in Hawaiʻi.[30] Even if Ossipoff was to some extent "forgotten" in the following decades, the previous attention has aided the recognition of his architectural contribution recently, demonstrated by the 2008 exhibition *Hawaiian Modern* at the Honolulu Academy of Arts and the Yale University, followed by the Deutsches Architekturmuseum in Frankfurt, Germany. This newly found interest also was reflected by the theme "Hawaii's Lost Master: The Houses of Vladimir Ossipoff" in the May 2008 issue of *Metropolis*.

Likewise, though only lately (and too late for the Gold Cost) Hayes & Scott designs have been included in a few Australian publications, such as the *Hayes & Scott: Post-war houses* (2005), *Hot Modernism: Queensland Architecture 1945-1975* (2015), *Australia Modern* (2018), referred to above, and most recently in the *Gold Coast: City and Architecture* (2018).[31] Yet, it is worth noting that even among the houses featured

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[30] SAKAMOTO, BRITTON, and MURPHY 2007.
[31] LEACH 2018.

in the *150 – An Unfinished Experiment in Living: Australian Houses 1950-65* (2017), only fifteen of the 150 projects are located in the State of Queensland and as few as three were in the Gold Coast. Conversely, although *Architecture in Australia* dedicated its January-March 1959 issue to the Gold Coast, almost all the articles focused on its urban development and offered predominantly critical views of it, also echoed in Boyd's *The Australian Ugliness* the following year. According to the editors, the "the cult of the 'modernistic' was now firmly established", by listing such features as "skillion roofs and butterfly roofs, leaning walls and leaning posts, varnished cypress pine, log-mould feature walls, 'sunburst' balustrading, lacquered waterworn stones and uninhibited colours." They also call attention to the increasing real estate speculation, leading to increasing land values and, consecutively, increasing height of buildings, while also criticising the architecture "appearing around the new hotels competing with each other in designs of almost valid vulgarity and 'glamorous' names emblazoned in neon signs."[32]

In retrospect, the above was surely a beginning of the still-continuing profit-oriented development, whereas features like neon signs now can also be regarded as the very identity of the Gold Coast (perhaps the "valid vulgarity"?). One sign of this paradigm shift is the neon sign of the Pink Poodle Motel from 1967 that was preserved in 2005 on the otherwise redeveloped site; for this, the developers received the Helen Josephson Perpetual Trophy for Innovation in Urban Design. Another glimpse of hope is that the Kinkabool condominium (1959-60), with its ten storeys at the completion being the then-tallest building in Surfers Paradise, was added in the *Queensland Heritage Register* in 2009. An additional example of this novel way of interpreting a built environment is the *Gold Coast Urban Heritage & Character Study*, published by the Gold Coast City Council already in 1997, which to a great extent was influenced by the postmodernist paradigm of the *Learning from Las Vegas* by Venturi, Scott Brown and Izenour in an attempt to analyse a strip city of Las Vegas. Correspondingly, Victoria Jones, in her "Invisible Landscapes" looks deeper than the surface with a poststructuralist assessment and points out that "the common interpretation of the Gold Coast" presents it as "superficial or shallow", but if the "often invisible and misunderstood economic, political and social landscapes can be interpreted, the visible landscape is given new validity."[33]

Almost sixty years after the *Architecture in Australia* 1959 issue on the Gold Coast, the renamed *Architecture Australia* did it again with its January/February 2018 issue. Many of its articles address the maturing city, besides looking back at the beginnings of the Gold Coat in the 1940-50s. Regarding the future, the editorial director, Cameron Bruhn, refers to Bill Heslop's mantra "You Can't Stop Progress" in the 1959 *AA*, echoed in the 2018 *AA* by Philip Follent's argument that "The Gold Coast's DNA is one of change", while Philip Goad points out that "the current growth and continuing vibrancy of a culture sustained almost solely by leisure will presage a new cultural and urban condition for the 21st century." By projecting the future, some of the authors, such as Matthew Eagle, a "local boy", a rising young award-winning Gold Coast architect, and an Assistant Professor at the Abedian School of Architecture, sees the change as an indication that "the Gold Coast transitions from a city of tourists to a city of residents".[34] This tendency of social sustainability is apparent not only in transcultural tropicalism in terms of climate-specific ecologic sustainability both in Honolulu and the Gold Coast,

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[32] *Architecture Australia*, January-March, 1959.
[33] JONES 2001.
[34] BRUHN et al. 2018.

but also in adaptive reuse of existing buildings among other applications, which requires innovative, creative and global approaches – poetically expressed by Juhani Pallasmaa as follows:

> The present concern with regionalism has the evident danger of turning into sentimental provincialism, whereas vital products of art in our specialized culture are always born from an open confrontation between the universal and the unique, the individual and the collective, the traditional and the revolutionary.[35]

[35] PALLASMAA 2007

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