Art Déco Architecture in Cyprus from the 1930s to the 1950s

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Fig. 1. Town hall, 1930s-1940s, Limassol, Archbishop Kyprianos street

Sl. 1. Gradska vijećnica, između 30-ih i 40-ih godina 20. st., Limassol, Ulica nadbiskupa Kyprianosa
This paper classifies the Cypriot Art Déco and addresses it, for the first time, as the dominating modernist variant of the 1930s-1940s in Cyprus. We argue that, out of several Art Déco trends, the Mendelsohnian streamline moderne is by far the prevalent and is characterized by a common, rounded architectural morphology. Main sources of this “Mediterranean Art Déco”, more or less immediate, are primarily France, England, Athens, and a now partially anonymous local architectural elite.
INTRODUCTION: THE DEVELOPMENT OF ART DÉCO AND INFLUENCES ON THE CYPRIOT ART DÉCO

The term Art Déco had not been generally introduced before 1966, when a retrospective of the famous Parisian exhibition "Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes" of 1925 was put on display in the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris. Although proto-types of the style already existed before the First World War, it spread internationally only after 1925. The style and its main characteristics are based on a variety of sources: from ancient civilizations, Arts and Crafts, Art Nouveau, especially the Glas- and Viennese "schools", to the futurist and Crafts, Art Nouveau, especially the Glas- and Viennese "schools", to the futurist machine aesthetics. Due to economical reasons, the style's flamboyant character became more austere after 1930. While Eva Weber and Alastair Duncan do not mention the influence of Expressionism, this vein of influences on Art Déco is emphasized by other scholars. However, Kenneth Frampton stresses that: "[...] no one source can ever be credited for this highly synthetic style. [...]"

Art Déco in Cyprus is a common architectural idiom between circa 1930 and the beginning of the 1950s, yet the term has not been in use until recently. Instead, "early modernism" and "pre-mature modernism" are used as definitions of the local architectural modernity. The appearance of Art Déco in the British colony coincides with the architectural modernization of the island, which commenced around 1930. Regarding the creation of a modern architectural style the importance of Greek-Cypriot architects had been already emphasized. Academically educated Cypriot architects returned to the island from abroad starting from the 1920s. Among the early modern architects, it is important to mention Theodhoros Fotiades, who had been trained in Athens, and designed in Neo-Classical/Neo-Greek or historicist style. Or else, Polis Michaelides, who returned from France after a short term in the office of Le Corbusier and who designed the "early-modern" Nicosia Orphanage of 1934/35. However, the architects of other, similar modern buildings of the years 1930-1950 remain unknown, partially because of the lack of accessibility to the personal archives of Cypriot architects. Furthermore, the British influence can be traced in projects delivered by the Colonial Public Works Department. A lightly decorative design is applied to the public building project, the Konak of Morphou (Güzelyurt), prepared for the PWD in 1938 by William Caruana. Another possible influence might be the single case of Ben Zion Ginsburg, a German-Jewish architect, whose work is recorded in Limassol in 1930. Eventually, more Jewish architects worked in Cyprus, coming from the British colony of Palestine and its booming Tel Aviv. Another strong influence on the development of Art Déco in Cyprus might have come from a group of members of a widely travelled and well-educated upper class, of whom some were trained in British institutions. We presume that this, nowadays anonymous elite, had absorbed the modern trends abroad and eventually promoted them in Cyprus, just as a similar group fostered the
development of a highly decorative Art Déco architecture in another British colony in the 1930s: in India.\textsuperscript{11}

Although being an international trend in the 1920s and 1930s, Art Déco has been, according to my knowledge, categorized more specifically in the United States. The stylistic categories established for the American Art Déco, are therefore the basis of this study, which analyzes the style in Cyprus in comparison to other relevant regions and belonging trends: England which is very probably one source of the Art Déco style in Cyprus; the Dutch-German expressionist modernism, being a general source of the style; the architecture of Athens, that has itself, especially in the period between 1910 and 1920, been under influence of the French Beaux-Arts and which is a probable source of the architectural inspiration of Greek-Cypriot architects; and finally, another city under French influence: Casablance in Morocco.\textsuperscript{12}

The buildings discussed in this paper are selected from a collection that resulted from a research on the bigger Cypriot cities such as Famagusta, Kyrenia (Girne), Larnaca, Lefke, Limassol, Morphou (Güzelyurt), the capital Nicosia (Lefkosía, Lefkos¸a), Paphos, Trikomo, the capital Famagusta, Kyrenia (Girne), Larnaca, Lefke, through an analysis and comparison with local and international examples.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{13} Weber, 2005: 8, 10, 15; FRAMPTON, 2007: 220
\item \textsuperscript{16} MÜLLER-WULCKOW, 1975.a: 87, 94
\item \textsuperscript{17} BIRIS, 1999: 21
\item \textsuperscript{19} ILL.: COHEN et al., 2002: 103, 145. French trends in Morocco: COHEN et al., 2002: 159-160
\end{itemize}
vereos Library in the old town of Nicosia (1947-49) designed by P. Michaëliades. Its dominating (vertical) classicism and specific regional character is characterized, as in many other cases, by the use of the local ashlar. Compared to the tripartite facade of the Rialto Theatre and the gate to the municipal market, with its stepped, horizontally banded pediment, the library’s decorative character is visibly reduced. The horizontal bands below the rows of windows and the rounded flanks of the central, set-back entrance are in Art Déco style, the latter being a detail that occurs often in Cyprus and that can be traced back to Gropius’ model factory of 1914 in Köln.

Buildings of the later Cypriot classical moderne generally carry few ostentatiously decorative details and correspond more exactly to the term stripped classicism. Instead, in these cases, shape and material create the decorative effect. However, the trend of a minimal decoration occurred already early in the 1930s, as demonstrated by the Nicosia Palace Hotel, located in the old town. In addition to the ashlar facade, its protruding balconies are another local feature, not only of the local classical but also of the local streamline moderne. Accordingly, the decorative tripartite facade of the Limassol Town Hall with its central tower had been built rather early in between 1930 and 1950 (Fig. 1), whereas the design of the ashlar-cladded Telecommunications Building of Nicosia seems rather late due to its general resemblance with the Severeios Library.

A typical Cypriot, flat-roofed urban building type combines commercial function on the ground floor with residential space in the upper floor(s). The classical moderne of this type can be frequently seen in and around Nicosia’s Ledra Street in the old town, the former main commercial area. An example shown in Fig. 4, with ashlar-cladded symmetrical front dates surely back to the 1930s. The central part of the building derives from the local “serial house type” that developed around 1900. The building displays an abstract pediment and two oriel of which the latter possibly refer to the traditional Turkish house (Fig. 4). An authentic classical moderne does not exist in purely residential architecture which is characterized by a rather eclectic design, and often includes vernacular elements.

The examples of the Cypriot classical moderne were mainly concentrated in the cities’ old cores; the majority of the preserved buildings are located in Nicosia. If such buildings ever existed in greater numbers in the old towns of Famagusta, Larnaca, Limassol and Paphos, they then must have been replaced by successive modernizations of the 1950s to 1970s.

**The Art Déco Skyscraper Style in the United States and its Variants in Europe and Cyprus**

**Art Déco stil nebodera u sjedinjenim državama i njegove varijante u Europi i na Cipru**

The skyscraper style appeared in the United States and lasted approximately from 1923 to 1931, when it came to an end following the 1929 market crash. Its ostentatious vertical character is mainly related to skyscrapers, displaying repetitive stylized angular zig-zag ornaments, thus sometimes also called zig-zag moderne.

In England, there are also several examples of the skyscraper style, but in a smaller scale. These public, office or commercial buildings are equipped with one or more towers or tower-like elements. The character of the facades of the towers varies from a classical to a Mesopotamian monumentality, by two or more vertical ribs/piers that are applied either onto a closed wall surface, or that alternate with vertical stripes of glass. The vertical design of the buildings, that include sometimes zig-zag ornaments, stands in contrast to the two- or multi-storey flanking parts with streamlined profile. Another small-scale version of the skyscraper style is represented by the vertical design of the facades of several cinemas such as the New Victoria Cinema.

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21 Gössel et al., 2001: 102
24 Not to be confused with a Greek revival style resulting from a Greek-Cypriot nationalism, see: Given, 2005: 408-409. Mostly non-classical examples: Kiesel et al., 2010: fig. 9; 2011: fig. 5-8; Fig. 6, 10. Ledra street: Dem, 1997: 69
25 Serial house type (one- or two-storey detached or row house with two rooms and a central entrance facing the street on ground floor): Dem, 1997: 65-66. Turkish house: Küçükerman, 2007. More modernized oriel: Kiesel et al., 2011: fig. 5, 7-8
28 Early example of the skyscraper style: Palace of Fine Arts (1919-28): Vandenbreeden et al., 1996: 103
in London (1928-30) or the Mesopotamian-inspired Rex Cinema in Athens (1935-37). \(^{39}\) It can be questioned, however, if the small scale skyscrapers derive immediately from the American skyscraper tradition or rather, through a filter of the Dutch-German expressionists who designed public, commercial and industrial high-rise buildings with towers or tower-like elements, mostly of Mesopotamian spirit, both before and after 1920. \(^{30}\)

Similarly to England, in Cyprus there are also buildings with one or more towers, usually flanked by two-storey wings with flat roofs, in a streamlined tropical déco style. Tropical déco style is a variant of the streamline moderne characterized by strongly protruding parasols. \(^{31}\) In the case of a former wine factory in Limassol, an asymmetrical tripartite façade is complemented by a more decorative classical moderne tower. Its four portholes probably refer to the sea close-by (Fig. 3). However, the tower of the asymmetrical tripartite front of the Lanitis Bros. Coca-Cola Plant in Nicosia-Engomi (1952) displays a more rational classicism. The same tower type exists in the polypartite façade of a school building in the walled city of Nicosia. In this case, the decorativeness stems from the "portholes" on the towers, the protruding parasols in a tropical déco and from one entrance rendered in the classical moderne style. \(^{32}\) A British influence on the design of these buildings should be considered.

The third trend that developed in the United States after the market crash of 1929 is characterized by "rounded corners and horizontal parallel bands known as speed stripes", and often includes porthole windows and flat roofs. \(^{33}\) This streamline moderne is related to urban functions and road-side buildings such as gas stations, whereas the suburban residences usually retain a more traditional form. \(^{34}\) The morphological characteristics of the streamline moderne, the horizontally banded profile with rounded corners, can be traced back to four precursors of which the first two have not been emphasized before.

The first precursor occurs in Athens and could be called streamlined historicism, characterized by vertical elements between horizontal bands, which are at times interrupted. This is encountered on the two-storey Livieratos Mansion by Alexandros Nikoloudis (1909), a building with a rounded corner of the Beaux-Arts tradition, that displays the "fluid forms of the French Neo-Baroque". Later examples include the multi-storey corner buildings of the Neo-Baroque Acropolis Palace Hotel, and the Neo-Classical Athens University Students Club (both from 1926). \(^{35}\) The streamline character is often stressed by several separate or continuous protruding balconies, especially at the rounded corners, a feature that can be equally found in the French (Parisian) historicism and Art Nouveau. The streamlined historicism in England occurs seemingly without such balconies. \(^{36}\)

In the urban centers of Cyprus, the streamlined historicism can be encountered in the early 20th century as well, as shown by an eclecticist building with Neo-Baroque features at the Atatürk Square in the old town of Nicosia, dating approximately from the 1910s-1920s (Fig. 5). \(^{37}\) When compared to A. Nikoloudis’ Livieratos Mansion, a relation to the French Beaux-Arts tradition, virulent at the beginning of the 20th century in Athens, becomes evident. \(^{38}\) Similar to Paris, Casablanca, Athens and Tel Aviv, the specific feature of the Cypriot streamlined historicism during the 1910s to 1930s are the rows of separate or continuous protruding balconies. This feature is also encountered on buildings of the Cypriot Art Déco and of the more rational Cypriot modernism of the 1930s-1940s. \(^{39}\)
"Achilleion" Building in Phokionos Street in the old town of Nicosia. However, an authentic Art Déco detailing, as displayed by a 1932 flat-roofed building of this type, is not encountered before the 1930s (Fig. 6). These two examples with protruding balconies form the link between the historicist building at the Atatürk Square (Fig. 5) and the successive example of the authentic streamline moderne that is evident in the building shown in Fig. 10. The corners of both buildings are stressed by a pediment.44

The third and fourth precursors of the streamline moderne are the International Style and the streamline of the expressionist modernism, which has so far been mentioned only rarely and indirectly. The various expressionist trends have already been comprehensively analyzed by Wolfgang Pehnt.45 The following characteristics appear already in expressionist designs prior to the dissemination of Art Déco from 1925 onwards: the rounded corner and the horizontal profile, achieved by (moulded) protruding or indented continu-

40 Former headquarters of Northern Electric, the Carlill House (1927): http://www.flickr.com/photos/234599960@ N06/2861890351/in/pool-art-deco-britain. See the simi-
8880273/in/pool-28516954@N00/

41 Vouliagris building (1938), Tetenes building (1932),
building at 14 Nikitara street (1925) and the Commercial
Credit Bank (1931): FESSAS-EMMANOUL et al., 2005: 218-
219, 221, 89, 91, 64-65, 71, 73

42 IMCAMA building, Lévy-Bendayan building (1928), Es-
cot building, Compagnie Générale Transatlantique building
(1929), Ill.: COHEN et al., 2002: 134, 136, 141, 165, 166

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44 See also: KIESSEL et al., 2010: 261 fig. 9

45 PEHN, 1973

46 MÜLLER-WULCKOW, 1975a: 92 who describes Poe-
 Lizig’s design in 1929 as: “earliest example of consequent
horizontal layers of storeys and fluent corner solution […]”
(translation: author). Expressionist or Déco are the “capit-
als” of the piers between the storeys

47 Amsterdam: PEHN, 1973: 190 Fig. 466; TAFFUR et al.,
1977: 169 Fig. 260-262. The caption of the illustrations Da-
vey, 2010: 230 and PEHN, 1985: 102 Fig. 95 name it as
third block of Spaandamverplantsoen, 1917-21, Garkau:
492. Ill.: MÜLLER-WULCKOW, 1975a: 49
ous bands of ashlar, concrete or brick which accentuate rows of windows and mark the division between the storeys. It is additionally achieved by horizontal brick layers which express the structural quality of the wall on the surface proper.

Already very early Hans Poelzig's proto-Art Déco, streamlined office building in Breslau (1910) displays the combination of both the rounded corner, and the horizontal profile. A later example is a dynamic rounded building of Michel de Klerk's housing complex Eigen Haard in Amsterdam (1913-18). The rounded corners have been emphasized by Kenneth Frampton as a characteristic of the "organic" design of Hugo Häring's farm buildings in Garkau (1924). Following Poelzig's dynamic streamline in Breslau, it was Eric Mendelsohn who had quite early applied a horizontally banded profile on urban commercial, office, and suburban residential buildings. It is the horizontal character of his design, combined with rounded shapes, that can be related to Futurism. Several other architects of the early 1920s also combined brick and plaster with Mendelsohn's dynamic modeling.

The rounded forms of modern machines of transport, especially of steamers, in the work of Le Corbusier and other architects of the purist International Style, are usually considered as an influential factor in the formation of the Art Déco. These forms are clearly visible in early buildings with rounded corners such as the housing complex in Hoek van Holland (1924) by Johannes J. P. Oud or Le Corbusier's Maison Lipchitz in Boulogne-sur-Seine (1923-25).

The existence of the European expressionist modernism in Cyprus, just as of its derive, the streamline moderne, is clearly evident (see chapter 2.7). The first example of an authentic International Style might be a residential building by Neoptolemos Michaelides (1949-52). Further examples include the former Evkaf Hotel in the old town of Nicosia by Demirtaş Kamçı (1958-62), and the Police flats in Nicosia-Ormophita by Costas Christofides (1958), all of which do not display streamline characteristics. However, traces of the International Style can be found in the Cypriot streamline moderne.

The authentic streamline moderne that spreads (bez s) internationally at the end of the 1920s, (bez zareza) is characterized by horizontally banded modeling and rounded shapes, both characteristics of the Dutch and German expressionist modernism, and by a specific "Mendelsohnian" dynamic-futurist character.

The streamline moderne in England is characterized by brick or ashlar wall surfaces in
public, office, industrial and residential buildings in England.\(^5^9\) Other buildings use plastered surfaces instead of brick or ashlar walls between the horizontal bands, as shown in the Midland Hotel in Morecambe by Oliver Hill (1933).

The third variant varies a lot, as can be seen in the example of the former office building of the Daily Express (1930-32), glazed and covered in Vitrolite. In England, even traces of tropical déco exist, as proven by the row houses on Chichester Drive East in Saltdean (1934).\(^5^6\)

It is difficult if at all possible, to make a scholarly distinction between Art Déco and Expressionism in Germany. For instance, Pehnt and Lampugnani/Schneider ignore the term Art Déco entirely.\(^5^7\) This is due to the influential role of the Dutch-German Expressionism on Art Déco. Thus, the buildings such as Mendelsohn’s early Schocken Store in Stuttgart (1926-28) and a gas station in Frankfurt by Carl August Bembé (1938) are rather associated with Expressionism than with the term streamline moderne.\(^5^8\)

The design of the German streamline facades demonstrates the same combinations of materials – brick, ashlar and plaster – as was the case with English examples. Apparently, this design did not occur before 1930 either in England or in France.\(^5^9\) No traces of tropical déco in Germany are known to me.

The decorative streamline moderne without rounded corners is evident, for example, on a telephone centre in Athens by Ioannis A. Antoniades (1937). An apartment building in Piraeus (1935) represents its variant with a rounded corner and protruding balconies.\(^6^0\) Several multi-storey apartment buildings in Athens from the 1930s represent a more rational modernism, except from their slightly decorative rounded corners and rounded protruding balconies. A hotel of the 1930s-1940s in Crete is even characterized by a continuous balcony streamline.\(^6^1\)

The facades of these buildings do not consist of horizontal layers of brick with ashlar, as many of the Art Déco buildings in London or in Germany do. However, again the streamline effect of the protruding balconies is a specific characteristic of Greek architecture after 1930. No traces of tropical déco in Greece are known to me.

In Casablanca, Art Déco becomes less decorative and more compatible with the international streamline moderne after 1930.\(^6^2\) This development coincides with the fade-out of the aforementioned historicist variant of the Moroccan Art Déco that had been employed in residential and public buildings.\(^6^3\)

THE ART DÉCO STREAMLINE MODERNE IN CYPRUS

The first Cypriot buildings of a streamline moderne, according to the data presented in the introduction, date back to the early 1930s, whereas the latest examples date back to the beginning of the 1950s, as proven by the aforementioned Coca-Cola Plant in Nicosia (1952). This last case demonstrates the streamline in two variants: one without rounded corners, and the second in the tropical déco style with continuous horizontal parasols above the windows. The streamline character affects nearly all building types. The variants of the European streamline moderne, of the “Mendelsohnian” profile, are found in Cyprus in a modified form, where the local ashlar is the common material instead of brick, except from the cases showing plastered facades.\(^6^4\)

Amongst the public buildings, the rounded, flat-roofed municipal markets stand out: the ashlar-cladded, one-storey building in Morphou displays a morphological similarity with the brick-walled fish market in Northampton. The building in Larnaca, designed by Polis Michaelides in the 1930s, has modernist surfaces of concrete and glass, whereas the portholes around the entrance and the “cornices” belong to the Art Déco style.\(^6^5\) The longer side of the market in Trikomo, built in tropical déco style, turns into a pentapartite symmetrical front with individually rounded segments, which resembles a stepped Gothic gable (Fig. 7). The already mentioned two-storey Nicosia Orphanage by P. Michaelides, with its strip-like windows, flat-roof and ashlar-cladding, represents the imagery of a ship


\(^{5^7}\) Pehnt, 1973; LAMPUGNANI et al., 1994.

\(^{5^8}\) LAMPUGNANI et al., 1994: 61, 125, 282, 299

\(^{5^9}\) Sikora, 2008: 28-29, 62-67, 108-109. France: LOUPIAC et al., 1997: 181-182 fig. 70 (with reference to the Dutch expressionism), 200-201 fig. 77; See group “Art Déco et Modernisme à Paris” on flickr.com

\(^{6^0}\) Athens: http://farm4.static.flickr.com/3153/3997587361_14f9815b2c_b.jpg; Piraeus: http://farm2.static.flickr.com/1302/a690067589_1d283f39c5_b.jpg

despite the nonexistence of portholes and rounded corners. It achieves this effect with its elongated volume, its windows, its small flat-roofed loggia with the mast on top of the building, that connotes a steering cabin.\(^66\) I would argue that, considering the function of the building—the communal housing of “stranded” children—the ship motifs are not simply of a decorative character as in most cases of Cypriot buildings with ship motifs. Instead, they connote the “ark”, a common metaphor in the architecture of modern hospitals and sanatoria since the 1920s. Michaelides might have been immediately inspired by the work of Le Corbusier, the office of whom he had attended for a short while.\(^67\)

The streamline moderne style buildings of the commercial sector are represented by the recently renovated building of the Pallas Cinematic Theatre in Nicosia (Fig. 8). The building is dominated by the streamline character, whereas its rounded narrow side displays vertical elements of classical spirit. The rounded entrance may indirectly be inspired by Mendelsohn’s influential Universum Cinema in Berlin (1926-28), but more directly by cinemas such as the former Embassy Theatre in Peterborough (1937) that has a rounded narrow side dominated by vertical ribs.\(^68\) The street-oriented long side of the Pallas Theatre in Nicosia exhibits similar characteristics to the one of the Embassy Theatre in Peterborough: a protruding body above the ground floor emphasized by a horizontal band. The result is the impression of a strong movement forward.

Several industrial complexes in Cyprus also relate to the streamline style, with the most ostentatious element being the entrance to a one-storey office building at Famagusta-Varosha (Fig. 9).

62 Bendahan apartment building (1935), Socifrance office building (1934/35), villa Dar es-Saada at Anfa (1935): Cohen et al., 2002: 187, 189, 211. See also ill. on p. 258, 265
63 Cohen et al., 2002: 171-172
64 Cohen et al., 2002: 187, 189, 211. See also ill. on p. 258, 265
66 Basic data: Fereos et al., 2006: 15 fig. 2; Fereos et al., 2009: 81
67 This building has to be added to the few in Cyprus presented by Kiessel et al. 2011 which transport a metaphorical meaning by their ship motifs. Ship motifs in modern architecture: Kähler, 1981
68 Universum: James, 1999, Embassy: http://www.arthurlloyd.co.uk/Peterborough.htm
69 Further examples: Kiessel et al., 2010: Fig. 9; 2011: Fig. 5-6, 8
71 Kiessel et al., 2011: 219 Fig. 2

The typical Cypriot urban building type that combines commercial function on the ground floor with residential space on the upper floor(s) often exhibits streamline characteristics, especially if located at street corners. It usually has protruding balconies expressing the horizontal profile. A flat-roofed building of the 1930s in Kyrenia exemplifies the widespread type and demonstrates the succession of the style depicted in Fig. 5-6 (Fig. 10).\(^70\) Another corner building is the Bank of Cyprus in Limassol by the Michaelides brothers (1947). It shows a stronger classical spirit achieved by the two-storey piers of its main body that rests on a little base. Above the main body of the building, a one-storey apartment with a streamlined protruding balcony is formed. Almost the same design had been applied to the former Bank of Cyprus building in Morphou, probably contemporaneously designed by the Michaelides office. The three-storey flat-roofed Sokrates Hotel in Kyrenia displays how the same morphology can easily be applied to a different function (Fig. 11).\(^70\)

Many residential suburban and rural buildings also carry streamline moderne characteristics. The detached flat-roofed type is represented by a one-storey residence in Morphou (Fig. 12), and by a two-storey residence in Kyrenia with a vernacular arcade portico.\(^21\) The type of a flat-roofed row-house is represented by a two-storey building on Istanbul Street in Nicosia’s old town. In suburban and rural buildings, the streamline is also combined with the pitched roof, as visible in a detached one-storey building in Morphou. It is equipped with a projecting, glazed veranda that is directed towards the street corner, and that ends in a
French influence on Cypriot architecture in the second and third decades of the 20th century, through Athens as a mediator. Architects like Theodhoros Fotiades may have played an important role in this process.

In Cyprus, balconies appeared between 1880-1920, at the time when the aforementioned "serial house type" also emerged. In contrast to the previous Ottoman courtyard house type, the facade now opens to the street and displays often a historicist or classical vocabulary. Gradually, the balcony pushed back the traditional Turkish oriel which had been a prominent feature of the "serial house type" as well. The oriel gave the opportunity to women to overview the street in front of their houses without being seen. Whereas the oriel represents privacy, the balcony reflects the enhanced possibilities of women to participate in the social life in front of their houses.

"ECLECTIC" ART DÉCO MODERNE IN CYPRUS „EKLEKTIÈKI" ART DÉCO MODERNIZAM NA CIPRU

Apart from the general eclectic nature of Art Déco, many buildings in Cyprus demonstrate various combinations of several Art Déco trends, the International Style and, at times, the vernacular elements.

First there is the House of Representatives (former Public Information Centre) in Nicosia, built by the colonial PWD under the supervision of Costas Christofides in 1955 in a "purely modern style". A precise analysis, however, shows that the flat-roofed building displays a mixture of various characteristics: the combination of vertical classical moderne and porthole-machine aesthetic at the central part of the front facade, a classical moderne on the left side of the building, and elements of the horizontal streamline moderne on the right part of the front facade. The clas-

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73. Maps of urban expansion of Nicosia, Famagusta outside of the old towns, from 1930-60: Keshishian, 1990: 26; Keshishian, 1995: 66
74. Cyprus: Keshishian, 1990: 218, bottom, compare the multi-storey example in Fig. 5, Tel Aviv: Aronis, 2009: 163-165. Fig. 4: built in an "eclectic style".
78. Oriel, serial house: Demi, 1997: 73-74. "Modern" oriel: Fig. 3; Kiessel et al., 2011: Fig. 5-7. Balconies and privacy in Tel Aviv: Aronis, 2009: 167-68. Use of balconies in Cyprus: Fasli et al., 2001: 3
79. Fereos et al., 2009: 55
sical concept of the entrance with its flanking vertical rows of porthole reminders of the upper part of the classical moderne facade of the Hotel Ducharme by Pierre Patout in Paris (1925).\(^6\) An approach to expressionist modernism without the common rounded architectural morphology can be seen on the building that today functions as the post office of Morphou (Fig. 15). The fully brick-clad, flat-roofed building exhibits a certain classical character, underlined by the frieze of brick triglyphs below the cornice.\(^7\) The public hospitals of Famagusta and Limassol — the former being demolished in August 2011 — despite displaying porthole windows as a metaphor for a rescuing “ark”, both belong to the Art Déco due to their subdued detailing: decorative horizontal bands, vertically fluted pilaster-like surfaces, and a purely decorative porthole.\(^8\)

The tropical déco of the two flanking sides of the tripartite Nicolau Press building in the old town of Nicosia by Odysseas Tsangarides (1938) is combined with the modernized classicism of the central entrance which has no central tower, in contrast to the representatives of the Art Déco small-scale skyscraper style.\(^9\) Refined Art Déco detailing, such as portholes and horizontally accentuated rows of separate windows are also applied to hotels that belong to a more rational modernism: such as the Constantia Hotel in Famagusta (today the Palm Beach Hotel) built between 1950 and 1960, and the Dome Hotel in Kyrenia, built before 1935.\(^10\)

Many residential buildings of the era show eclectic characteristics; a two-storey ashlar-cladded building with a pitched roof and the protruding eave of a Turkish house is the most decorated one I came across in Cyprus (Fig. 16). Despite its asymmetry, zig-zag ornament, streamline detailing and protruding parasols in the style of tropical déco, it displays an overall spirit of the classical moderne.

The formerly suburban Pavilions Residence on Limassol shoreline, built by B. Ginsburg approximately around 1938 has a rounded tower decorated with “Mesopotamian” ribs.\(^5\) Apart from the tower, the building demonstrates a rational modern character with a few portholes that refer to the sea.

**Conclusion**

**Zaključak**

This paper shows that architectural modernism in Cyprus in the 1930s and 1940s, usually called “early modernism” or “pre-mature modernism”, is dominated by the Art Déco style in nearly all building types. The International Style and its machine aesthetic are very rarely found until the end of the 1940s. The Cypriot Art Déco is less decorative than in places where the style was contemporaneously present, for example in Bombay. The streamline moderne and its variant, the tropical déco, are the most dominant Art Déco styles apart from an eclectic Art Déco which displays various combinations of the three main Déco styles, the classical moderne, the skyscraper style and the streamline moderne. Almost all variations of the Cypriot Art Déco are characterized by vernacular elements such as: the arcaded portico, the hipped roof, the oriel, the row of balconies, and the ashlar cladding.

It is most likely that the immediate stylistic influences of this “Mediterranean Art Déco” derive from England and Athens, to which either close political, economical or cultural connections existed. Especially in England, the streamline moderne with its rounded, horizontal, originally Dutch-German expressionist “Mendelsohnian” profile, was very common. This paper also suggests that an elite group of Cypriot architects and clients who are partially anonymous today, had absorbed modern trends abroad and promoted them on the island.

The frequency of the Art Déco streamline moderne and the rounded architectural morphology in Cyprus can be explained by the previously existing rounded forms of a streamlined historicism, evident in Cyprus and similarly in England, Paris, Athens and Casablanca in the beginning of the 20th century. This rounded architectural morphology is decisively emphasized by horizontal rows of balconies, a characteristic that is prominent in the architecture of Cyprus just as in the architecture of Paris and Athens and in the architecture of several cities within French and British colonies: Casablanca, Beirut and Tel Aviv. Therefore, the morphology of this streamlined historicism very likely derives, in the case of Cyprus, from Paris through Athens as mediator.

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**ILLUSTRATION SOURCES**

1. Fig. 9 Photo by Asu Tozan, PhD, Eastern Mediterranean University, Famagusta
2. Fig. 13 Drawing by Nevet Zafer Cömert, M.Arch, Cyprus International University, according to the instructions of the author
3. All other images by the author.
Pojava Art Déco stila u Britanskoj koloniji poduđara se s arhitektonskom modernizacijom otoka koja je zapocela oko 1930. No, sam naziv usao je u upotrebu tek nedavno. Ciparskim arhitektima koji su se vracali iz inozemstva od dvadesetih godina 20. stoljeća povjerena je važna uloga u modernizaciji. Ipak, imena autora mnogih zgrada sagrađenih između 30-ih i 50-ih godina 20. st. ostala su neznačajne. Britanski utjecaj može se pratiti preko projekata Kolonijalnog odsjeka za javne radove. Snažan utjecaj imali su danas anonimni arhitekti koji su preuzeli moderne trendove iz inozemstva i dalje ih razvijali na Cipru.

Stilske varijacije američkog Art Decoa kao što su klasični modernizam, stil nebode / zig-zag modernizam, modernizam fluidnih linija i njegova inačica, tzv. tropski deco, predstavljaju tematski sadržaj ove analize izvršene na temelju usporedbe sa stilovima u ostalim relevantnim regijama kao što su: Engleska koja vrlo vjerojatno predstavlja važan prethodnik od kojih pravci historicizma fluidnih linija i njegova inačica, tzv. tropski déco dominantno je obilježen stilom Art Déco.


Zaobljena morfološka Art Déco stila s istaknutim balkonima prisutna je u svim ciljaparskim gradovima i brojnim selima i time se dokazuje da je između tridesetih i pedesetih godina 20. stoljeća došlo do znakovne modernizacije, urbane obnove i širenja. Afrička celina dobio je izrazit uređeni oblik nakon početkom 30-ih godina 20. stoljeća. Postoje različiti oblici zgrada između 1930. i 1950. godine: stambene rezidencije u predgrađima koje imaju fasadu od lokalnih kamenih klesanaca i koje pokrajima imaju i vernakularne elemente. Korisna bi bila daljnja istraživanja o međusobnim povezanostima Mediteranskog Art Décoa, Beaux-Artsa, arhitekture francuskih kolonija i na Cipru gdje je moderni klasicizam već vjerojatno postojao krajem dvadesetih godina 20. stoljeća.

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