

Towards the Prospect of a Modern Vernacular

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Bernard Rudofsky's 1964 MOMA exhibition *Architecture Without Architects* (Fig.1) launched global interest in the area of vernacular or "nonpedigreed" architecture. Rudofsky explored anonymous, spontaneous, and indigenous architecture as he noted that existing historical narratives focused on the "privileged – the houses of true and false gods, of merchant princes and princes of the blood – with never a word about the houses of lesser people."¹ He and Pietro Belluschi, argued that vernacular buildings were communal art, a collective enterprise that demonstrated amenable relationships to their surroundings, climate, and topography.



Figure 1. Architecture Without Architects Exhibition, MOMA: 1964 .
<https://www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/3459>.

Later, Amos Rapoport in *House Form and Culture* advanced Rudofsky's ideas arguing that the vernacular or 'Folk Tradition' was "the direct and unselfconscious translation into physical form of a culture, its needs and values as well as the desires, dreams and passions of a people"² which encapsulated a "world view writ small, the 'ideal' environment of a people expressed in buildings and settlements, with no designer, artist, or architect with an axe to grind."³ Rapoport noted that despite expressive limits, the vernacular adapts

to a broad range of situations and creates place within them. Its adaptability exists in its open-ended, additive quality allowing vernacular architecture to accept additions and changes that would destroy 'High Style' design. Thus, the 'essence' of vernacular architecture is achieved through the relationships between its elements and not the elements themselves.⁴

By the 1980's Tzonis + Lefaivre and Frampton, sensing an advancing alienation and exhaustion from the remnants of the International Style, advanced their respective notions of Critical Regionalism. While Frampton wished to avoid any nostalgic reference to the vernacular stylistic elements in his resistance to the homogenization of product manufacture and construction, in *Prospects for a Critical Regionalism*, he clearly advocated for a resistant architecture that addressed issues of place and tectonics while seizing the artistic potential of the region aimed at advancing the "liberative and poetic legacy of the prewar Modern Movement."⁵ Like Frampton in their affinity to the artistic precepts of the Modern Movement, Tzonis and Lefaivre in *Why Critical Regionalism Today* called for a reassessment of local culture but, using the Modernist techniques of 'defamiliarization' by means of identifying, decomposing, and recomposing regionally inspired design elements to elevate them above the provincial.⁶

This paper advances a Modern Vernacular that, as noted by Demetri Porphyrios in *Sources of Modern Eclecticism*, explores the debate between "nature and civilization; between rusticity and the man-made; between country and city; between primitive shed and civic habitat."⁷ Examined in terms of their approaches to incorporating the local vernacular, Villa Mairea, Aalto, Le Petite Maison de Weekend, Le Corbusier, and *Can Lis*, Utzon exhibit vital strategies to discern vernacular values and deploy vernacular tactics that avoid a nostalgic formal and thin tectonic identity. Currently, such vernacular inspiration in the architectural inclinations of The Renzo Piano Building Workshop, Glenn Murcutt, and the MASS Design Group aim towards the prospect of a Modern Vernacular and, in so doing, the construction of a more humane and engaged architecture that ennobles the human condition and its setting.

MODERN VERNACULAR AND THE ESSENCE OF CULTURAL CONSTRUCTION

“Were it me, were I the one who would come to build, there would be red clay and pale curls of wood. There would be an orchard outside and shotguns in the hallway. Thick white paint on rough pine boards would connote home and call to mind the soft sounds of dogs and men on the porch, the cool feel of linoleum on the floor, the smells of bacon frying. A woman’s lilt, an endless melody strung of hymns to Jesus, would wander through it, accompanied by the brisk whisks of a broom.”

—Henry Glassie, *Vernacular Architecture*

Folklore Scholar Henry Glassie in his seminal work *Vernacular Architecture* asserts in his framing of Vernacular Architecture that “Buildings, like poems and rituals, realize culture.”⁸ He envisages culture as ‘accumulating’ thus providing “an inner resource of association that gathers order aesthetically.”⁹ When buildings are situated as ‘folk’, Glassie argues that their embodiment of commonness and tradition are at odds with values cherished in the academy that are grounded in pretense and progress. Instead, he suggests that the study of vernacular architecture accommodates cultural diversity while acknowledging “the reality of difference and conflict.”¹⁰ Vernacular architecture in Glassie’s terms “favors completeness, recognizes diversity, and seeks ways to use buildings as evidence to tell better versions of the human story.”¹¹ Glassie’s culturally constructed experiential notion of the vernacular resonates in contemporary atmospheric imagery grounded in the mnemonic vision of the common and traditional.

Evident in the work of Peter Zumthor, his depiction in *Thinking Architecture* of the half-forgotten imagery of his aunt’s garden and kitchen advances what he would characterize as the simple presence of things. While memories of concrete vernacular imagery revive the architectural situation of a specific place and form, Zumthor subtly hints of the ‘essential’, familiar qualities that Glassie advances without tracing them to a specific form thereby avoiding any direct vernacular reference that would divulge “the secret of the memory-laden mood.”¹²

His 2007 Bruder Klaus Field Chapel’s values, like Glassie’s, lie outside the academy’s as do its *philosophical* underpinnings found most specifically in the idea of *Dwelling* as evidenced in Martin Heidegger’s *Building Dwelling Thinking*. The chapel’s exterior form, while familiar, (silo, stacked hay bales, nearby Haldenstein castle ruins) avoids specific reference while its interior evokes both the vernacular (tepee, hermit’s hut) and primordial (womb) without direct citation. Vernacular echoes persist in its community-based construction process and methods (rammed concrete and charred timber).¹³ As such, Zumthor painstakingly avoids what Tzonis and Lefaivre would characterize as ‘Romantic Regionalism’ actuated by a

‘familiarization’ that constructs “scenographic settings for arousing affinity and ‘sympathy’ in the viewer.”¹⁴ Instead he pursues a form of ‘defamiliarization’¹⁵ that recalls literary theoretician Victor Schklovsky’s 1917 essay *Art as Device* whereby common things are re-presented in a new way through the identification, decomposition, and recomposition of the chapel’s ‘essential’ primary design elements in terms of what Frampton in his article *In Search of Ground* would characterize as their ‘topos’ (agrarian configuration of the site), ‘tectonic’ (constructive and material substance of the built work), and ‘type’ (space of human appearance).

THE PAINTERLY PURSUIT OF VERNACULAR METAPHOR

“Nothing old is ever reborn. But it never completely disappears either. And anything that has ever been, always emerges in a new form.”¹⁶

—Alvar Aalto, 1921

In his formative years as an architect, Aalto mistrusted the nationalist tendencies that shaped Finnish National Romanticism. Throughout his career he professed no “feeling for folklore”, and would later nuance the difference between the narrow dimensions of National Romanticism and the national sentiment of Finnish culture embodied in the Karelian region’s indigenous architecture which as Richard Weston points out he was to find as “pure forest settlement architecture” that envisioned “how human life and nature harmonize in the best way.”¹⁷ Aalto was suspicious of the International Style noting its “rootless, airborne internationalism” and instead pursued an architecture that “builds on the popular psyche and purely geographic conditions.”¹⁸ In this respect, Aalto positioned his work within the confines of culture to mitigate the machine symbolism with a “balanced mentality which emerges from... straightforward everydaylife.”¹⁹ Aalto argued that an everyday cultural consciousness over time “alert to the multivalent myths of form” could countermand the prevailing vision of architecture as a scenography of technical advances.²⁰ These values would come to the fore in his 1938-41 design for the Villa Mairea at Noormarkku.

Aalto’s initial and ‘Proto-Mairea’ proposals were too close to the rustic quality of Karelian farmhouses for his clients Harry and Maire Gullichsen. This observation would lead Aalto to pursue a painterly approach to the interior influenced by Cézanne as observed by Göran Schildt where space develops from the experience of the building elements themselves. This spatial predisposition allowed Aalto to pursue the metaphor of ‘forest space’ where spaces seem to form and reform around the body in space.²¹ The major interior protagonists of this metaphor were the slender tree-like columns that screen the stair and stand in dialogue with the interior rattan and timber bound steel columns (Fig. 2). Evoking the birch and pine forest metaphor as they recalled Karelian vernacular column joining tactics, the columns ‘naturalize’, thus ‘humanize’, the industrial



Figure 2. Villa Mairea, Noormakku: 1938–41. <https://scandinaviancollectors.com/post/79240427124/villa-mairea-by-alvar-aalto-1937-1939>.

nature of the interior steel columns.²² At the exterior, bundled Japanese bamboo screen-like ‘saplings’ address the nearby forest as they initiate the interior ‘forest space’ that weaves through the house’s reworking of the spatially interconnected vernacular tupa plan with its modern undertones and establish the context for other exterior vernacular-inspired elements and events. Exterior vernacular elements include: a garden gate to the forest, the Karelian-inspired timber sauna with sod roof, the perimeter rubble wall conjuring the image of medieval churchyard walls, timber balustrades recalling farmstead fences, timber gutters and weatherboarding and, at the scale of human detail, the brass entry door handle design drawn from wood sauna door handles. These vernacular fragments exist relationally in a form of collage that, as Weston suggests, has its origins in the *papier collé* of Georges Braque.²³ This collage tactic allowed Aalto to synthesize apparently incompatible materials, forms, and images, in an effort to express the polarities between vernacular and modern that, with recalling the vernacular practice of adding non-integral features to emphasize specific building elements, arrived at a uniquely Finnish architectural outcome.²⁴

FROM BRICOLAGE TO MONTAGE: THE VERNACULAR OF JUXTAPOSITION

“I am attracted to the natural order of things... in my flight from city living I end up where society is in the process of organization. I seek out primitive men, not for their barbarity but for their wisdom.”²⁵

—Le Corbusier, 1935

Le Corbusier’s regional approach to the vernacular was shaped by his 1912 *Voyage d’Orient* and subsequent travel to North Africa, Spain, and Greece that exposed him to folk dwellings and landscapes where he was “captivated by harmony between, people, buildings and the landscape, as well as by the ingenuity of the vernacular in dealing with local materials

and the hot climate.”²⁶ By the mid 1930’s, Le Corbusier began a shift away from “modernization and its faith in the inevitable benevolence of modern technology.”²⁷ He would demonstrate a critical disposition to the vernacular in his projects for the Errazuris House in Chile, (1930) *Maison de Mandrot* near Toulon, (1931) and *Vacation House at Mathes*, (1935) before achieving a dramatic summative outcome at *Le Petite Maison de Weekend* (1935). At the Errazuris House, William Curtis notes that Le Corbusier was forced due to local circumstance to consider locally sourced stone and timber as well as addressing climate and landscape issues.²⁸ He deployed logs for the interior column structure and stone piers to support the house, using local stone for the floor and ramp. The dramatic ‘v’ shaped roof was clad in turf, a reference to the primeval and foreshadowing similar gestures at *Le Petite Maison de Weekend* and *Villa Mairea*. At *Maison de Mandrot*, a narrow profile L-shaped plan situated on a raised plinth was also realized through the use of local rubble masonry walls. The rubble masonry defined the private domain, in this instance juxtaposed with a steel frame, that enabled Le Corbusier to free the main living space while opening the corresponding terrace façade to address site micro-climate and viewshed. Curtis positioned the result as a “montage of the factory aesthetic and the primitive”²⁹ where “in this version of ‘regionalism’ the mass produced was brought in from the outside and then juxtaposed with customary objects of local practice.”³⁰ The *Vacation House at Mathes* brought about further clarity to the ex-urban house type while working in a similar material palette. In this instance the ‘v’ shaped shed roof paralleled the longitudinal volume. Rubble walls again enclosed the private realm and outdoor covered garden terrace while a timber structure articulated the second level veranda creating a free façade at the first and second levels. This juxtaposition of traditional and modern structural techniques combined with contrasting materials advanced an oscillating reading suggestive of bricolage.³¹

Both *bricolage* and *montage* became the primary protagonists in the spatial construction and reading of *Le Petite Maison de Weekend* at Celle-St.Cloud (Fig. 3). From the perspective of *bricolage*, Le Corbusier proposed a heterogenous material palette described in the *Oeuvre Complète* where he noted that one is “confronted by exposed stonework, natural on the outside, while on the interior, wood on the walls and ceiling and a chimney out of rough brickwork, with white ceramic tiles on the floor, Nevada glass block walls and a table of Cippolino marble.”³² Each of the material deployments and interior design elements as seen in the 1935 interior image read as ‘essential’. Le Corbusier, as *bricoleur*, established the spatial narrative surrounding the tension between society’s natural and civic confines. He articulated this tension between the interior and the rusticity of the exterior stonework, turf roof, and hearth through their interaction with manufactured elements such as the Nevada glass block, plywood cladding, and the ceramic floor that ‘dematerialize’ their respective



Figure 3. Petite Maison de Weekend, Celle-St.Cloud: 1935. Fondation Le Corbusier: fondationlecorbusier.fr.

surfaces contributing to an ethereal, primordial tent reading. Assembled as a *montage* recalling the film making tactics of Sergei Eisenstein, the spatial sequence from the carpark to the entrance, entry, encounter with the hearth, dining and living experience events are compressed in time, space, and content. It is the long view framed by the hearth and glass block wall that extends from the honorific status of the dining table to the distant garden pavilion that provided spatial release while alluding to a primordial longing and vernacular reading.

VERNACULAR AND THE TRANSCULTURAL TRAJECTORY

“When I travel, I have always learned from the places I have visited. The Mediterranean, North Africa, Mexico, China, often old places where I have seen how people have done things before. What density can mean, the function of a wall and so on. Quite trivial thoughts readily available to all. I have never copied these things, but I have allowed these thoughts and elements to influence the way I work.”³³

—Jørn Utzon, 1989

The work of Jørn Utzon has involved a career-long pursuit of what Frampton has termed “transcultural form” characterized through his statement: “A prominent element in Utzon’s architecture is his transcultural intention, his tendency to seek inspiration outside the Eurocentric domain.”³⁴ Utzon’s transcultural predilections stemmed from his global travels and interest in vernacular architecture that began well before Rudofsky’s 1964 *Architecture Without Architects* exhibition.³⁵ Travels to Morocco informed his 1947 *Project for Housing in Morocco* particularly through its multi-layered woven massing that reflected his observations on the “unity of village and landscape, brought about by their identical material-earth.”³⁶ For Utzon, vernacular buildings provided perspective and

intention as to architecture’s engagement with nature and industrialized building achieved by means of his vernacular-inspired ‘kit of parts’ and ‘additive architecture.’³⁷

Utzon would further allude to his vernacular reminiscences of the interwoven Moroccan Atlas Houses in his Kingo Houses Estate at Helsingør (1957-59) and his 1962-63 Fredensborg Housing. In both settings each individual house unit is arranged in subtle alignment with respect to the terrain and in relation to adjacent dwellings echoing his reflections on his encounter with Moroccan Atlas houses and their lyrical disposition in the landscape³⁸ as he notes:

“All the houses were the same colour as the ground we stood on, yet they were full of subtle shades. And when they were building - they were almost always working on something somewhere - they sang. Always in rhythm with the way in which they stamped the clay in oblong moulds - almost three or four metres long and about seventy-five centimetres high. Always accompanied by singing. Every house was so beautifully placed quite unlike the conformity of houses in Denmark and Sweden. Here the buildings are placed in relation to each other and in relation to the undulations of the terrain. I was profoundly inspired by the way of building in natural surroundings.”³⁹

In particular at Fredensborg, Utzon developed a diverse transcultural mix where he congealed an L-shaped, low-slung, Wright-inspired Usonian plan with Chinese-inspired tile capped walls surmounted with chimneys that recalled Iranian *Badgir* wind catching devices. Unit surfaces and openings articulated with Spanish inspired tiles and timber grillwork animated the confines of its courtyard recalling the vernacular farmstead complexes in the Vaucluse region of southern France.⁴⁰ These transcultural vernacular permutations informed the design for Utzon’s residence Can Lis, Porto Petro, Majorca (1971-73) to such a degree that it would compel local architect Manuel Cabellos to note that at Can Lis “Utzon has displayed that he understands the spirit of the Mediterranean, the light, the landscape and the local materials - even better than the other Majorca architects.”⁴¹

Can Lis can be argued as Utzon’s summative vernacular statement. Its typological origins can be found in the Villa and its Latin (L. *Vicus*, village) and Italian etymology (It. *Villa*, A country house, with farm buildings around a courtyard). Utzon’s delight in the design and habitation of his seaside retreat echoes that of Pliny the Younger in his first century Letter XXII to Gallus describing his Laurentine Villa retreat and “the so many charms with which my little villa abounds.” Portrayed by Richard Weston in his 2001 Lecture *Jørn Utzon: Buildings Ancient and Modern* at the Architectural Association as a “mechanism for observing the landscape”, its four “village-like” pavilions (dining, living, private quarters, guest quarters) and outdoor courtyard parallel the undulating coast

on a narrow twenty-meter-deep site situated to capture specific viewsheds, breezes, and solar patterns that recall the Laurentine Villa's intimate site specificity. Its site relation, characterized by a one-to-one scalar correspondence with the topography, and the site's physical features can also be seen in Greek temple site orientation tactics and, more recently, in the 'building-the-site' specificity of Mario Botta's Ticino region houses. In this sense, Can Lis is a timeless gesture, tied to the circumstance of its site and the transcultural 'additive kit of parts vernacular' that informs its physical/constructive and social contexts. As expressed by John Pardy: "The kit of parts – stone blocks, concrete 'I' beams and curved tiles – provides not just a dimensional logic, but a constructional DNA that grows the building into a unified whole."⁴²

Utzon himself characterized this additive vernacular tactic in the following way:

"Such a pure addition principle results in a new architectural form, a new architectural expression with the same attributes and the same effects as are obtained e.g. from adding more trees to a forest, more deer to a herd, more stones to a beach"⁴³

Expressed in sketches and a sugar cube model by Utzon with construction documents delineated by his son, the design for Can Lis was subject to frequent on-site adjustments that were developed in close relation with a local builder familiar with regional vernacular building techniques. The vertical construction materials were locally sourced beginning with the 40cm x 80cm sawcut Marés stone blocks used for walls and columns. The horizontal roof structure was comprised of standard precast concrete I-beams that span up to 5 meters when used as supports for the roof structure and, when doubled, serve as lintels for the wall openings. Utzon discovered the *bovedilla* arched clay tiles in a local bakery. Although out of production at the time, Utzon's builder knew their source and used the original wood curved molds to fabricate them. The *bovedillas* were then placed between the flanges of the I-beam and covered with flat clay tile itself capped with impervious quarry tile.⁴⁴ Floors, kitchen, and bedroom built-ins and some furnishings were favored by the denser Santanyi stone while the millwork was largely derived from native Madera Norte Pine. The interior tilework was designed by Utzon's daughter and produced locally. Clay tiles in the spirit of the Chinese-inspired tile capped walls at Fredensborg were added later to the parapets to alleviate water infiltration and add to its transcultural reading while the double Catalan triangular chimneys, typical of the Majorcan village house-type, articulate the roofscape in the spirit Fredensborg's Iranian *Badgir* wind catching devices.

The 4.5-meter square living room (Fig. 4) presents as an otherworldly cave that transports the viewer from the refuge of place to the prospect of the horizon. This relation is established through an entry sequence beginning in the rear courtyard

through a four-bay loggia. Stark in its tectonic articulation, a single column with lintel above defines the entry to the living room. Five deep-set apertures evocative of Le Corbusier's similar gestures at Ronchamp frame views to sea, sky, and horizon viewed from the site-adjusted semicircular fixed seating for family gatherings. Above, at the upper west corner, a thin aperture floods the wall with light in the mid-afternoon accentuating the circular saw-cuts on the Marés stone. Utzon viewed this aperture as both a vernacular timepiece and poetic metaphor for the transitory natures of life and architecture where "Happiness is counted in seconds."



Figure 4. Can Lis, Porto Petro, Majorca: 1971-73. http://architectuul.com/architecture/view_image/can-lis/6073.

POSTSCRIPT

The Modern Vernacular trajectories explored at the Villa Mairea, Le Petite Maison de Weekend, and Can Lis realized through the tactics of Metaphor, Bricolage, Montage, and Transcultural Form offers transformative contemporary approaches to global architectural design to realize a more culturally specific and engaged architecture that addresses both local and global realities. Parallel to each of these tactics, Schklovsky's process of 'defamiliarization' through identification, decomposition, and recombination advances vernacular typological transformation that can be seen in the work of The Renzo Piano Building Workshop's adaptation of the vernacular Kanak 'Grand Case' at the Jean-Marie Tjibaou Cultural Center, Nouméa, (1998). In this instance Piano, through tectonic vernacular type-form transformation, expresses the dialectic between the Kanak people and the increased hegemony of the forces of modernization inscribed within the fragile post-colonial political context. The sequence rhythmically alternates between the transformed 'Cases' and museographic program elements as in the traditional Kanak Grand Allée village plan. Piano's dialectical vernacular/technological juxtaposition is not without its detractors as David Langdon writes:

“A fundamental disconnect between the technological sophistication of the structures and the traditional craftsmanship exhibited within them illustrates a conceptual problem that undermines the Center’s tenuous sense of heritage and identity. This is an unintended but nevertheless fitting theme given the commission’s complex political context, and one that is never completely resolved through architecture.”⁴⁵

Glenn Murcutt’s *Marika-Alderton House*, Yirrkala Community, East Arnhem Land, Northern Territory, Australia, (1994) also presents a rich amalgam of transcultural form, juxtaposing aspects of the temporary aboriginal beach shelter and Australian outback house types. Influenced by the Modern undercurrents of Mies, Aalto, Scarpa, and Chareau, Murcutt melds the Anglo-Indian and Aboriginal vernacular to countermand culturally and environmentally inappropriate state housing. Frampton praised the effort and its “cubistic” quality noting:

“Built about an elegant structural steel frame finished in aluminum, and fitted with equally elegant aluminum roof vents so as to discharge the build-up of air pressure under cyclonic conditions, it is all together more cubistic and substantial than his earlier architecture.”⁴⁶

The prefabricated project, not unlike the portable 19th century iron houses shipped from England to the mining regions of the Australian Outback, was transported in two shipping containers and bolted together on the site. The Miesian platform supports a simple gabled structure through six galvanized steel portal frames enclosed by operable marine plywood shutters and tallow-wood screens. It is naturally ventilated in the spirit of aboriginal temporary beach shelters by means of the Venturi-Effect by means of a slatted tallow-wood floor and roof ventilators.

Like Piano, Murcutt too, had his detractors among scholars who noted that “the house is insensitive to the history and political plight of the native culture. The Aborigines have never constructed stationary, permanent structures.”⁴⁷

Most recently, MASS Design’s Ruhehe Primary School, Ruhehe, Musanze District, Rwanda, (2018) (Fig. 5) recalls Le Corbusier’s regionalist tectonic explorations of the 1930’s at the Errazuriz House and Maison de Mandrot as well as Utzon’s Moroccan Atlas housing inspired, topographically specific, site planning at the Kingo Housing Estate. Reminiscent of Le Corbusier’s juxtaposition of local vernacular tectonic traditions with contemporary structural materials and nuanced by Utzon’s sensitive topographic integration and transcultural design references, Ruhehe Primary School is at once local and global. An existing curved ledge of native volcanic stone establishes the orientation of the site plan. Locally sourced stone quarried and deployed by local crafts-persons serves as a cladding over a



Figure 5. Ruhehe Primary School, Ruhehe, Musanze District, Rwanda: 2018. <https://massdesigngroup.org/work/design/ruhehe-primary-school>.

minimal concrete and recycled steel structural system. Woven panels reference local weaving traditions and afford contiguous relation from the classrooms to the social prospect of the courtyard. The roof design maximizes natural ventilation and daylight, while enhancing acoustical performance through the use of clay tiles. Environmentally astute, 80 percent of the building materials were locally sourced within 50km.⁴⁸

As part of MASS 2016 African Design Center’s initiative intended “to train and empower the creative leaders who will design a more equitable, just and sustainable Africa”,⁴⁹ the program provides the training and experience required to execute impactful socially constructed community-based, design-build solutions to address the challenges that face Africa, and by extension, the world. From a social vantage, in addition to training design ‘fellows’ deployed in the communities they serve to coordinate projects, skills training in the building trades for local unemployed youth and women are a key objective, resulting in a workforce comprised of 35 percent women. Economically, 75 percent of the project budget was spent in the Ruhehe Village.⁵⁰

The Modern Vernacular propositions envisioned here return us to Henry Glassie’s vernacular vision that “favors completeness, recognizes diversity, and seeks ways to use buildings as evidence to tell better versions of the human story.”⁵¹ While snapshots, these propositions attempt to advance conceptions of how an architectural vernacular of “climate, culture, myth and craft”⁵² informed by contemporary, political, scientific, and technical forces can address the paradox proposed by Paul Ricoeur as “how to become modern and return to the sources; how to revive an old, dormant civilization and take part in universal civilization...”⁵³ Positioned in the context of this yet unresolved dialectic, the vernacular inspirations and modern trajectories proffered in *Towards the Prospect of a Modern Vernacular* seek to advance architecture’s contributions to humankind’s “ethical and mythical nucleus”⁵⁴ and, in so doing, construct a more humane and engaged architecture that ennobles the human condition and its setting.

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