

Editor's Note

Since its inception, the International Association for the Study of Traditional Environments (IASTE) has had unparalleled support from its host institution, the University of California, Berkeley. In the current economic climate, U.C. Berkeley, like many public universities, is facing great crisis as budgets have been slashed, faculty have been furloughed, and the U.C. system has made movements toward privatization. Even while IASTE remains healthy, these developments are troubling to scholars who have relied on the open, inclusive nature of public institutions as places of inspired discourse and investigation.

Even in the midst of this crisis, scholarship on tradition and the built environment remains exciting and innovative. This issue of *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review* explores a variety of geographies and themes, demonstrating the continuing creative production within our area of interest. The issue opens with Amy Murphy's "Future Traditions of Nature," a revised version of her paper that was co-recipient of the Jeffrey Cook Award at the 2008 IASTE conference. Using the virtual lens of Japanese anime, Murphy shows how postindustrial societies need to reorient their understanding of nature away from an unsustainable ideology of resourcism. As in the postapocalyptic landscapes of these films, this will require reassessment of spatial metaphors, constrictive binaries, and false hierarchies. From the fantasy geographies of anime, the issue moves to the streets of New York's Lower East Side, where Lara Belkind examines how newcomers have adopted a strategy of urban camouflage over the last thirty years to blend in and build cultural capital. Here, she argues, claims to tradition (particularly the preservation of traces of the neighborhood's working-class and immigrant past) have been used to mask the gradual cultural and economic transformation of a "found territory" of low-income tenements and commercial buildings into an increasingly globalized milieu. Questions of authenticity are also at the heart of our third paper, Andrei Serbescu's discussion of the changing rural environment of post-socialist Romania. In this case, the sudden opening to capitalism has created new patterns of vernacular building that clash with old village forms. Nevertheless, Serbescu argues, these embody a return to traditional building practices (largely banished under the Communist regime), even if the emerging forms currently lack aesthetic distinction.

Issues of continuity and change also dominate a Special Article from Alona Nitzan-Shifan that interrogates the effect of the changing border with Palestine on Israeli architectural production. She argues that ongoing construction of a concrete security wall is only the most recent shift in this border, whose physical location has altered the relation between Israelis, the land, and its history; and whose symbolic qualities have led to heated debate over appropriate forms and materials. Finally, in the Field Report section, Yishi Liu explores the domestic architecture of Korean migrants to northeast China as an expression of identity and changing Chinese ethnic and frontier policies. Unlike other instances where hybrid architecture has been theorized as a form of resistance to state power, in this case it has been a cooperative effort by the population and the Chinese government. However, its hybrid quality may still be seen as resisting the effects of globalization.

In the last issue, it was our pleasure to announce that the IASTE 2010 conference would be held in Beirut, Lebanon, and that its theme would be "The Utopia of Tradition." Many of you have received the Call for Papers Poster, which we hope you have shared with your colleagues. The full text can also be found at the end of this issue. We hope you will all submit abstracts and join us in Beirut in December of 2010.

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