

# PICTURESQUE MODERNITIES

## ARCHITECTURAL REGIONALISM AS A GLOBAL PROCESS (1890-1950)

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### Between Alsace and Pacific Ocean: Regionalist Heimatschutz architecture in the late Bismarck Empire and in it's peripheric territories 1900-1918

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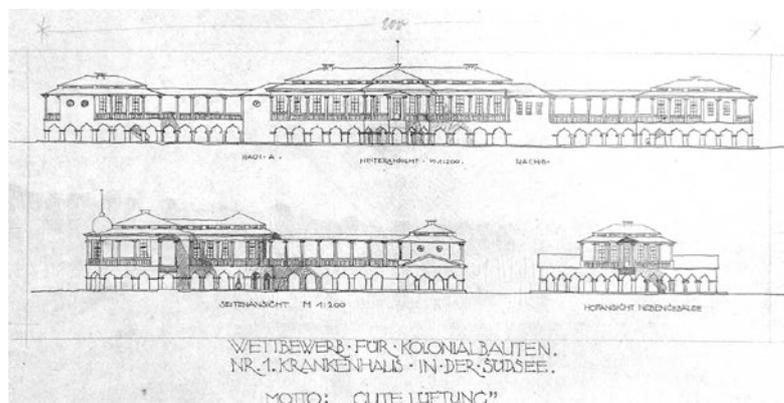
#### Abstract

In the late Bismarck Empire the German version of regionalist architecture found it's first manifests in the pamphlet Heimatschutz (1897) by Ernst Rudorff and the very influential book series Kulturarbeiten (1901-1907) by Paul Schultze-Naumburg, who acted as the first president of the Deutscher Bund Heimatschutz (founded in 1904). Rudorff's identity construction in order to defend and preserve German Heimat included nationalist and völkisch elements. It did not aim against industry in general, but against their effects of mutilation, disfiguration, and homogenization in landscape and architecture.

Regional branches of the movement and their architects collected forms of traditional vernacular architecture and proposed Bavarian, Silesian, Saxonian, North German etc. versions of Heimatschutzarchitektur. The bund became the operative framework of the powerful Heimatschutzbewegung, active in site preservation, protection of historical monuments and subtle integration of new construction. The turn to regionalism was supported by reputed protagonists of the early modern movement like Theodor Fischer and Fritz Schumacher, who were also founding members of the Werkbund (1907).

A centrifugal regionalism did arise at the south west periphery of the Reich, where a parallel regionalist movement developed in the province of Alsace with it's capital Strassburg. This landscape had been a German territory until Louis XIV, but was annexed from France and integrated into the Reich after the French-German war of 1870/71. In this place, régionalisme not only pushed traditional local Heimatkunst and architecture, it sometimes expressed nostalgia to french culture and was linked to a political regionalism, which opposed the centralist and integrating strategies from Berlin and aimed at cultural and political autonomy. When after WW I Alsace was returned to France, the regionalist movement turned into an autonomy movement then fighting French centralism.

A third focus will be directed at a specific colonial center-periphery situation in Deutsch-Neuguinea. The south German regionalist architect Dominikus Böhm, who had never traveled to this most far-flung territory of the Reich, in 1914 proposed a hospital building in an regionalist style which imagined the tropical climate of a pacific island.



Dominikus Böhm: Hospital for an island in the German-colonial Oceania (1914)

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