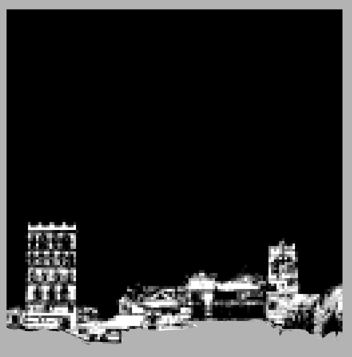
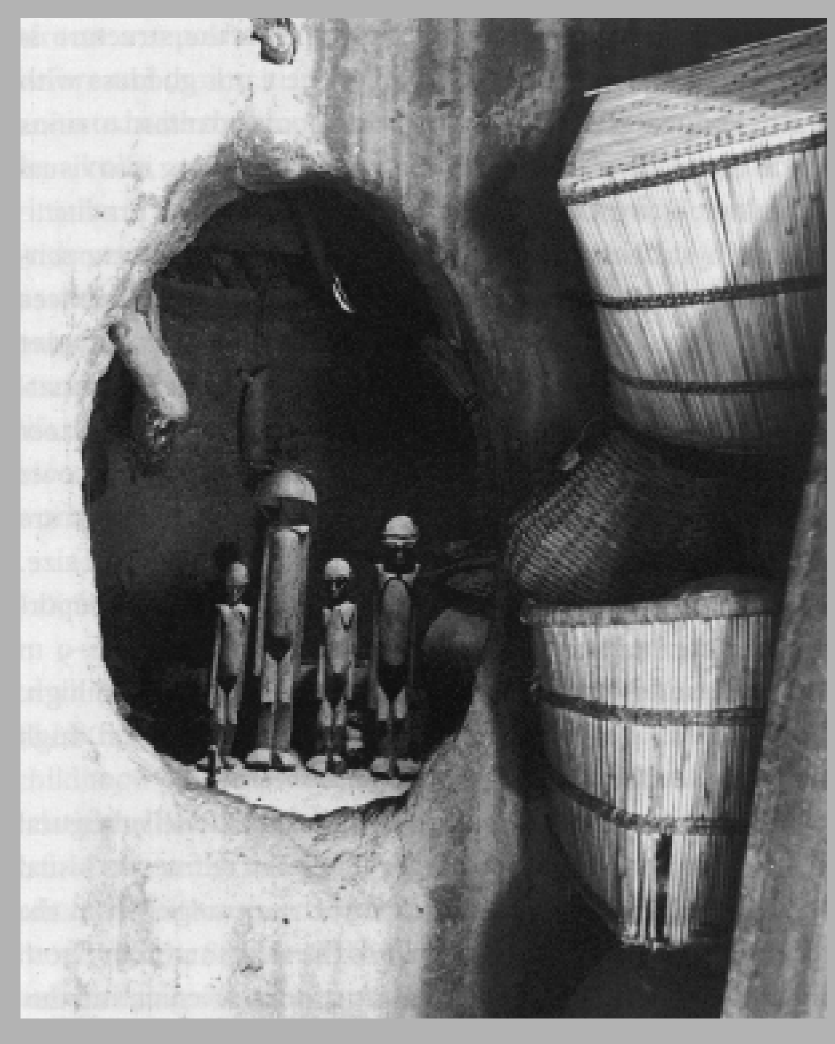


TRADITIONAL DWELLINGS AND SETTLEMENTS REVIEW

JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF TRADITIONAL ENVIRONMENTS



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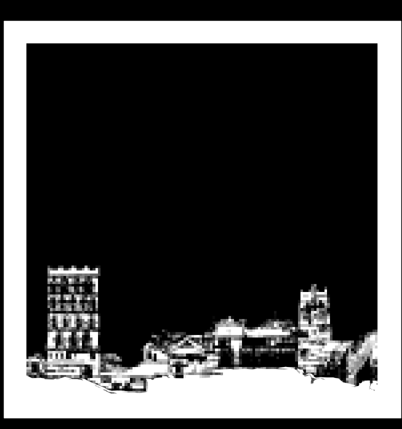

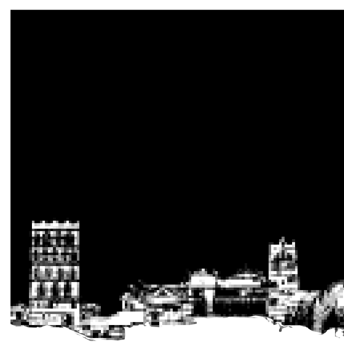

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IASTE membership is open to all who are interested in traditional environments and their related studies. In addition to receiving the Association's semi-annual journal, members are eligible to attend the biennial conference at reduced rates. Subscription to the journal is available only with membership in IASTE. Domstic annual order rates are as follows: Individual, $50; Institutional, $100; Corporations, $160. Foreign members add $15 for mailing. Libraries, museums, and academic organizations qualify as institutions. Subscriptions are payable in U.S. dollars only (by check drawn on a U.S. bank, U.S. money order, or international bank draft). Send inquiries to:

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TDSR VOLUME X NUMBER II SPRING 1999

TRADITIONAL DWELLINGS AND SETTLEMENTS REVIEW

Journal of the International Association for the Study of Traditional Environments

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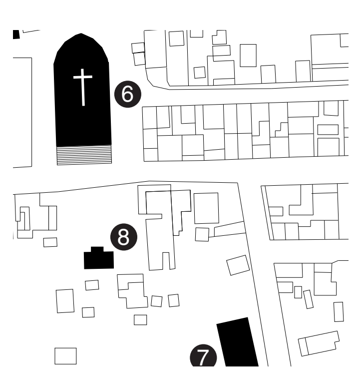

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COVER ILLUSTRATION: *Thildu*, the house of the spirits, from where the ancestors continue to protect the Lobi family group, Ghana. © Tito Spini and Giovanna Antongini. Reprinted with permission from *Encyclopedia of Vernacular Architecture of the World,* Paul Oliver, ed.

Editor's Note

I would like to start this note by reporting on the success of the IASTE 1998 conference, held in Cairo, Egypt, last December. The event was attended by more than 300 participants, about 120 of whom presented papers on various issues related to the theme "Manufacturing Heritage and Consuming Tradition." In addition to the rich plenary and regular sessions, the conference was enlivened by a number of extracurricular activities. The opening ceremonies were held in the majestic and recently restored auditorium of Cairo University, and were followed by a reception in the equally impressive hall under the dome. Halfway through the conference, participants were invited to roam the streets of Islamic Cairo, an area which was especially lively in preparation for Ramadan festivities. The tour ended with a reception at Beit al-Harawi, a sixteenth-century courtyard house. The closing event was an elegant dinner and cruise on the Nile, complete with traditional music and dance.

As was the case with our previous conferences, we will publish some of the plenary- and regular-session papers in the next year or so. I have reached agreement with a publisher to produce an edited volume, *Global Norms and Urban Forms*, that will include some of the keynote papers and be fleshed out through the inclusion of invited papers on the theme of manufacturing heritage and consuming tradition in the global era. Similarly, this issue of *TDSR* is meant to present a sampling of the different sub-themes presented at the conference.

We begin with an article by Leonardo Castriota describing conflicts between state preservation policies and the needs of the local population in the historic Brazilian gold-mining city of Ouro Preto. Next, Christian Galpin and Ann Hublin show how a French architect working on the West Indian island of Guadeloupe during the early part of this century arrived at an innovative blend of modern technology and climatic adaptation that is now part of the island's tradition. Rami Daher then introduces us to the politics of power, culture and capital in the emerging Jordanian heritage industry. In our section "On Design," Katharine Leigh and Abimbola Asojo demonstrate how different ethnic communities in the United States are engaged in forging new identities through the design of sacred places. Finally, in a "Field Report," Rosemary Latter discusses the reconciliation between agriculture and tourism in Switzerland, and its effect on the built environment. Our book review section begins with a substantial "Review Article" by Peter Nabokov on the recently published *Encyclopedia of Vernacular Architecture of the World*, a monumental contribution to the field of traditional settlements, edited by Paul Oliver. We hope you all enjoy this issue.

Nezar AlSayyad

Living in a World Heritage Site: Preservation Policies and Local History in Ouro Preto, Brazil

LEONARDO CASTRIOTA

This article describes conflicts between state preservation policies and the needs the local population in the city of Ouro Preto, Brazil. Former capital of the wealthy gold mining state of Minas Gerais, Ouro Preto is today one of Brazil's most significant historic sites. Having been preserved nearly intact following the decline in gold mining during the nineteenth century, the city was rediscovered in the 1920s by modernist intellectuals seeking a representation of national identity, and in the years that followed a new federal preservation agency initiated efforts to homogenize its image. Beginning in the 1960s, however, modernization pressures led to antagonism between the preservation agency and the local population. A new industrial boom brought Ouro Preto renewed growth, a demand for more buildings in the historic area, and the rapid and disorderly occupation of its surrounding hills. More recently, as industrial activity has slumped, both the government and local population have identified tourism as the city's most important economic alternative. Historic and present-day conflicts are illustrated through examination of an important public space, the Largo do Coimbra.

The faculty of reminiscence is not something natural, but rather an achievement, a difficult invention through which men and women have learned gradually to appropriate their individual and collective pasts. Memory, a power so important in the construction of culture it took the form of a goddess among the ancient Greeks, is also a selective ability: in order to remember, one has to forget. Such a mechanism also seems to govern state heritage-preservation policies, which are often aimed at the construction of national identity.

***Leonardo Castriota** is a Professor of Architecture and Chair of the Department of Architectural History at the Federal University of Minas Gerais, Belo Horizonte, Brazil.*

FIGURE 1. *Ouro Preto, the most significant colonial architectural ensemble in Brazil and the first city in Brazil to be classified as a national monument, and as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. (Photo courtesy of Laboratório de Fotodocumentação, Escola de Arquitetura, UFMG.)*

Such policies function as a dialectic: to create a national identity, certain aspects must be emphasized in preference to others, and light must be shed on certain moments in history while others are relegated to obscurity. As far as so-called historical cities are concerned, this process often entails erasing conspicuous marks of local history that have taken years to crystallize, in order to create a national symbol.

Such conflicting priorities are well represented in the vicissitudes of preservation policies adopted this century in the city of Ouro Preto, Brazil. The former capital of the state of Minas Gerais and the country's most important urban center from the gold cycle of the eighteenth century,[1] Ouro Preto today is the most significant colonial architectural ensemble in Brazil. It was also the first city in the country to be classified as a national monument, and as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO (FIG.1). Preserved practically intact thanks to a long period of economic stagnation, the city has been the focus since the 1930s of preservation policies that have largely succeeded in preserving its physical fabric. But such policies have created an idealized object, at the same time they have overlooked key aspects of the city's history and alienated its population. To illustrate such vicissitudes, this article will examine, albeit briefly, the transformations of one of Ouro Preto's most significant urban spaces, the Largo do Coimbra, a space typical of Portuguese urbanism in the Americas.

THE CAPITAL OF THE MINES OF GOLD

In the 1960s, in an important study of civil architecture in colonial Brazil, Robert Smith observed that even though the Portuguese discoverers were men of the Renaissance, as urbanists, they "belonged to the Middle Ages."[2] The presence of Portuguese medieval urbanism in the colonial cities of Brazil made them completely different from their Spanish counterparts in the Americas. The regular layout of the latter, derived from architectural treatises written by Renaissance theoreticians, was established in the "Leyes Generales de los Reynos de Índias," issued by King Phillip II of Spain in 1573. It was largely by means of these "laws" that the expanding Spanish Empire attempted to establish urban centers that followed regular geometrical patterns, even when the lay of the land was not suitable to such abstraction. Thus, the Spanish colonial town, with its checkerboard grid, differentiated itself from surrounding farming areas, creating a clear separation between culture and nature. Spanish colonial towns were also distinguished by the conspicuous role played by a *plaza mayor* or *plaza de armas*. This geometrical space, where both religious and temporal power were concentrated, played the role of town center, exercising an unquestionable power of attraction. In contrast, the Brazilian town, loyal to its Portuguese origins, was irregularly shaped and multicentered, having an undefined outline.[3] Such characteristics were evident during the early coloniza-

tion of the coast in places like Salvador and Rio de Janeiro. But they were even more pronounced in Ouro Preto, which was founded in the early eighteenth century to assist with the exploitation of gold in Brazil's highlands — a region that would become known, not without reason, as Minas Gerais (General Mines).

Today Ouro Preto occupies a rather peculiar and unfavorable site. At 1,100 meters above sea level, it stretches over a craggy area, occupying steep sites that are difficult to access — a constraint compounded by the hard local soil, which makes grading difficult. Ouro Preto's linear shape may be explained by the very process of its formation. The city emerged as the connection between two small miners' settlements, erected around two chapels (Antônio Dias and Pilar) situated on opposite sides of a hill. Reflecting the Portuguese colonial tradition, the city was not planned or organized according to a preconceived layout, but formed gradually, articulating itself around an old road connecting these two original centers of activity. Such a layout adapted itself to the contours of the terrain in a casual manner; instead of taking a grid form with aligned streets, the city spread out to cover the hillsides, with individual structures positioned to avoid both the strong winds and floods that were frequent in the area (FIG.2). If no established pattern can be observed in such a process of settlement formation, it still followed a certain logic. Lívia Romanelli d'Assumpção has written that the layout of Brazilian towns in the eighteenth century: "follow[ed], where possible, the same contour line, avoiding obstacles, bordering water streams or even hilltops for improved orientation and economy."[4]

Another key aspect of Ouro Preto's formation was its fast initial growth. The city evolved from 1701 to 1721 from a small miners' settlement to the capital of the newly created province of Minas Gerais. The rapidity of its growth reflected the wealth to be found there. Despite the poor alluvium mining technique in use at the time, in the first seventy years of the eighteenth century Brazil produced approximately half of all gold mined worldwide from 1500 to 1800. Such economic vitality attracted legions of mostly Portuguese immigrants in search of wealth. As a result, Ouro Preto's early ensemble of buildings underwent rapid expansion, and the conditions were created for the establishment of a number of intermediary social classes. On the one hand, as the Portuguese Crown realized it needed to make itself present in the region, it dispatched a large bureaucratic apparatus to the city to oversee the area's mining activities. On the other hand, the explosion of wealth in the area led to a rapid expansion of the city's business and service sectors, attracting craftsmen, artisans, masons, sculptors, carpenters, tailors — as well as tramps and prostitutes.

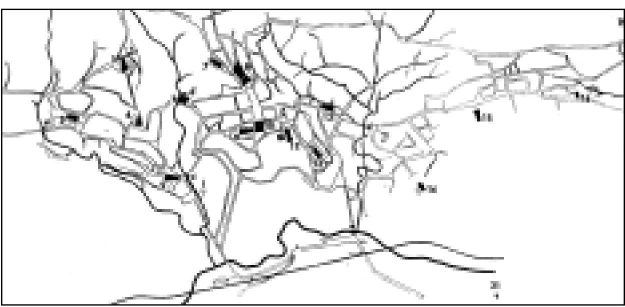

FIGURE 2. *Ouro Preto's layout. (Based on: R.M. de Andrade, "The Conservation of Urban Sites," in* The Conservation of Cultural Property, *Paris, UNESCO Press, 1975.)*

FIGURE 3. *The face of Brazil's colonial towns: a sequence of irregularly spread streets, lined by rows of houses built to the limits of their lots, forming an unbroken street wall. (Photo courtesy of Laboratório de Fotodocumentação, Escola de Arquitetura, UFMG.)*

In such a rich and multifaceted environment, it is not difficult to imagine the role played by public space. In general, the streets and squares of Brazil's colonial cities served as the locale for a great amount of economic and social activity. Following this pattern, Ouro Preto's streets were soon transformed from simple miners' trails to lively social spaces. Their appearance also changed, as houses along them were built to be admired, their facades given ever more prominence. It was not long before the image of such colonial towns was consolidated as a sequence of irregular streets, lined by rows of houses built to the limits of their lots, forming an unbroken street wall (FIG.3). And in the absence of large civic squares similar to the *plazas mayores* of the Spanish colonial towns, small squares, usually associated with churches, became the focus of urban life. The basic rule in creating such centers for socializing seems to have been to assign one church to each small square.

The rich urban scene or Ouro Preto during the eighteenth century was no exception to this pattern of colonial urban growth. Churches articulated space, demarcating the central areas of Ouro Preto and occupying most significant locations. In her study of the city's churches and their spatial patterns, Raquel Julião asserted that these religious buildings served as expressions of identity and independence for a multiplicity of social groups. "In fact, not only did they help to organize the local society, but they also structured the urban landscape. It is the ensem-

ble of churches that gives a meaning to the town, making it understandable."[5] The only exception to this rule was Tiradentes Square, an official space laid out on top of Santa Quitéria Hill. At the highest point in the city, separating its two initial settlements, its occupation was always planned and governed by the state (FIG.4). A different spatial arrangement eventually appeared in this area, tending toward a regular checkerboard pattern, reflecting imperial power and its increasingly repressive policies.

MODERNITY AND TRADITION: AN ORTHODOX NARRATIVE

In a country marked by the ideology of the new, whose landscape is extremely changeable, the preservation of an entire ensemble of buildings from the eighteenth century, seems remarkable. Notwithstanding, as has been noted by Rodrigo M.F. de Andrade, Ouro Preto's present aspect, "characterized by the tiered layout on a steep hillside, bears the marks of its history — early wealth, a period of rapid development, a century and a half of administrative power and prestige, followed by a gradual decline, impoverishment and loss of status."[6]

De Andrade's comment reflects the fact that even though the city lost its economic vitality after the depletion of its gold mines in the early nineteenth century, it remained the capital of Minas Gerais for nearly one hundred years more, organizing the state's economic, social and political life through its administrative offices, supported by business and manufacturing activities. In addition, when the School of Mines was founded in 1875, Ouro Preto became an important academic center, contributing to the formation of a technical elite that rose to prominence in Brazil's business and political spheres. However, this new balance was suddenly disrupted with the advent of the Republic, when the decision was made to move the state capital to Belo Horizonte in 1897.[7] Following the departure of state government, Ouro Preto underwent a rapid decline, and its population dropped from 17,860 to less than 10,000 inhabitants.

Preserved nearly intact thanks chiefly to the decline in gold mining in the nineteenth century, but also to the loss of its status as a state capital, Ouro Preto was not rediscovered until the 1920s, when writers participating in the Brazilian modernist movement came to regard it as a symbol of national identity. During this period, heritage preservation also became politically significant in Brazil for the first time, attracting government involvement.[8] At the time of the first centennial of Brazilian independence, when large federal museums had already come into existence, the press was filled with accusations that the country's historic cities were being neglected, causing the irremediable destruction of the "nation's treasures."

There is a peculiar twist to this story of the rediscovery of Brazilian built heritage. Heritage-preservation policies in Brazil have traditionally been drawn up and implemented by progressive intellectuals rather than conservative groups. One reason is that in addition to its strong criticism of traditional academic arts, the Brazilian modern movement has stressed cultural renovation and a search for roots, and has placed the issue of identity on the national agenda. As Helena Bomeny has pointed out, modernist intellectuals in Brazil believed that "cosmopolitanism, immigration, foreignism, imitation, classicism's conventional and universalized formulas, timeless solutions, stilted language" were dangerous.[9] Thus, while keeping in close contact with the European avant-garde, Brazilian modernists developed a peculiar relationship with tradition, refusing the idea of a radical rupture with the past. As summarized by the art critic Aracy Amaral:

FIGURE 4. *Tiradentes Square. (Photo courtesy of Laboratório de Fotodocumentação, Escola de Arquitetura, UFMG.)*

In the twenties, architecture, literature, and the visual arts were marked by a desire for formal renovation, making the early years of this century a time of cultural definition, particularly in São Paulo. The intellectual and art communities remained attentive to what was happening in Europe, especially in Paris, but emotional commitments lay with Brazil. Although educated in Europe, the Brazilian artists and writers who participated in the modernist movement – which had its historical beginning during the Week of Modern Art at São Paulo's Municipal Theater, 11 to 18 February 1922 – gradually came to realize that Brazilian reality was as important as formal renovation.[10]

In this context, it should come as no surprise that Brazilian modernists "rediscovered" Minas Gerais and, in particular, Ouro Preto. In their search for a "deep" national identity, they identified expressions of genuine Brazilian civilization in this eighteenth-century ensemble, and in so doing, they revalued the local Baroque style, which had long been considered eccentric and unimportant. Instead, the modernists claimed the style was a new cultural synthesis, created by an isolated society which had managed to rework various cultural influences in its own manner. In this sense, the approach of Brazilian modernists to the eighteenth century can be compared with the approach of the European avant-garde to the primitive and archaic — with the particularity that the primitive in Brazil pointed to the country's cultural roots. In Brazil the avant-garde rediscovery of primitive culture corresponded to the rediscovery of another, nonofficial national culture, one which had been ignored for years.

In terms of architecture, this reading of the national past eventually came to play an important part both in the formulation of Brazil's preservation policy and Brazil's distinct strain of modernist design. The combination of a search for the new and a revaluation of tradition is clearly evident in the course followed by Lúcio Costa, the creator of Brasília, who was also the intellectual leader of the Brazilian architectural renovation movement of the 1930s. Costa's enduring goal was to integrate modernity and tradition, based on a reflection of the particularity of his professional field, architecture, and its relationship with Brazilian reality.[11] In this regard, it should also be pointed out that Brazilian modernist architects had a pragmatic interest in recovering the nation's colonial past, since they believed its traditional forms contained important lessons. Most importantly, they identified a correspondence between colonial and modern architecture, which, in their opinion, shared such common characteristics as simplicity, austerity, purity, and proper use of materials.

The cultural critic Antoine Compagnon has referred to the discourses developed by the modernist avant-garde and within formalist criticism as "orthodox narratives." According to this view, the course of art within modernity has been characterized by a reductive search for essence. Analyzing the critical works of Hugo Friedrich in literature, and Clement Greenberg in the fine arts, Compagnon has shown how the development of modern art embodies a "purification dialectics." This was undoubtedly the position of Brazilian modernist architects, who viewed architecture as moving progressively toward increased authenticity and autonomy as reflected in such values as structural truth and simplicity. As such, their reading of tradition represented just such an "orthodox narrative." It should then come as no surprise that they rejected the historicist nineteenth century (whose architecture, as well as being "imported," they believed to have been characterized by ornamentation and superficiality), in favor of the austere colonial architecture of the eighteenth century. In their pursuit of depuration, the modernists needed to choose prominent ancestors, and the severe builders of the gold-cycle towns of Minas Gerais corroborated theses defended by Costa, Niemeyer, and others. Thus, as Compagnon has pointed out, the "orthodox narratives" of modernism tended to be both teleological (insofar as they reflected the very outcome they intended to arrive at), and apologetic (insofar as they legitimated contemporary production).[12]

MANUFACTURING HERITAGE: THE MAKING OF A NATIONAL SYMBOL

This particularly Brazilian modernist approach to the past raised the important question of the preservation of the nation's colonial heritage, which was seen as essential to the construction of national identity. With the "1930 Revolution," the issue also became a main focus of the new ruling group, which tried to establish a government-oriented cultural policy.[13] Toward this end, the new rulers engaged a number of progressive intellectuals from the modernist movement to work in the Ministry of Education and Health. In July 1933 these appointees' first historic-preservation step was to make Ouro Preto a "national monument" by Decree No.22.928. In fact, this action was largely symbolic, since no specific legal provision was taken to protect the site or its individual monuments. But in 1936 the Minister of Education, Gustavo Capanema, with the help of Mário de Andrade, one of the most prominent modern Brazilian writers, prepared a conservation law to be submitted to the Federal Parliament. An even more important step was taken with the creation of a new federal agency to oversee heritage preservation: called SPHAN — Serviço do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional (National Historic and Artistic Heritage Service) — it was incorporated into the organizational structure of the Ministry of Education.[14] Finally, in 1937 another decree, No.25, provided SPHAN with the legal means for an effective preservation policy, the instrument of *tombamento* (listing). Applied almost immediately to Ouro Preto, this legal procedure enabled SPHAN to prevent damage to or demolition of a listed building, and it enabled it to control the introduction of new buildings to a listed site.

It is interesting to note that both the mechanism of official government protection and the first measures taken by SPHAN derived directly from the "orthodox narrative" of modernism described above. In Brazil this had led to the establishment of

an affinity between the Baroque architecture of the colonial past and the modern architecture of the present. According to this view, an authentic Brazilian architecture had only developed during the mining cycle of the eighteenth century, and all previous buildings had merely been transplants of Portuguese architecture — a sort of "pre-history" of Brazilian architecture. One corollary of this ideological posture was the myth that only Brazil's Baroque architecture — as well as its contemporary modernist architecture — had dignity, and that the interval of 150 years between had been sterile. In this way an "oblivion strategy" was set in motion which stipulated that in order to recall an idealized (austere and authentic) eighteenth century, it was necessary to "forget" the slow evolution that cities such as Ouro Preto had undergone since. Therefore, in the very listing of Ouro Preto as a preservation site, the artistic value of its colonial ensemble triumphed over its historical value. But privileging aesthetic expression in this way eclipsed the town's actual history and many of the components that made it a socially constructed whole. Government preservation policies in the years since Ouro Preto was first listed have only further emphasized this focus on the colonial ensemble as an idealized object. Lia Motta has caustically summarized the preservation practice imposed on Ouro Preto as follows: "Economically emptied, the city was used as a raw material for a nationality laboratory of modernist inspiration, leaving its population, which was not even mentioned, subordinate to that idealized view."[15]

In his book *The Past is a Foreign Country*, David Lowenthal asserts that every act of recognition "alters survival from the past."[16] This seems to be exactly the case with Ouro Preto. In its search for a national symbol, SPHAN initiated an effort to homogenize the image of the city, thereby eliminating the majority of its recent urban and architectural transformations and, concomitantly, important references to local history. In essence, systematic action was taken to efface traces of the nineteenth century—requiring, for example, the removal of such Neoclassical or eclectic architectural elements as gables and platbands as a condition for remodeling approval. Such elements were viewed as disruptive to the colonial ensemble's unified appearance. Examples of such "corrective" actions may be found throughout the city, but one particularly noteworthy example is the Banco Comércio e Indústria, where a colonial facade was added, and nineteenth-century architectural elements removed (FIGS.5-7).

Similar homogenizing stylistic criteria were also mandated for new buildings. Initially, these envisioned that some modern buildings would be accepted, provided they were "of good architectural quality," as evaluated by SPHAN's experts. In setting such a standard, SPHAN was following the directive of Lúcio Costa, who (in line with his modernist convictions) argued that sooner or later SPHAN would have to ban "colonial disguises." Costa also asserted there was nothing worse than the tendency, which he identified as predominant in the United States and Great Britain, to reproduce everything to an "appropriate style," including light switches. Thus, during the initial years of the preservation effort approval was given, for example, to the well-known Grande Hotel, designed by Oscar Niemeyer. Eventually, this building caused heated arguments among both intellectuals and the local population about the evaluative criteria used by the agency. And, given the difficulty of analyzing such designs, in later years SPHAN began to employ more prescriptive rules that specified a number of stylistic features such as typical details of construction and finishing for roofs, cornices and sashes, and strict color schemes.

The imposition of such design guidelines for new buildings soon caused a "heritage style" to appear in Ouro Preto, typified by contemporary buildings which emulated houses from the eighteenth century. Because the city was not expected to grow rapidly, SPHAN's initial regulatory attention focused on building facades, while disregarding such other design parameters as lot size, house position, and building volume, which would soon prove to be very important.[17] But when the city did begin to grow rapidly, especially in the 1960s, this approach led to a harmful "counterfeiting" of the ensemble, and the emergence of a hybrid architecture in which "heritage-style" buildings mingled with original specimens. Here, as Lowenthal asserts, "the passage of time dissolves distinction between originals and emulations, and augments their confluence" — which ends up, even from the viewpoint of aesthetic recognition, posing a problem.[18]

FIGURE 5. *Banco do Comércio e Indústria, still with its eclectic elements. (Photo courtesy of Prof. Ivo P. Menezes.)*

FIGURE 6. (LEFT) *Banco do Comércio e Indústria, after "corrective" action by SPHAN. (Photo courtesy of Prof. Ivo P. Menezes)*
FIGURE 7. (RIGHT) *Liceu de Artes e Oficios, an important nineteenth-century building, in its original state before the intervention. (Photo courtesy of Prof. Ivo P. Menezes)*

THE EFFACEMENT OF LOCAL HISTORY

A good example of the effort to homogenize Ouro Preto's image can be seen in preservation-motivated design interventions to the Largo do Coimbra, an open space typical of Portuguese urbanism in the Americas. As previously discussed, early settlements in Brazil developed in an organic manner, creating a number of irregularly shaped public spaces, often articulated by religious buildings that played an important part in urban sociability. This was the case with the Largo do Coimbra, a widening of the street fronting the important Church of São Francisco de Assis. In the historic city, this plaza served as a counterpoint to the adjacent Tiradentes Square, which was the site of the Governor's Palace, the City Council, and the Prison. Whereas Tiradentes Square had been inserted at the highest point of Santa Quitéria Hill as the official space of the city, the Largo do Coimbra supported such daily activities as shopping and socializing.

The predominantly commercial character of the Largo do Coimbra was strengthened in the nineteenth century by the construction of a rustic drover's market (FIG.8). Lying in front of this building was a poorly paved patio, into which piles had been driven to restrain the animals. In the center of the patio there was also a large rectangular stone washtub, used by drovers for washing their utensils, and a stone column that provided running water to residents of the area. In time, major grocery stores, as well as fabric and haberdasher's shops, came to locate in the vicinity of the Antônio Dias Market, as it became known. As a result, it became the most popular market in Ouro Preto — a local business and social center. As described by a local newspaper in the nineteenth century:

> *[The market] attracted major stores from Rua do Ouvidor, the most important in town, and from other places; and while shopping and dealing, people would talk about other subjects, financial and political conditions, and also gossip a little bit. It was the town's gazette. Everything was seen, learned and told there.*[19]

Like other towns, Ouro Preto has been characterized by a process of change that has had its own internal logic, and which has been faster at times of economic boom and slower at times of stagnation. Thus, toward the end of the nineteenth century the drover's market was replaced with a Neoclassical building, the predominant style of the time (FIG.9). It was this internal logic of transformation that was interrupted after the town was listed by SPHAN in 1938. From then on, every urban transformation was supervised by the state, which also began to act directly to enhance the image of the colonial ensemble. According to this policy, the market building in the Largo do Coimbra was demolished in 1946-1947 to provide a better view of the church. The demolition was not considered significant at the time, since the market's architectural style was regarded as unimportant and discordant with the city's colonial image (FIG.10). However, some years later the head of SPHAN, reflecting on this type of action, made a more considered judgement:

> *The demolition of minor buildings might, in some cases, appear to be justified with the object of enhancing the significance of a major monument; but, in considering such possibilities, those responsible for the conservation of the site might very properly demur and refuse to authorize such a step if such action seemed likely to cause a lack of overall balance or if it tended to falsify or to obscure the historical significance of the area.*[20]

In her book *The Power of Place*, Dolores Hayden discussed the relationship between built environment, public history, and social memory. She drew attention to what the philosopher

FIGURE 8. *Largo do Coimbra with the original market. (Photo courtesy of Laboratório de Fotodocumentação, Escola de Arquitetura, UFMG.)*

Edward S. Casey has called "place memory": "the stabilizing persistence of place as a container of experiences that contributes so powerfully to its intrinsic memorability."[21] Demolition of the nineteenth-century market to enhance the visibility of a listed monument clearly disregarded the "place memory" of the Largo do Coimbra. By this action was its long history as a place of business and socialization summarily effaced on the basis of purely aesthetic considerations. In essence, the local history — the intricate web of social, economic and cultural relationships that made up the face of the place and the life of the town — was discarded to provide room for an idealized national symbol.

According to such a preservation policy, which systematically excludes participation by local residents, it might come as no surprise if the place memorability of the entire city were eventually to disappear — at least as far as the local population is concerned. One might even note how a curious inversion has taken place: in Ouro Preto the state has assumed the role of "local guardian," while local residents have come to be viewed as hostile to the preservation agenda, transgressors within their own city.

CONSUMING TRADITION: PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Considering the above relationships, it is not surprising that state preservation policies have found diminishing support among the local population, which tends to consider SPHAN an exogenous agency whose purpose is to preserve the city for outsiders. Even the opening of a local SPHAN office in Ouro Preto has not helped to change such perceptions; on the contrary, SPHAN employees are viewed as intrusive and hostile to local interests. It is noteworthy that such antagonism has never grown into open and active opposition, as could be expected. On the one hand, this may be explained by the generally weak tradition of engagement and the low degree of organization among the Brazilian population. On the other, it might be the case that the ideological force of preservationist discourse has caused the discourse of modernization in the city to abstain from formulating itself in a more aggressive manner. Thus, instead of openly opposing federal influence in local affairs, the population has resorted to the "camouflage strategy" of building clandestinely, or — in the words of a former SPHAN official — engaging in construction "over the weekends."

As late as the 1960s no grave conflict had resulted from the divergence of views between SPHAN and the local population. Economically emptied, the city remained largely unchanged from colonial times (FIG.11). This situation changed rapidly, however, starting in the later years of the 1960s, as the development of the aluminum mining industry in the region brought new momentum to Ouro Preto's economy. To house the increasing population, the aluminum producer ALCAN erected a new district on the outskirts of town. However, as housing demand could not be entirely met by this new district, the built-up portions of the city, which had remained practically unchanged since the late eighteenth century, expanded to include previously open peripheral areas, where mostly low-standard buildings were constructed.[22] A single figure gives an idea of the magnitude of this expansion process: when the whole ensemble was listed in 1938, it comprised approximately 1,000 buildings; by contrast, an additional 3,000 structures had been approved by 1985. In addition to expansion beyond its previous limits, such growth involved building on previously open areas within the city, even in backyards, changing radically the colonial ensemble's ratio of open to built-up area. Such modernization pressures soon resulted in fierce antagonism between the local population, which had been systematically excluded from the formulation of preservation policies, and SPHAN, which continued to try to maintain the colonial ensemble's appearance through building-design controls.

During this period the town also started to become a popular destination for tourists, who were attracted by its historical

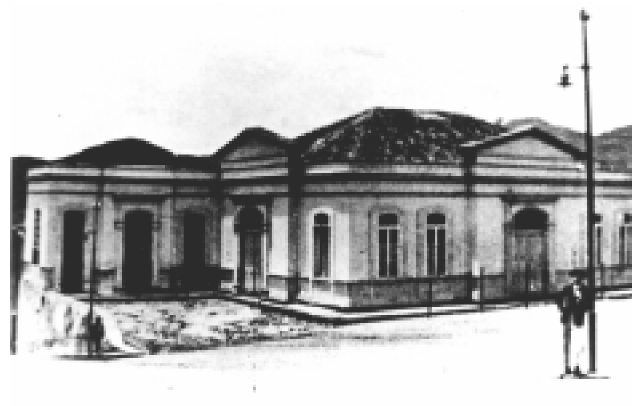

FIGURE 9. *The Neoclassical market (nineteenth century). (Photo courtesy of Laboratório de Fotodocumentação, Escola de Arquitetura, UFMG.)*

FIGURE 10. *Largo do Coimbra after the demolition of the market. (Photo courtesy of Laboratório de Fotodocumentação, Escola de Arquitetura, UFMG.)*

value and the unique atmosphere of its Baroque architecture. Tourism brought many impacts on daily life, redefining the use and occupation of some historic areas, and causing some old residences to be transformed into hotels or business establishments. In this regard, the town's identity as a cultural-tourism site was strengthened in the late 1960s by the establishment of the Winter Festival, organized by the Federal University, and aimed at promoting courses and workshops in connection with different artistic activities. Today this event attracts a large number of students, intellectuals and artists from Brazil and abroad, giving visibility and prestige to the city. However, the local population is generally excluded from these activities, and the festival has only reinforced the sense that their city has been appropriated in a manner alien to their interests. Such exclusionary tendencies had first appeared in the 1950s, when the practice began of moving the state government to the former capital on the September 7 (Brazil's Independence Day). On these occasions Tiradentes Square would be fenced off and reserved for the authorities and their guests.

It is ironic to note how the appropriation of the city by outsiders has taken contradictory forms today. Quite apart from the official occupation of Tiradentes Square on Independence Day, another type of appropriation takes place during the Winter Festival and other seasonal feasts (such as Carnival and the Feast of 12). At these times the town's public spaces are occupied by a mostly young population, in a manner that is openly transgressive. For example, Tiradentes Square becomes a "free republic" during the festivals, its main monument continuously occupied by youngsters. The reaction of various elements of the local population differs with respect to these divergent forms of tourist occupation. On the one hand, the local elite, which profits from the official tourist flow, strongly resents the transgressive use of its traditional places. On the other, more working-class residents, who generally live in outlying areas and identify the city with its historical areas, see the feast celebrations as opportunities to come to the city center and take part in public events. The participation of such people in Carnival parades is particularly widespread.

From the above, it is clear that both industrialization and tourism have deeply changed the cultural status of Ouro Preto in recent decades. However, by viewing the town purely as a work of art, the preservation agencies have instituted policies that cannot reconcile such new pressures. The situation has been compounded by the failure of the various government agencies to cooperate on a regional planning effort. Efforts at comprehensive planning for Ouro Preto were first instituted in the late 1960s when it became obvious that uncontrolled expansion was causing a disfiguration of the city's colonial ensemble. In 1968 the Portuguese architect Viana de Lima, a UNESCO consultant, prepared the first such development plan, which consisted primarily of a zoning map and the definition of preservation and expansion areas. A few years later, a multidisciplinary team, under the direction of the Fundação João Pinheiro, a state-government planning agency, drew up a more comprehensive plan. This 1974-1975 effort included plans for new urban infrastructure and landscaping; the restoration of monuments; and social, economic, institutional and administrative initiatives. In addition, an urban expansion scheme was prepared, proposing the creation of new centers to ensure that development could continue in a consistent manner without affecting the integrity of the colonial ensemble.

It is indicative of the problems of Ouro Preto that almost 25 years after such plans were first proposed, institutional difficulties continue to block their implementation. Much of the delay may be attributed to a lack of cooperation between the various agencies responsible for the preservation and administration of Brazilian cities. For example, although federal, state

FIGURE 11. *As late as the 1960s the city remained practically unchanged, having undergone no major transformation. View from the Largo do Rosário around 1960. (Photo courtesy of Laboratório de Fotodocumentação, Escola de Arquitetura, UFMG.)*

and local authorities are involved in Ouro Preto, they do not always act in a collaborative manner. With respect to heritage preservation, Brazilian legislation provides for "concurrent competence" of the federal union, states, and municipalities, but it fails to define how each level of government is to act. Thus, in Ouro Preto, SPHAN (a federal agency) is in charge of listing procedures, and has been responsible for the maintenance and conservation of the city since 1938 — including the inspection and coordination of designs and the maintenance of museums. The state government, represented by Fundação João Pinheiro, has been charged with overall planning for the city and its outlying region. And the city council maintains its role as the principal local administrative power, responsible for, among other things, the enforcement of zoning laws.

Conflicts have become quite common in this atmosphere of competing spheres of power and interest. For example, as a representative of local interests, city government has often opposed SPHAN policies, which it regards as unnecessarily restrictive. In the opinion of an architect from SPHAN, "the local authority used to omit their responsibility for the conservation of local heritage and even make the work of SPHAN more difficult."[23] Local government has also failed to support the urban planning efforts of state government, with the result that these efforts have generally failed to have any impact on urban conditions. As for SPHAN, despite the incorporation of new concepts into its discourse (especially the "Declaration of Venice," advocating such new ideas as the socially oriented use of monuments), it has continued to consider the city primarily as an aesthetic object to be preserved, and continued to ignore matters of economic growth and social development.

A number of conflicts since the 1960s have pitted SPHAN openly against local administrative agencies. In certain instances local government has directly challenged SPHAN's control by implementing changes it deemed necessary without the federal agency's approval. Such was the case when the sides of the Morro do Cruzeiro (Cruzeiro Hill) were occupied in the mid-1970s. Even though SPHAN claimed such action would compromise the scenic value of an area that was highly visible from within the ensemble, the local administration approved lower-class zoning for the area, which eventually resulted in the new district of Amazonas. Such a case reveals a class dynamic, according to which the local administration claims that it is answering the demand for working-class dwellings, which the preservation agency has tried to exclude from the historical center. Thus, two different discourses are opposed: a preservationist discourse, based on broadly defined aesthetic and historical considerations; and a development discourse, based on local political and social conditions. Such a dynamic was also at work in another well-known incident, which took place in the mid-1980s and involved construction of a local bus terminal. SPHAN refused to approve the design for this building, claiming it incorporated modern elements, such as tempered glass, that it considered too aggressive. Here, too, the local administration prevailed, and the terminal was constructed despite the federal agency's opinion.

The single period of respite from this long-running conflict occurred from 1993 to 1996, when a candidate associated with the preservationist cause was elected mayor. During this period, the GAT (Technical Advisory Group) was created to bring together the activities of various official departments and provide advice to both the population and the city administration. In its brief existence, GAT undertook an exemplary effort to achieve rapprochement with the local population, starting a dialogue that permitted consideration of its viewpoint in design review. Another important achievement by GAT was the formulation and approval of a master plan for the city, which aimed at organizing its growth and reconciling preservation and development demands. However, GAT's early successes failed to reverse the negative popular image of the preservation cause. And today local people continue to perceive preservationist policies as being alien — and even contrary — to their interests. Such antagonism is most strongly voiced by the lower classes, who consider current policies to be elitist, focused on the preservation of the historical center for tourists to the detriment to other social needs. Such an unfavorable evaluation was reflected in the outcome of the local election in 1996, when a candidate for mayor was elected whose message focused on the needs of local residents, as opposed to local heritage. Support for this candidate was strongest among residents of suburban and rural areas.

Many of the conflicts referred to above have been played out in the Largo do Coimbra. Most obviously, the city's growth since the 1960s has radically altered the view from this space. The historical view encompassed a number of unoccupied hills, but this was completely changed with the rapid and disorderly occupation of the surrounding hills. Another important change involves uses it accommodates. Despite the demolition of its market, business activity soon reappeared in the plaza, initially as a weekly fair, but later in the form of selling handicrafts to tourists (**FIG.12**). The difference in the nature of past and present commercial activity indicates the effects of preservationist interventions. As a result of its disfigurement, local residents now identify the plaza as a place reserved for outsiders. Thus, even if the plaza's business orientation has been preserved, commercial activity there is targeted at tourists, who come to buy handicrafts in soapstone, a "typical" product of the region. It is interesting this shift in focus has not affected the church, however, which the local population still identifies as their own (**FIG.13**). For example, the proposal by a mayor a few years ago to hold a concert for a select group of patrons in the church was met with outrage from the local population.

Several years ago the sociologist Mônica Fischer studied how such preservation policies are perceived by the population of another historical Brazilian city. Her comprehensive research in the city of Mariana, located near Ouro Preto (and also listed by SPHAN), in 1992-1993 sheds light on the case of Ouro Preto as well. Through a series of interviews with local residents, Fischer sought to capture, in a representative manner, the views they had of their city, especially with respect to preservation and modernization of the urban tissue. Her research showed that most resi-

dents liked to live in Mariana, an opinion shared by members of different social classes, who all claimed it was a safe, comfortable, and peaceful place.[24] By contrast, none of the respondents to her survey said that historical value was the reason they liked to live in Mariana. One conclusion that might be drawn from these findings is that the city is valued as a set of social relationships, not because its rich historical heritage has given it nationwide prestige and prominence. Fischer also found that respondents generally assigned positive meanings to features of the traditional town related to the household and private spheres — home, furniture, and the like. From this she concluded the population clearly wished to retain the town's stability in environmental and emotional terms, since these qualities provided a guarantee of privacy, comfort, safety and peace. Respondents were also unanimous in their desire to preserve the town's churches, but Fischer found this to be the sole instance in which they would voice concern with preservation. In particular, the town's Baroque churches, with their historical/artistic assets, were identified as unique symbols of the town's identity, deserving true preservationist effort.

As far as public space was concerned, the research pointed to a paradox which typifies a common "ideology of modernity" in Brazil. The old urban tissue was valued when it was perceived as being supportive of a familial and peaceful life, yet it was also considered an obstacle to progress. The general perception of Mariana's layout among residents was negative: to them, it was an "entangled" urban space, having "only old houses" that were "old-fashioned" and "run-down." By contrast, the modern, which means the new, was identified with the life of larger cities and the possibilities of leisure, action and consumption. In respect to these associations, Fischer noted that older residents tended to chose traditional images and values, while younger ones preferred modern patterns for cities, streets and buildings. She noted one reason may have been that the younger group lacked access to experiences promised by the modern world through various types of mass leisure, such as music concerts, sports events, and shopping at malls.[25]

In this relation may lie the most serious issue identified by Fischer's research as far as the formulation of preservation policies: the local population's failure to associate a historical city with development. The population surveyed made no positive reference to Mariana as an urban space capable of being recovered and renewed. Instead, preservation agencies were perceived as hostile to, rather than supportive of, local development. Such a view explains the widespread feeling among residents that they must evade control by such agencies, whose criteria they cannot understand. (A single figure suffices to indicate the extent of this problem in Ouro Preto: during the period of activity of GAT, approximately 50 percent of building designs were submitted for analysis only after those responsible had been summoned to do so.) Thus, in dealing with the city as a aesthetic and idealized object, it can be seen how traditional preservationist policies, deprived of coordination with public policies of a broader scope, end up proving incompatible with the dynamics of the real city. As such, they only strengthen a false dichotomy between preservation and development.

CONCLUSIONS: AT THE CROSSROADS OF DEVELOPMENT

Cities such as Ouro Preto are at a crossroads with regard to their social and economic future and the prospect of sustainable development. Following decades of fast growth, the 1990s have now brought industrial deceleration and the disappearance of thousands of jobs. As the result of economic stagnation, tourism is today seen, both by the government and the local population, as an important economic alternative, one which could prove beneficial to the preservation of the historical ensemble. However, the preservation policies so far implemented do not seem to favor the emergence of such a new model for development. In addition, as far as tourism is concerned, a considerable problem exists with regard to the poor quality of local

FIGURE 12. *Largo do Coimbra in 1998. (Photo by author.)*

FIGURE 13. *The church of São Francisco de Assis remains identified by the local population as something of their own: local celebration in 1930. (Photo courtesy of Laboratório de Fotodocumentação, Escola de Arquitetura, UFMG.)*

services and the limited capacity of quality hotels. It would seem this might only be resolved by adopting a program of modernization involving the attraction of outside investment. However, such a program would most likely face considerable resistance from local property owners who, in their hostility to public authorities, would most likely refuse to cooperate.

The prospect of further tourism promotion would also seem to strengthen the opposition between a "false tradition," for external consumption, and a "secret local tradition," which remains marginal and refractory to preservation policies. As has been pointed out, the preservationists' attempts to homogenize the urban ensemble and fit it to an idealized image, caused a systematic erasure of local history and memorability. Among other things, this has led to a lack of identification between the population and the Baroque scenery, which is perceived as belonging to outsiders. To preserve its culture and tradition, local society has been forced to develop a strategy of "self-absorption," by which local residents have become increasingly isolated. The result is the survival of practices, usually associated with the strong religious and popular traditions, but which are barely noticeable to tourists — such as a language of church bells and the lit balconies marking the path of processions. The outsider, on the other hand, is offered images of a stylized history that have a stronger commercial appeal: replicas of historical sculptures, newly made antiques, and even the possibility of strolling round the old town wearing traditional costumes, having his or her image immortalized in artificially aged photographs (FIG.14).

FIGURE 14. *Outsiders are offered images of a stylized history that has a stronger commercial appeal: replicas of historical sculptures, newly made antiques, and even the possibility of strolling around the old town wearing traditional costumes, having their images immortalized in artificially aged photographs. (Photo by author.)*

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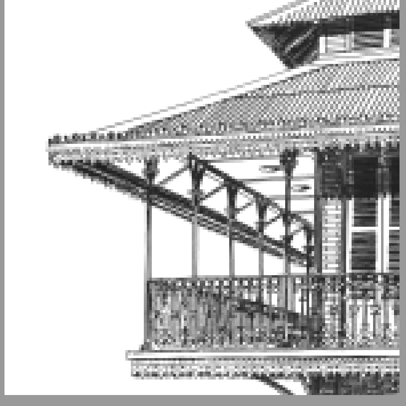

A Tradition in Transition: Ali Tur in Guadeloupe, 1929-1937

CHRISTIAN GALPIN AND ANNE HUBLIN

Following the great hurricane of 1928 the architect Ali Tur was commissioned by the Ministry of Colonies to rebuild the government buildings on the island of Guadeloupe in the French West Indies. Within eight years he designed some one hundred edifices. Ali Tur's architectural manner was everything but traditional. Born in Tunisia to French parents, he had been influenced by Orientalism. His architecture also introduced reinforced concrete and responded genuinely to the risk of hurricanes and the need for bioclimatic adaptation on the island. Paradoxically, this exogenous production is now considered a part of the Guadeloupean heritage. Ali Tur's style may now stand for a creative alternative to current design ideology in an environment in transition.

In the age of globalization, the concept of "creolization" has been invoked to anticipate the creation of a single worldwide culture based on a combination of local identities.[1] However, the reality of such an exciting metaphor, standing for a fusion of Western and non-Western traditions, is probably too good to be true. In the Caribbean, one of the places where Creole styles were forged, creolization was based on very different conditions from the current global processes.[2] First, "exchange" between European cultural patterns and the traditions of African slaves in the colonial Caribbean was extremely unequal, with the values of the colonizers clearly emphasized, and the patterns of the dominated crudely denied.[3] Second, cultural models imported to the Caribbean from Europe and Africa were themselves transformed through three centuries of isolation from their origins. Thus, for example, the oral transmission of language from one generation to the next in the West Indies, both among European masters and African slaves, gradually led to the creation of genuine "local" languages based on English, Spanish, Dutch, and French, but also including references to Amerindian and African languages.[4]

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The present condition would seem to differ from this Caribbean model of creolization, which has resulted in such vibrant forms of speech, music, and vernacular architecture. Contemporary cultural globalization implies instant and permanent communication between partners who, even when they have disproportionate levels of cultural or economic power, are no longer engaged in a purely colonial or dependent relation. For this reason, the Creole metaphor may not be pertinent to understanding the present global cultural fusion. Nevertheless, the Caribbean example may still be useful in revealing how abrupt evaluations may be misleading in attempts to appraise cultural transformation. A main paradox in such instances of cultural change is the role played by external patterns in the making of local identity. Creole cultures, probably more than others, are based on such transformations of external patterns into internal ones.

The case of the buildings designed on the island of Guadeloupe by the French colonial architect Ali Tur from 1929 to 1937 is emblematic of such issues. When Ali Tur introduced new building techniques and modern design language to this island in the French West Indies, he opened an era of transition. His works, some now classified as historical monuments, eventually generated a new style, which was widely imitated, and thus became "Guadeloupean." The story of Ali Tur's buildings suggests that local identity is not a closed box, but that local styles change. And it suggests that such identity may be fortuitously influenced by the importation of exotic models, as long as these models are able to trace their own roots within the new environment.

Ali Tur's work on Guadeloupe was far from anonymous. Yet his talent as a designer was sufficient to overcome both the routine qualities of the local vernacular and the obtuse canons of official, academic architecture. On Guadeloupe, Ali Tur changed the rules of the game, and imposed his personal style. Yet in accomplishing this tricky feat, he neither offered a blind pastiche of local style (as enchanting as it was), nor obeyed the conformist models of his time. Rather, his creations were based on a clever and elegant combination of European "Avant Garde" style and local requirements for climatic comfort. The study of his buildings today may help answer some of the questions involved in making a transition between a dead past, the vernacular heritage, and the current brutal alternative of the "nowhere" buildings now being erected from Bangkok to Paris. Following the lead of Ali Tur, it might be possible to find another way to associate creative design with local adaptation, and so face the challenge of contemporary design in traditional contexts.

THE MAKING OF A CREOLE STYLE IN FRENCH WEST INDIES

When Ali Tur was invited to rebuild the devastated government buildings on Guadeloupe in 1929, local buildings were of several different types. Bourgeois and popular dwellings used the old Creole style, which can generally be called "traditional"; public buildings reproduced metropolitan academic architecture; and other influential models were imported directly from overseas, like the American villa. Tradition may be a rather inadequate concept to apply to such a Creole architecture. It might be better to call it "customary."[5] On arrival in the Caribbean, European colonizers tended to reproduce their own patterns of construction, which tended to be those of the European vernacular of the period. Yet, as their technical means were scarce, they had to use more simple techniques. Some such techniques were borrowed from indigenous groups, like reed- or palm-thatch roofing. Others, like wattle-and-daub infill for walls, probably came from their labor force of African slaves.[6] On Guadeloupe, French peasants also brought techniques like timber framing and weatherboard cladding.

The very first colonizers in the French West Indies made rustic shelters of planks, reeds or palms. Of the original buildings on the island, only the Governor's House and some military and religious buildings were made of stones or bricks, which were often imported from Europe as ballast on ships.[7] Soon, however, naval carpenters contributed their know-how to local construction, and their skills were rapidly learned by slaves.[8] With the development of the sugarcane plantation system at the end of the seventeenth century, a model for rural settlement was developed, including the master's house, various functional rustic buildings, and slaves quarters, which took the form of makeshift huts. While public, military and religious buildings generally imitated more formal models, masters' houses reproduced contemporary European models for rural bourgeois houses. Such imitation of the French provincial style may be illustrated by the master's house at Mont Carmel Plantation, built in 1726. It resembled the design found in the eighteenth-century engravings describing the

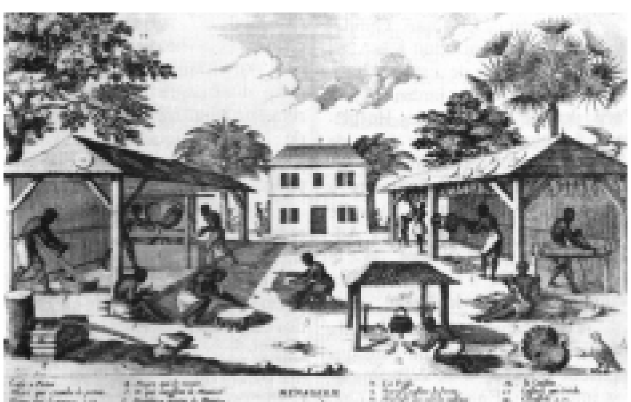


FIGURE 1. *A planter's house, engraving of the eighteenth century. (Source: Père J.B. du Tertre,* Histoire générale des Antilles habitées par les Français.*)*

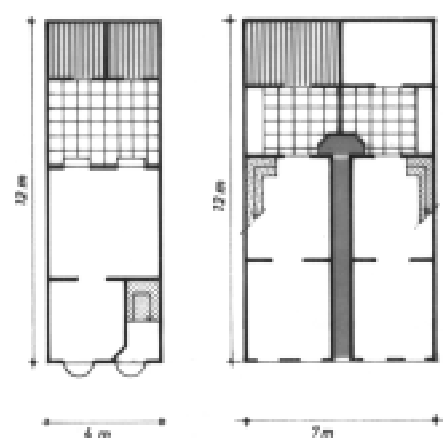
French West Indies: a small symmetrical house built in coated masonry with a tiled roof (FIG.1).

Despite such roots in imitation, the imported architectural styles, like imported languages, progressively tended to diverge from their original European models. Both material and nonmaterial culture were orally transmitted through generations of masters and slaves on Guadeloupe. As a result, a creolized architecture emerged, which included the basic traits of European dominant cultures transformed by local interpretation. The main residence at the Plantation La Pagésie, built at the end of the nineteenth century, might serve as an example of such a rustic but refined type. It was a large wood structure with board filling, with a two-story gallery shading the first and second floors. Such paradoxical links between external and internal models continued through the centuries. And by the end of the nineteenth century, the island had also received a full complement of more formal public buildings according to various colonial building programs — schools, market places, town halls, churches, etc. — that strictly reproduced prevailing academic patterns.

Alongside this official architecture, popular dwellings, ranging from self-help huts to sophisticated villas made by skilled craftsmen, continued to be built according to customary patterns fixed through three centuries of colonization. The small wood huts used by Guadeloupean peasants and poor townspeople took a rectangular form, with a double-slope roof covered with corrugated iron sheets. Some of these huts had only one door, which opened on the gable end. Laid on only a few stones, such a structure was a "mobile home," which could be transported wherever its inhabitant needed to go. This type of shelter seems to have been inherited from the slaves' cabins of sugarcane plantations, and other models were derived from it, such as larger rural huts, or even urban houses.

In contrast to such humble dwellings, masters' houses, as well as the urban houses and country villas of the more well-to-do, included specific elements aimed at ensuring climatic comfort, such as perimeter porches for shading interior rooms and overhanging roofs to protect from tropical rains. Such houses had high windows, symmetrically arranged on opposite walls, which could be closed with wooden slatted shutters to filter the light and provide cross-circulating breezes. Additional heavy plank shutters could be installed when necessary to protect from the strong winds and heavy rains of hurricane season. In urban houses, balconies and galleries usually complemented such window treatments (FIGS.2-4). According to Bernard Autin:

> *The aprons used as the basement of windows are one of the most outstanding elements of urban scenery. In wood, in forged iron or cast iron, their design is infinitely varying. Geometrical forms, simple or crossed railings, mosaic assemblages, symbolic vegetal representations, all of them always remain transparent, so as to let circulate the breeze and permit views onto the street.*[9]



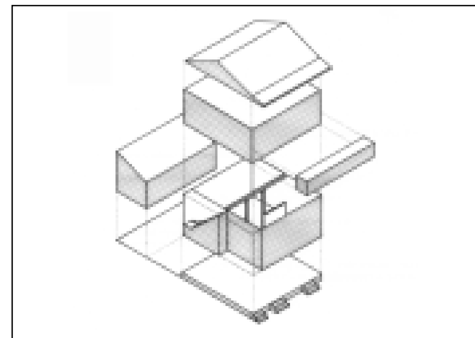


FIGURE 2. (TOP) *Urban House in Pointe-à-Pitre. (Source: B. Autin,* Croquis à Pointe-à-Pitre, *Guadeloupe, Imprimerie Darantière, 1992.)*
FIGURE 3. (MIDDLE) *Layout of an urban house at Pointe-à-Pitre. (Drawing by Christian Galpin.)*
FIGURE 4. (BOTTOM) *An urban house at Pointe-à-Pitre. Study of volumes. (Drawing by Christian Galpin.)*

1780	March 21	Fire burns 111 out of a total of 123 houses.
1843	February 8	Level IX earthquake leaves city demolished and 3,000 dead.
1867	September 6	Violent hurricane ravages the entire island of Guadeloupe.
1871	July 18	Fire entirely demolishes Pointe-à-Pitre.
1897	April 29	Level VIII earthquake entirely demolishes Pointe-à-Pitre.
1899	April 17	Fire destroys 313 houses in Pointe-à-Pitre.
1928	September 12	Hurricane of exceptional force leaves 1,500 dead.
1931	January 6	Fire burns a whole sector of Pointe-à-Pitre.

FIGURE 5. *Main Disasters at Pointe-à-Pitre, 1780-1931. (Source: Anne Hublin,* Case créole et ville coloniale, Vol.II, 1846-1946, *Paris, Ministère de l'Equipement, 1996, p.129.)*

FIGURE 7. *The St. Antoine Market in Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe. (Source: B. Autin,* Croquis à Pointe-à-Pitre, *Guadeloupe, Imprimerie Darantière, 1992.)*

The adaptation of architectural form to climatic conditions was a major and constant factor in the making of the Guadeloupean style. Yet the process was less cultural than environmental, bespeaking the need for protection from heat, sun, and tropical rain, and expressing adaptation to the constant risk of fires, earthquakes and hurricanes (FIG.5). The Creole style also welcomed external architectural types. Thus, some structures were entirely imported from overseas — such as fashionable villas, called "chalets," components for which came straight from New Orleans and were erected for leading sugarcane-industry families (FIG.6). Meanwhile, public buildings were designed as replicas of prestige constructions in France. At the beginning of the twentieth century, for example, an exact reproduction of a Haussmannian building could still provide an appropriate model for a department store in Pointe-à-Pitre (FIG.7). Thus, in Guadeloupe, as in other parts of the Caribbean, architectural production was typified by the coexistence of local, creolized models and external types, reproduced without modification.[10]

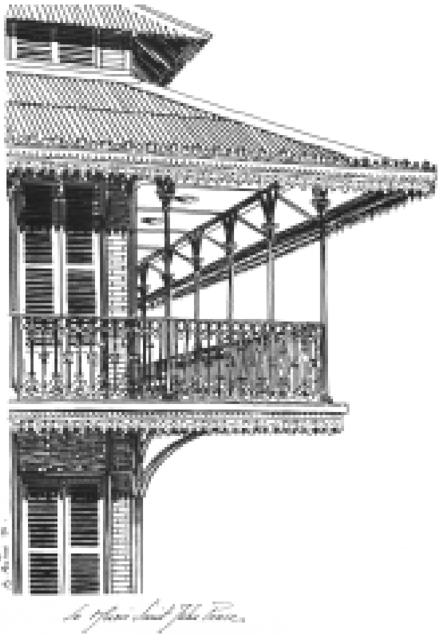


FIGURE 6. *Souques House, Pointe-à-Pitre. Components of the house were imported from Louisiana in 1880 by the director of the town's main sugarcane factory. Inhabited by the directors of the factory until 1967, the house, classified as a historical monument, was later transformed into the Saint John Perse Museum. (Source: B. Autin,* Croquis à Pointe-à-Pitre, *Guadeloupe, Imprimerie Darantière, 1992.)*

THE ALTERNATIVE DESIGN OF ALI TUR

Following the terrible 1928 hurricane, which devastated Guadeloupe and killed some 1,500 people, the Ministry of Colonial Affairs commissioned Ali Tur to rebuild the island's government buildings (FIG.8). The architect applied a technique

FIGURE 8. *Portrait of Ali Tur in 1946. The French architect, born in Tunisia in 1889, is well known for his work in Guadeloupe, but also for housing projects in Paris. He died in Paris in 1970. (Photo courtesy of Isabelle Peltzer.)*

FIGURE 9. *The patio in the Court Hall at Pointe-à-Pitre. Ali Tur used the model of a central courtyard or* patio, *in all his court hall projects. (Drawing by Ali Tur, in* Encyclopédie de l'Architecture: Architecture Coloniale, Guadeloupe: Bâtiments gouvernementaux et communaux, Ali Tur, *Paris, Editions Albert Morancé, 1930.)*

unknown on the island at the time, reinforced-concrete construction. He worked at reconstructing government buildings on Guadeloupe until 1937, when a court case opposed him to the Ministry of Colonial Affairs. Within this short period, he designed a series of outstanding buildings. Ali Tur never desired to imitate the local vernacular, yet neither did he arrive on Guadeloupe with ready-made solutions (as many modern architects of the post-World War II era might have done).

As part of his court testimony, Ali Tur described his cultural background as follows:

> *One of my father's diplomatic postings led him to Tunisia, where I was born in 1889. He gave me an Arabic first name, which does not surprise me, coming from a graduate of the Polytechnique with an acquired taste for poetry and literature. But I can assure you, my Dear Sirs, that my father's ancestors being from the Cévennes and my mother's from Alsace, I am just an ordinary Frenchman, born overseas.*[11]

Nevertheless, the Arabic style he discovered as a child in Tunisia became deeply rooted in "Ali" Tur's architectural design.[12] Some forms he regularly utilized unmistakably recall Arabic architecture. For example, the slab-terrace roofs of his buildings seem derived from the flat, compact "skylines" of medieval medinas; their simple white facades, made ornate with complex shutters, resemble Arabic *claustras*; and the central patios he incorporated in many projects, often with running water and trees, correspond to the romanticized image of the Garden of Paradise symbolized in the courtyards of many Arabic mansions (FIG. 9). Also, the slim, ornate towers of Ali Tur's Catholic churches suggest the tall minarets of mosques (FIGS. 10, 11). It is important, however, to point out that Ali Tur's inspirations were based both on traditional Arabic style and on the Neo-Moorish style adopted in France's North African colonies by such architects as Henri Prost, Tony Garnier, and Joseph Marrast.[13] According to Gildas Baudez and Françoise Béguin:

> *In Algeria, at the beginning of the century, the Neo-Moorish, one of the numerous variants of Eclecticism, became an established*

FIGURE 10. (LEFT) *In this drawing of the church at Morne à L'Eau, the steeple is standing separately from the church itself, like a minaret. When the church was built, the architect had to change its design to include the steeple within the sacred building. (Drawing by Ali Tur, in* Encyclopédie de l'Architecture: Architecture Coloniale, Guadeloupe: Bâtiments gouvernementaux et communaux, Ali Tur, *Paris, Editions Albert Morancé, 1930.)*

FIGURE 11. (RIGHT) *An aspect of the church at Morne à L'Eau in the initial project. (Drawing by Ali Tur, in* Encyclopédie de l'Architecture: Architecture Coloniale, Guadeloupe: Bâtiments gouvernementaux et communaux, Ali Tur, *Paris, Editions Albert Morancé, 1930.)*

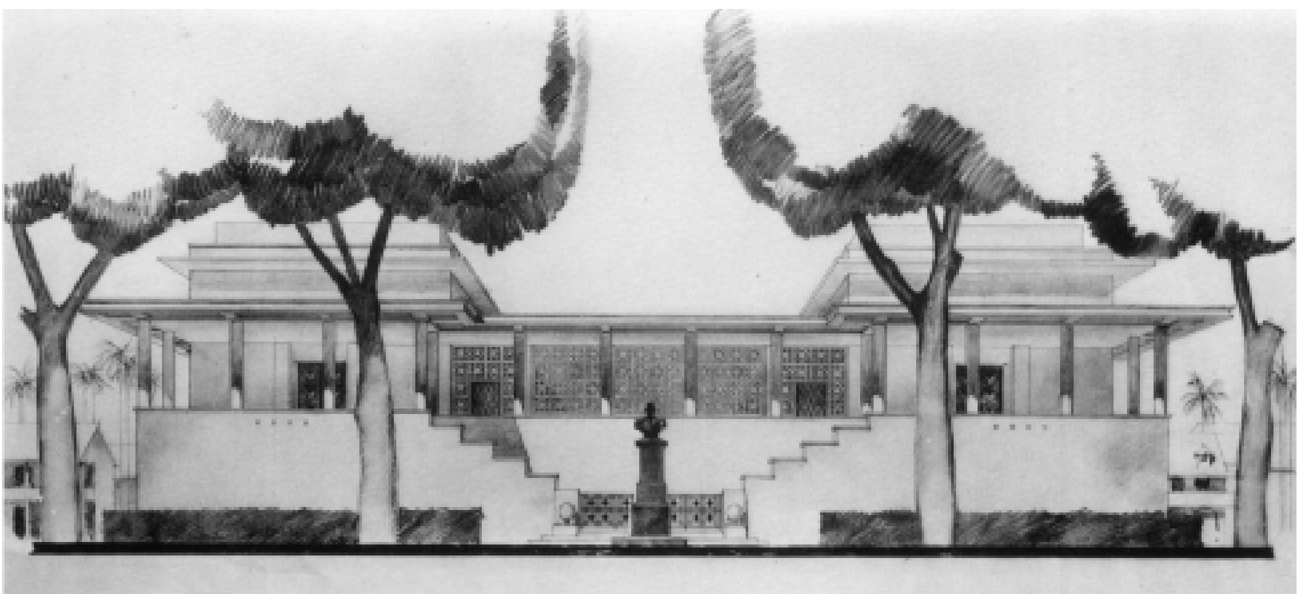


FIGURE 12. *Main facade of the Court Hall at Pointe-à-Pitre. An overhanging concrete roof shades a series of doors and windows, which give the first floor a complete transparency in contrast to the thick basement of the building. (Drawing by Ali Tur, in* Encyclopédie de l'Architecture: Architecture Coloniale, Guadeloupe: Bâtiments gouvernementaux et communaux, Ali Tur, *Paris, Editions Albert Morancé, 1930.)*

> *style. This surprising promotion, for a long time dismissed as a "café-concert" style, went on to experience a prodigious development. Almost every single public building built by France in North Africa between 1900 and 1930 was Arabized.*[14]

While the exotic quotations in Ali Tur's architectural design indicated a touch of Orientalism,[15] his main inspiration came from the Art Déco style he had learned at the Academy of Fine Arts in Paris. The academy awarded several famous prizes to Ali Tur, and the influence of this period style is obvious in his monumental approach to design. In particular, a revealing comparison can be made between the works by Ali Tur and Auguste Perret. Both show an enthusiastic use of large halls, giant pillars that enhance facades, and immense, diaphanous walls of hollowed and carved concrete **(FIGS.12,13)**. In their major public buildings, both architects also used traits of the Roman Revival such as projecting central pediments, porticos, and shallow domes.

Ali Tur's career had already taken several unusual turns before he arrived in the French West Indies. In 1918 he had been made a chartered appraiser in charge of investigating the compensation claims of war victims. But he soon set up his own office in Paris, and took on private building-maintenance installations and construction contracts. This work probably gave him a sensible approach to the material aspects of his profession, and may explain another characteristic of his work, the importance he gave to technique and materials. The smallest details of Ali Tur's buildings were carefully conceived, with the architect himself designing every decorative element, and even furniture.

FIGURE 13. *The entrance hall of the church at Morne à L'Eau. Thin columns emphasize the impressive elevation of the hall, while the thickness of the concrete walls disappears in the orchestration of pilasters and geometrical enrichments. This elaborate manner is extended to the ceiling, also carefully sculpted and hollowed. (Drawing by Ali Tur, in* Encyclopédie de l'Architecture: Architecture Coloniale, Guadeloupe: Bâtiments gouvernementaux et communaux, Ali Tur, *Paris, Editions Albert Morancé, 1930.)*

In 1925 Ali Tur was appointed one of ten architects attached to the Ministry of Colonial Affairs. Then, on April 1, 1929, a contract was drawn between Ali Tur and the French government, represented by Victor Tellier, "for the construction of various Government buildings in Guadeloupe." The total cost was estimated at 40 million francs (1929 value), with a four-year building schedule. The contract stipulated that the architect would open a practice in Guadeloupe, and it authorized him to undertake additional work for local municipalities. This last clause was to substantially increase the number of Ali Tur's commissions on the island, as municipal councils eventually took out loans of 50 million francs to cover their own reconstruction projects.

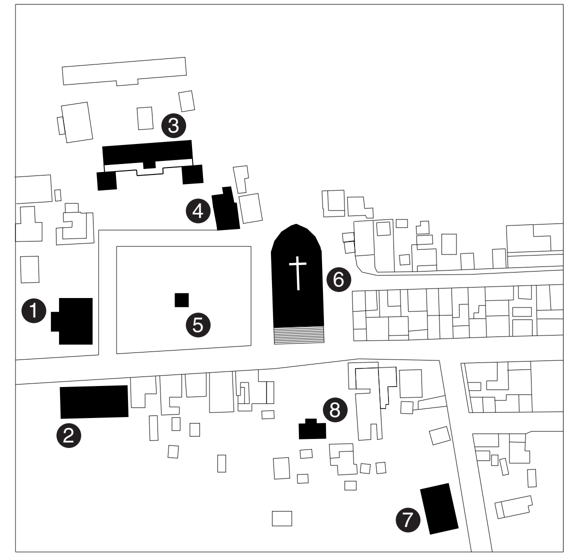
From 1931 on Ali Tur was involved in the construction of more than a hundred public buildings on the island (town halls, churches, tax offices, schools, health centers, etc.). Most of the materials used in this effort (cement, structural timber, iron rods, plumbing fixtures, tiles, and so on) were supplied from Europe, according to the debt owed to France by Germany following World War I. Materials were centrally stored at Fouillole, then distributed to local building contractors by the Guadeloupe Public Works Department. Ali Tur's designs generally made use of a post-and-beam, reinforced-concrete structural system, with infill concrete and cement rendering. "This is the best solution in a country subject to hurricanes," Ali Tur claimed.[16] He never made reference to the alternative hazard of earthquakes.

Not surprisingly, the gap between the type of structure chosen and the skills available among local contractors soon led to serious difficulties. As a result, with prior government agreement, Ali Tur recommended that contracts on the island be opened to large French construction companies. Since importing skilled labor to Guadeloupe was too expensive, these companies instead chose to bring expert overseers to train the local work force. In a 1935 book entitled *Public Works in Guadeloupe*, M. Robert, Head Engineer of the Guadeloupe Public Works Department, declared: "It was this local labor, at the origin so poorly skilled, but who very rapidly managed to catch up, that carried out all the main work. The resulting works proved the complete transformation of their skills, over the last few years."[17] Most other executives, engineers and architects involved in the building projects at the time also agreed as to the high quality of work achieved by local Guadeloupeans.

Competition being considered beneficial to the colonial economy, Ali Tur also recommended the introduction of "calls for tenders." And the French government encouraged several major French public-works companies to develop organizations on the island. In 1935 the main ones operating there were the Société Française Diligenti-Payot, Kahn et Parcy-Baudin-Vincent-Tissot, Curiss Prass, and Lombard. Of Ali Tur's major projects, the Diligenti Company carried out the construction of the Conseil Général Headquarters, the Governor's House (now the Prefecture), and the building now used by the Commerce and Industry Chamber, originally designed as a hotel.

FIGURE 14. *The Town Hall at Petit Canal is a typical example of the more modest public buildings that Ali Tur achieved for small communities in rural areas. (Photo by Christian Galpin.)*

In addition to his architectural production, Ali Tur was also concerned with town planning, and most of his buildings played a major role in the arrangement of central-city areas. The church and town hall at Lamentin, and the Conseil Général Headquarters, Law Courts, and Governor's House at Basse Terre are all living legacies of Ali Tur's contribution to the reformulation of the urban design of Guadeloupean cities.[18] In small towns, Ali Tur's projects for town halls and



1-City Hall / 2 - Law Court / 3 - School / 4 - Presbitery
5- War Memorial / 6 - Church / 7 - Market / 8 - Tax collector's Office

FIGURE 15. *Layout of the central square at Lamentin. Ali Tur ordered the public buildings of this town according to the archetypal colonial scheme of the union of religious, civic and judiciary powers. A similar ordering may be found in the reconstruction of the central areas of other villages and small towns by Ali Tur. (Drawing by Christian Galpin.)*

other facilities often resulted in a relocation of central activities, which had formerly been focused on churches, but which now became centered on renewed civic centers characterized by geometric designs for open public areas **(FIGS.14,15)**.

In the early 1930s these characteristics of Ali Tur's architectural style had become well known. An entire volume of the *Encyclopedia of Architecture* had, in fact, been dedicated to his works, entitled *Architecture Coloniale, Guadeloupe: Bâtiments gouvernementaux et communaux, Ali Tur.*[19] It included nearly all the ink and pencil drawings describing the design of his Antillese projects. Ali Tur, himself, never mentioned any architectural form as a source of inspiration. But he said all aspects of his art were based on environmental requirements. Regarding insulation and ventilation, he noted:

> *These two conditions have very largely conditioned an architecture of rebirth in Guadeloupe. On the one hand, I always had to be sure that my buildings would be correctly located to let the breeze ["Alizé"] flow freely through all the rooms. I also only had rooms which, on both opposite sides, opened onto the exterior. [And] I cared about openings: all the door panes, window-glasses, and even some interior partitions were replaced by slatted shutters which could be arranged according to variable necessities of ventilation. On the other hand, when the funding was sufficient, I built verandahs, or porch roofs to protect the facades and the bay windows from direct sunlight.*[20]

This brief comment indicates how Ali Tur's vision of architecture was based on the same topics as Guadeloupean vernacular, which had been shaped through centuries to fit the environment. Yet, even though Ali Tur's architectural design offered an appropriate response to such local environmental conditions as ventilation, insulation, rainfall and humidity, his style stood in total aesthetic contrast both to the island's traditional architecture and its previous official buildings. In his Antillese work, Ali Tur's paradigm seems to have been to generate variations, always subtlely arranged with impressive elegance. Yet, by giving new form to customary patterns of climatic adaptation, Ali Tur technically and scientifically confirmed the legitimacy of traditional Guadeloupean designs. One might even say that Ali Tur's architecture represented an unselfconscious transposition of the local architectural vocabulary.

One reason for the contrast in style may have been that concrete provided new structural possibilities and the possibility for different forms of decorative expression. In particular, Ali Tur pushed the potential of concrete to produce sculptural effects to its limits. In his work, refined sequences alternate light and shade, while complex volumes give his buildings a sumptuous dimension. Yet, while many aesthetic values in his architecture may have been determined by the material he used, he also left a personal imprint on architectural and structural elements. Thus, the Orientalist theme of *claustras* emerged from his particular background and experience. He

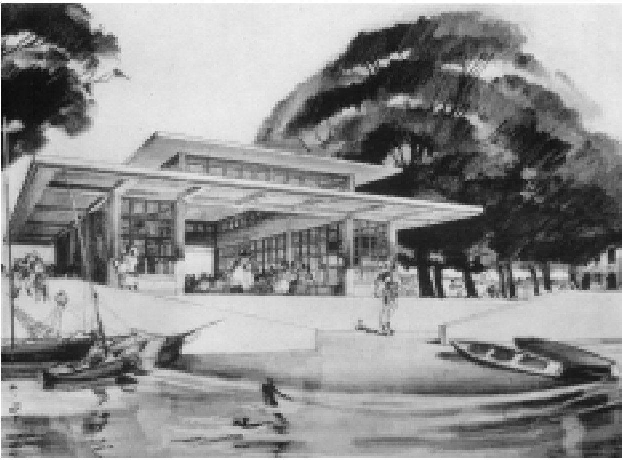


FIGURE 16. *In the Market Hall at Port Louis, the structure of the basement contrasts with a heavy double roof, the whole design resulting in an aerial allegory of architectural elegance. (Drawing by Ali Tur, in* Encyclopédie de l'Architecture: Architecture Coloniale, Guadeloupe: Bâtiments gouvernementaux et communaux, Ali Tur*, Paris, Editions Albert Morancé, 1930.)*

also arranged architectural elements in certain recurring forms in his designs: thus, openings were usually conceived of as a series of rigorously geometrical, sophisticated and decorative forms, often obeying rhythms based on the number three. Their size and form also often provided severe contrasts: rectangular, square, circular, and sometimes even octagonal. In addition, Ali Tur took advantage of the necessity of shading facades by using large cantilevers and overhanging roofs to increase sculptural effects **(FIG.16)**.

In many ways Ali Tur's manner can be related to the influence of Auguste Perret and Tony Garnier. Leonardo Benevolo's remark about Perret and Garnier might as easily be applied to Ali Tur:

> *Perret and Garnier knew the outlines of the tradition they are relying on. The idea was that there is a kind of timelessness in architecture which allows its adaptation to the requirements of the day, but that, however, design is based on permanent forms, which thus, in a discrete but never forgotten way, refer to Classicism. That means that there is a pre-established harmony between the architectural heritage and the building and construction techniques, and thus, that one may confidently, with his own means, face all modern concerns resulting from scientific and social developments.*[21]

One might argue that Ali Tur stood between several heritages, and that by staying within limits he assigned to himself, he managed to elaborate, with firm rigor, a Classical style of his own **(FIGS.17,18)**.

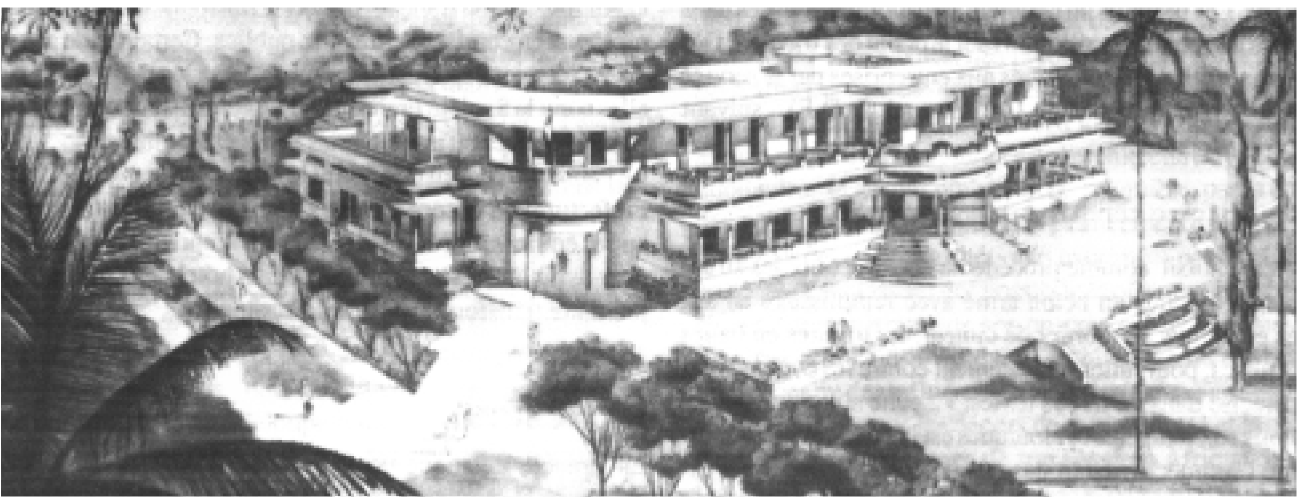


FIGURE 17. *The Governor's House at Basse Terre, located in a vast park, obeys a "Grand Manner" that recalls the majesty of aristocratic palaces. (Drawing by Ali Tur, in* Encyclopédie de l'Architecture: Architecture Coloniale, Guadeloupe: Bâtiments gouvernementaux et communaux, Ali Tur, *Paris, Editions Albert Morancé, 1930.)*

LEARNING FROM ALI TUR

Several characteristics of Ali Tur's work on Guadeloupe in the 1930s suggest profitable points for present-day designers. Today's designers lack the certitude of the generation born under the reliable trees of the Classical academies. Instead, they may feel guilty when confronted with traditional contexts. The concept of heritage, formerly limited to historical monuments, has now been extended to a large range of urban areas and natural sites.[22] And the conservation of vernacular architecture, urban as well as rural, has now become a major issue. In Guadeloupe, the studies of Jack Berthelot (especially *Caribbean Popular Dwellings*, published in 1982[23]) have forced local authorities to regard even the most modest Creole huts with new respect. While this new awareness of heritage has deserving aspects, it also bears negative consequences. For example, in protected sites, a mimetic architectural unity has been imposed, censuring innovative architectural designs.

Learning from the work of Ali Tur may allow contemporary designers more self-confidence when facing the collision between tradition and modernity. According to Gustave Flaubert, it is only through such collisions that it is possible to have a true meeting with self-conciousness. Avoiding the

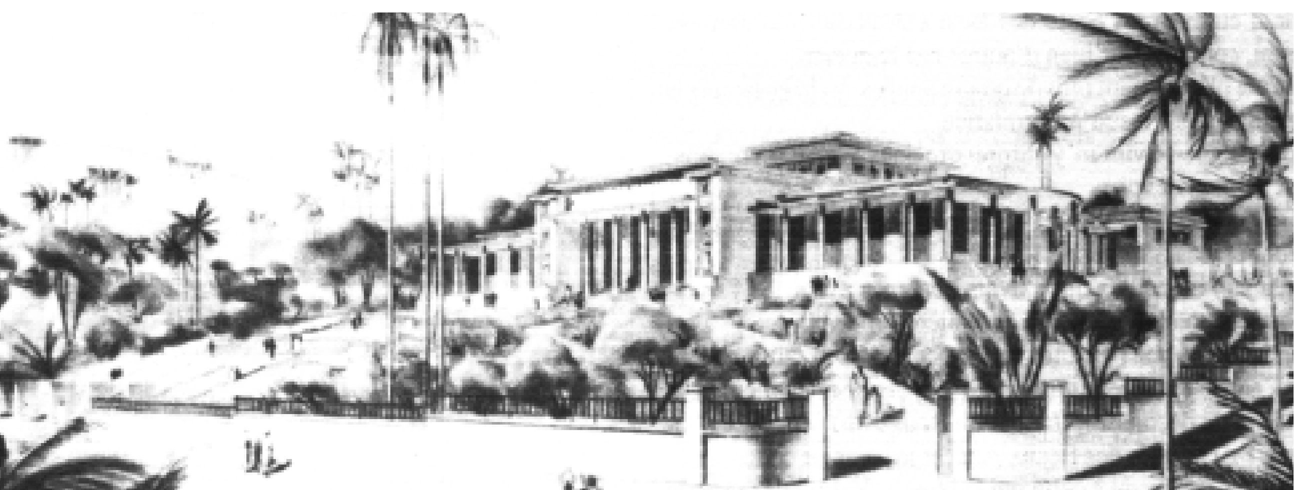


FIGURE 18. *Conseil Général Headquarters at Basse Terre. Succession of porticos and peristyles shading the facades enhances the progression onto the core of the building. A square tower culminates at the top of the building, providing ventilation to the different rooms. (Drawing by Ali Tur, in* Encyclopédie de l'Architecture: Architecture Coloniale, Guadeloupe: Bâtiments gouvernementaux et communaux, Ali Tur, *Paris, Editions Albert Morancé, 1930.)*

shock by copying the past is not the best way for "imagining our future."[24] In Ali Tur's time, local architecture was accorded little consideration. This allowed him to design freely, without any hesitation, imposing change on local construction routines. On the other hand, Ali Tur was modest and sensible enough to respect local contexts. But he did not express this by copying the decorative aspects of the Creole style, as Neo-Vernacular projects so often do today. Rather he designed modern buildings to accommodate local needs for climatic adaptation and disaster prevention. Since his designs "fit" the local environment in this way, they can be compared to preceding local constructions.

After their appearance in the 1930s, the buildings of Ali Tur were admired on the island and generated many "clones," mainly urban houses at Pointe-à-Pitre between 1940 to 1950. Ali Tur's patterning thus gave a common "1930s" style to certain neighborhoods on Guadeloupe. But from the 1950s on, Ali Tur's buildings were largely ignored. From that time to the 1980s, unsuitable international buildings, often designed like shoe boxes, were the norm in the French Caribbean, regardless of local conditions.[25] More recently, this International Style was severely questioned; and there followed a revival of the Creole vernacular, resulting in Neo-Vernacular styles that were more cosmetic than authentic. Looking back at its Creole roots, however, Guadeloupe has now also rediscovered Ali Tur's designs, and some of his main buildings have been classified as historical monuments, part of Guadeloupean heritage.[26] By a strange alchemy, therefore, the disruptive attributes of Ali Tur's work have now become a fully integrated and indisputable component of local tradition.

Various factors may have favored this integration. Considering the three centuries of Guadeloupe's colonial history, the eight years during which Ali Tur practiced on the island may appear as only a brief incident. However, Ali Tur's activity was of greater importance than his brief appearance may indicate, largely because his designs were produced over the entire island during a decisive period in its history. Due to the absolute devastation of the 1928 hurricane, Guadeloupean public buildings needed to be rebuilt everywhere — not only in main towns, but also in remote villages. His work also included all sorts of buildings, from churches to town halls, schools, hospitals, market halls and so on. Thus, his architecture marked all the aspects of society, except housing. (Even memory did not escape his imprint, as he rebuilt the World War I commemorative monuments of many villages.) Ali Tur's architecture materialized a new public architecture, which islanders rapidly adopted as part of their everyday, common landscape.

A political strategy can also be discerned behind the substitution of older government buildings by Ali Tur's designs. France's colonization of Guadeloupe had begun in 1635, and the French government wanted to organize large festivals for the year 1935 to commemorate three centuries of French presence. In some ways, changing all the governmental buildings was a way of creating a striking marker. The project to create a new architecture can thus be read as an attempt to revitalize the image of the enduring power of the colonial system.

Looking back, one can see how today's re-embracing of Ali Tur's work reflects a major aspect of Caribbean societies: their capacity to combine external traits and transform them into fully local patterns of culture. Thus, Creole identity is based on a vital ability to progressively incorporate complexity introduced from outside. Yet, while assimilation of external models may be considered a typically Creole trait, it may also be considered an ordinary effect of the passage of time. Time and architecture are great and opposing companions. As Stewart Brand has pointed out, "time devours buildings."[27] With time passing, what was once a resplendent monument may become little more than a poor ruin, or even nothing at all. However, time may also give to some buildings a fresh significance, an unexpected beauty. In this case they get a second life, and join the vast and heterogeneous package that is called "local" tradition.[28] Any odd piece of architecture, through years, just because it is still there, may be acknowledged as a part of the *"genius"* of a place.

Nevertheless, the full assimilation of such an Arabic-Classic-Colonial-Modern-French style into a local image of architecture must still be questioned. Today, as Ali Tur comes back on stage, Guadeloupean architects might be tempted to continue in the style of a certified master. But there is a time for each style, and the best lesson to take from Ali Tur's design philosophy may be to avoid imitating him. Contemporary Guadeloupean designers must today confront the same challenge Ali Tur faced in the 1930s: modernization and adaptation. And, like Ali Tur, they might seek to create a new local architecture, independent of the former vernacular, but, in a way, equivalent. Following the path of tradition is not going backward, but going forward, with the same care for the local. Thus, they might provide a new local identity, imposing their own artistic style and creating new markers for the same place. Discussion of which part of traditional architecture these designers might include or not include in their work is, of course, essential. But giving a unique style to a place is also fundamental. Even if such new buildings might seem shocking from the literal perspective of tradition-preservation, they might provide the best solution to the task of continually revitalizing local architectural identity. This will require significant invention, but it will also require, as with the work of Ali Tur, wise attention to the specificity of the Caribbean environment. Ali Tur's buildings are a rich example of such an alternative architecture, based on multicultural experience, resulting in an integrated style supported by the designer's inner talent.

CONCLUSION: FOR A PERMISSIVE "DIGLOSSY" IN ARCHITECTURE

It may be best to conclude here by discussing the limits of this case. Ali Tur only designed official buildings, and the merit

of his production consists in the new style he gave to public architecture on Guadeloupe. But prestigious projects requiring professional designers, as talented as they may be, represent only a small part of local construction.

Traditional architecture on Guadeloupe consisted for many centuries of domestic buildings which were the work of relatively unknown artisans who elaborated and refined vernacular patterns. But such local know-how and practice are now disappearing, leaving a void which cannot be filled by the deceptions of modernity. Since it is no longer possible to return to the anonymous genius of the artisan, is the only alternative to accept that such qualities of place can only emerge from the most creative designers?

A major trait of Creole societies is, and always has been, the split of local culture into two expressions: the first formal and official, reproducing the dominant culture of colonizers; the second informal and customary, preserving the cultural heritage of such subordinated groups as ethnic minorities, slaves, and the lower classes. For example, in the French West Indies people speak two languages: French, which is used at school and for formal occasions; and Creole, which is used at home, between friends, and for informal conversations. Linguists have called this division "diglossy." In the Caribbean, architecture, like language, conforms to a diglossic pattern. The language of official architecture is grand and impressive, open to modernist technologies that symbolize progress and prosperity. But at home the same pattern is not necessarily desirable. Thus, middle-class clients on Guadeloupe today demand so-called "colonial" villas that reproduce such typical traits of bourgeois architecture as pavilion roofs, dormers, enclosing porches or galleries, thin colonettes, gorgeous balustrades, and white-washed rendering. Such a decorative Colonial Revival vocabulary is also used by self-help builders.

Professional designers, of course, hate this bad taste among the Antillese middle class. But they might be a little more tolerant and confident of such people's tastes, since such a naïve Neo-Vernacular style is itself a version of the everlasting talent of Creole society to imitate and integrate external traits. Copying bourgeois architecture of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is today a way to escape the colorless modernist projects imposed during the last twenty years. Thus, the current ambiguity in Guadeloupe's domestic architecture may announce bright new developments. Popular architecture obeys the fundamental Creole dilemma, so accurately described by Edouard Glissant[29]: as minor as it is, naïve creation may magnify the diglossic world where official and informal architecture are both in search of their present identities, surviving all sorts of disasters, cultural as well as natural.

In a short essay entitled "Bassin des Ouragans" ("Bay of Hurricanes"), Raphaël Confiant, gave a paradoxical view of the aftermath of a disaster which illustrates the wonderful Creole humor and ability to survive any circumstance with hope deeply rooted in the heart.

> *The hurricane had beheaded the trees, the houses, and torn out electric and telephone wires, drowned the huts which, by imprudence or colonial negligence, had been built along the Bouillé River. In short, the world had became a tremendous disaster. The silence of eternity reigned there and no living creature would have risked a bit of his nose outside. Anna Maria proclaimed with delectation: "We are the only creatures to be alive."*[30]

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Gentrification and the Politics of Power, Capital and Culture in an Emerging Jordanian Heritage Industry

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This article presents an epistemology of the heritage industry in Jordan and an investigation of the dynamics of gentrification as a potential outcome of conservation projects. It argues that heritage conservation should not be approached only as a means for capital accumulation; nor should it be confined to the commodification of historical and cultural environments. Rather, heritage conservation should be seen as a complex activity aimed at fostering cultural continuity and genuine community development and participation. If heritage tourism is to be endorsed as a major component of a national economy, a dynamic and balanced interaction should be maintained between cultural heritage, host communities, and tourist-industry investments.

A standard definition of culture is the "totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought typical of a population or community at a given time."[1] Duncan and Ley, however, have recently critiqued such a static definition of culture and its implications for cultural landscapes, and they have offered a new definition in which culture is conceived as a conflict between empowered and marginalized ideological and political interpretations of place.[2] Others have also written that culture is a dynamic concept, and that when it is forced into a static existence, it ceases to serve as a source of inspiration.[3] The above distinction highlights a general misunderstanding that has come to surround efforts at heritage conservation. Unlike the conservation efforts practiced by specialists in such fields as archaeology and the preservation of artifacts, heritage conservation is a dynamic field. A comprehensive understanding of its processes must take into account a reading of the political, social and economic dimensions of cultural change. In fact, heritage conservation might best be defined as the ongoing management of change in the built and social environment.

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In Jordan the heritage-conservation movement is today faced with several obstacles that have become manifest in the absence of defined mechanisms, such as established administrative tools and channels for financial support. By default, conservation projects are today being approached as regular construction jobs, with no consideration given to local inhabitants or their culture. One fashionable form that such heritage conservation projects has taken, especially among architects and investors, is the commodification of the recent past as a heritage attraction, the experience of which may be sold to affluent consumers. Such a strategy, however, prioritizes capital accumulation over the welfare of host communities and living cultural heritage. It is causing severe disassociation, alienation and gentrification within those communities which contain conserved sites.[4]

The purpose of this article is to investigate the dynamics of gentrification in culturally live sites in Jordan. It is based on an interrelated study of the politics of power and legitimacy, capital investment, and culture among the major players in the Jordanian heritage industry: designers, conservationists, investors, local authorities, and host communities.

UNDERSTANDING GENTRIFICATION: SYNTHESIS OF CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

A working definition of gentrification is the "restoration of deteriorated urban property especially in working-class neighborhoods by the middle and upper classes." The word originates from "gentry" (people of gentle birth, good breeding, or high social position) and "fication" (production or making).[5] Thus, gentrification is related to the production of new social identities for the middle class (production of gentry) through the restoration or rehabilitation of deteriorated working-class neighborhoods. The problem with this definition is that it marginalizes the effects of such processes on the original inhabitants of a gentrified area. Further consideration of the essence and complexity of gentrification, therefore, might lead to an operational definition of the concept which stresses both a place- and a person-centered perspective.

From a place-centered perspective, gentrification can be defined as the "conversion of socially marginal and working-class areas of the central city to middle-class residential use, [which] reflects a movement, that began in the 1960s, of private-market investment capital into downtown districts of major centers."[6] More recently, this use of the term has been expanded by sociologists to refer to such processes as they occur in rural settings as well. From a person-centered perspective, gentrification can be defined as the process by which low-income occupants of developed, adapted or rehabilitated areas in urban or rural settings are replaced by higher-income residents. The mechanism behind such displacement is well known, generally involving an increase in property values and tax assessments that the original residents cannot afford. They are then forced, or tempted, to sell out for prejudiced amounts, leading to alienation and loss of culture and way of life.

Recent research has attempted to arrive at a synthesis of two modes for analyzing gentrification pressures: cultural analysis (involving such issues as production of social identity, displacement and demographic restructuring, and geographic preference); and economic analysis (involving such issues as consumption of past environments, capital accumulation, and increases in property values).[7] According to such research, gentrification entails processes of spatial and social differentiation involving the consumption of past environments by outside investors or new, more affluent residents for the purposes of flexible accumulation of capital and the production of desired new forms of social identity (e.g., urbanity, high-style living, or association with "historic" environments).[8]

EPISTEMOLOGY OF THE HERITAGE INDUSTRY IN JORDAN

No clear definition exists of historical and cultural resources in Jordan today. In fact, post-1700 AD historical and cultural resources are not even protected by law, and have been plagued by widespread destruction and neglect. The management of cultural resources has also only recently been integrated into the scope of municipal planning practice, and no guidelines exist concerning intervention in already-existing historical settings.[9] In the absence of such official policies, heritage-conservation projects in Jordan have in the last two decades become intertwined with the tourist industry. According to Masri, such heritage-conservation/tourism developments have been associated with a variety of themes and objectives — some concerned with local identity, others constituting little more than a refuge from reality.[10]

The following brief discussion categorizes some principal themes of these conservation projects. Because it is aimed at critically understanding conservation in Jordan, it attempts to single out only the main motives behind each project, and it is not intended to imply these projects do not have other motives. Obviously, to do each project justice, each would have to receive its own detailed study. But for the purposes of this paper, which focuses on gentrification, only the village of Umm Qais has been selected for in-depth case study.

Most heritage conservation projects in Jordan follow an approach in which heritage is viewed as a means for capital accumulation, and according to which each heritage site is treated as a commodity. This trend is being encouraged by wealthy investors who have tried to gain legitimacy through association with architects and conservationists. Since such projects are often based in rural villages, they often lead to severe gentrification and widespread displacement of original inhabitants. This fashionable trend can be seen in projects and proposals for luxurious tourist villages such as Taybet Zaman, Umm Qais, and Khirbet al Nawafleh **(FIGS.1A,B;2)**.

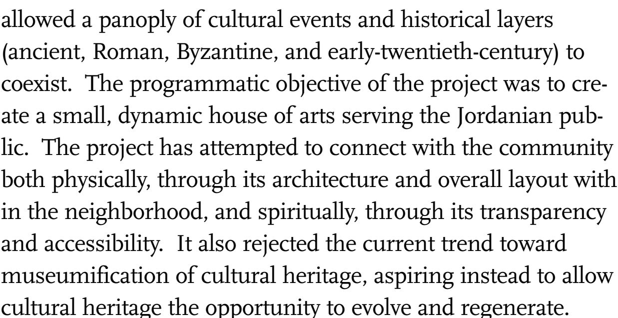
FIGURE 1A,B. (ABOVE) *The tourist village of Taybet in southern Jordan. Note the lack of differentiation between existing village fabric and new additions.*
FIGURE 2. (BELOW RIGHT) *The tourist village of Khirbet al Nawafleh in southern Jordan after evacuation and deterioration, and before implementation of the conservation project. The village provides an example of the commodification of the cultural heritage resulting in gentrification.*

Different levels of gentrification characterize these developments. In the case of Taybet Zaman in the Petra region, the entire village was rented from its inhabitants by Jordan Tourism Investments according to a long-term contract. The village was then transformed into a luxurious tourist attraction, and many of the former villagers were offered such low-income jobs in the new development as cleaning and custodial work (the investor's way of providing for community development and public participation).

In other conservation projects, architectural heritage has become a means for social differentiation and the production of a new social identity for the upper-middle class. The geographic constitution of such gentrified or conserved areas is crucial to the production of such new identities, which usually center around "urban living" and the consumption of high-class cultural products (e.g., alternative music and arts and crafts). Historic residential neighborhoods in Amman have become particularly favorable locations for this type of conservation activity. A perfect example is Books@Cafe, a recently completed adaptation of an historic house into a Westernized Internet cafe. Despite its high-minded intentions, the project constitutes an intrusion into a calm residential neighborhood, producing alienation and discomfort among the local community. And it has created a schizophrenic difference between the environments inside and outside the cafe, intensifying the separation between the neighborhood and its architectural heritage.

Unfortunately, very few conservation projects in Jordan prioritize community development, sustainability, or the revitalization of heritage in the service of a larger community. In the pursuit of such goals, conservation might be viewed as a cultural act, and architectural heritage might be considered a source of inspiration. In such projects the regeneration of architectural heritage can also provide a tool to resist commodification of the environment. Usually, instances of this third type of heritage-conservation are initiated by artists and/or concerned conservationists, and they generally have a cultural/educational flavor. They also tend to emphasize differentiation in place and time between the various historical layers of a particular site. A good example of this type of approach is Darat al Funun, in Amman (FIG.3A,B,C). After the 1970s, this site was abandoned and fell into neglect; but in 1993 it was conserved by the Shuman Foundation in a way that

FIGURE 3A,B,C. *Darat al Funum Art Center in Amman, Jordan. The project, which resulted in the harmonious coexistence of different layers of history and architecture, is an example of heritage being a source of inspiration for cultural regeneration.*



allowed a panoply of cultural events and historical layers (ancient, Roman, Byzantine, and early-twentieth-century) to coexist. The programmatic objective of the project was to create a small, dynamic house of arts serving the Jordanian public. The project has attempted to connect with the community both physically, through its architecture and overall layout within the neighborhood, and spiritually, through its transparency and accessibility. It also rejected the current trend toward museumification of cultural heritage, aspiring instead to allow cultural heritage the opportunity to evolve and regenerate.

With the exception of those few such successful endeavors that prioritize cultural continuity and genuine community development and participation, the majority of heritage-conservation projects in Jordan today adopt the first alternative, which the author refers to as the *zaman* approach.[11] This trend is spreading in Jordan like a malignant tumor, lethal to heritage, since it acts as an obstacle to its regeneration and continuity.

UMM QAIS: HISTORIOGRAPHY OF A JORDANIAN VILLAGE

Historical research should provide interpretation of facts and events in both a temporal and a geographic context. Clear distinctions should also be drawn between mere chronologies of events and interpretations of their meaning in place and time — a historiography.[12] Without a proper historiography of Umm Qais, the study of its architecture would be little more than a study of static objects, with little relation to underlying conditions of political, economic and cultural dynamics. According to Shami, in order to arrive at this level of understanding of nineteenth-century Umm Qais, one has to appreciate the importance of the prevailing land use system, contemporary processes of land registration and ownership, and the nature of trade networks that existed at the time. These factors all had a significant effect on the political, cultural and economic context of the village, as well as its layout and architectural composition.[13]

The village of Umm Qais is located in the northern part of Jordan, where it commands magnificent views of the North Jordan Valley, Lake Tiberias, the Yarmouk River Gorge, and the Golan Heights **(FIG.4)**. Umm Qais also occupies the site of the ancient Greco-Roman city of Gadara, a city of the Decapolis famous for its poets and philosophers.[14] Gadara had originally been founded as a military colony by the Ptolemies; but it was Pompeius, the famous Roman leader, who conquered it in 63 BC and initiated an extensive building program that included theaters, baths, temples, gateways and infrastructure.[15] In 1806 the ruins of ancient Gadara were identified by the German Orientalist and explorer Ulrich Seetzen. Later on, the site was surveyed more thor-

oughly by G. Schumacher, another German traveler in Bilad al Sham, who wrote that it was uninhibited at the time.[16]

Under Ottoman rule during the second half of the nineteenth century the acropolis of Gadara was resettled by villagers arriving from such nearby settlements as Sama al Rousan and Malka. The layout of the new village, which took the name Umm Qais, followed the original plan of the Greco-Roman city but was built according to a Jordanian/vernacular style. During the second half of the twentieth century the settlement expanded along the main road connecting Irbid to Himmeh, which passed nearby. The name Umm Qais (originally *mkes*, which means "frontier station," or "sac for measurements," in Arabic) reflected the significant role the settlement played in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as an Ottoman border post and center for collecting taxes, in the form of agricultural products, from the Hauran Valley.[17] Today, the village provides archeologists, anthropologists and conservationists with an extremely rich heritage site, incorporating both the ruins of the Greco-Roman city and one of a very few genuine and well-preserved Ottoman villages in the region.[18]

A key historical condition affecting the development of the village in the early nineteenth century was the desire of the rulers of the Ottoman Empire to promote agriculture in Bilad al Sham to compensate for a drop in agricultural production from the Balkans, which was at the time subject to political unrest. The Ottoman government also aimed to achieve an increased level of state control in the region. A Land Code was initiated in 1858 to further these ends. It made it mandatory to register all lands under cultivation, and it specified that any land left unattended for more than three years was subject to confiscation by the government. In Umm Qais, the effect of this code was substantial, leading to a gradual stratification of the village community into two groups: landowners *(mellakin)*, who had settled first in the village and who could therefore register most nearby lands; and share-croppers *(fellahin)*, who worked these lands for the landowners, and who on rare occasions were able to register lands of their own.

One of the most prominent *mellakin* in Umm Qais was Falah al Rousan, who later became the Ottoman district magistrate (*qaimmaqam*, or *mukhtar*). He occupied the most significant house in the village, Beit al Rousan, located at the apex of the old acropolis where it had a commanding view of the rest of the town.[19] Generally speaking, there was also a strong connection in the village between cadastral patterns and power relations, on the one hand, and architectural patterns and village morphology, on the other.[20] *Mellakin* families resided at the highest levels of the village, building beautiful courtyard-style houses with elaborate detailing and vaulted roof systems. *Fellahin* settled in small scattered houses in the lower parts of the village. A third group, landowning families who had arrived later in the growth of the village, settled between these two groups in an intermediate location.[21]

By the turn of the century, following these general development patterns, the region of Bilad al Sham had achieved significant agricultural prosperity, and had succeeded in attracting the political and economic interest of both Britain and France. This led to the improvement of infrastructure and trade networks linking Umm Qais to such major cities in the region as Damascus, Irbid and Tiberias.

JOURNEY FROM PARADISE TO GHETTO

In 1967 the Department of Antiquities of Jordan proposed plans to excavate large new sections of the ancient city of Gadara. To further this plan, even though archaeological excavations had to that point been carried out without significant obstruction from the local community, the department issued a special "Legal Order" confiscating the houses and lands of the villagers. The change in policy with regard to Umm Qais reflected the government's desire to demolish it entirely to facilitate the archaeological excavations. As such, it reflected a decision to privilege the heritage of one period (Classical Roman and Byzantine) at the expense of the continuity of another (the Ottoman-derived culture of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries).

Eventually, these government plans to demolish Umm Qais completely were abolished under pressure from Jordanian and German architects and anthropologists. But the displacement of the villagers was carried out nonetheless. Thus, in 1976 the inhabitants were forced to sell their houses and agricultural land to the government, and in the ten years that followed they were displaced to a nearby housing project **(FIG.5)**. Following the relocation, most of the houses were left vacant, which caused them to deteriorate severely **(FIG.6)**. The result of these policies was that during the 1980s the previously harmonious coexistence of different cultures, architectural orders, and ideologies in Umm Qais was dismantled under the direction of certain empowered scholars and authority figures who had chosen to prioritize one period of Jordanian history at the expense of another. Confiscations eventually amounted to about 460 *donoms* of agricultural land, for which the level of compensation was extremely

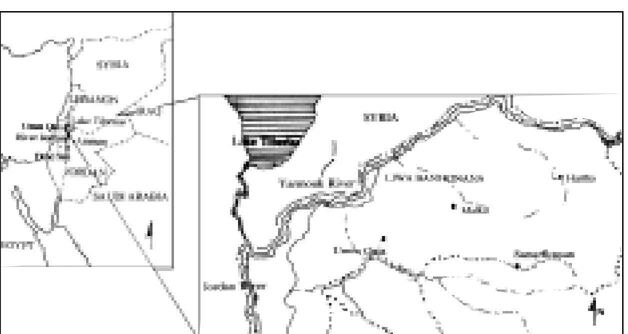
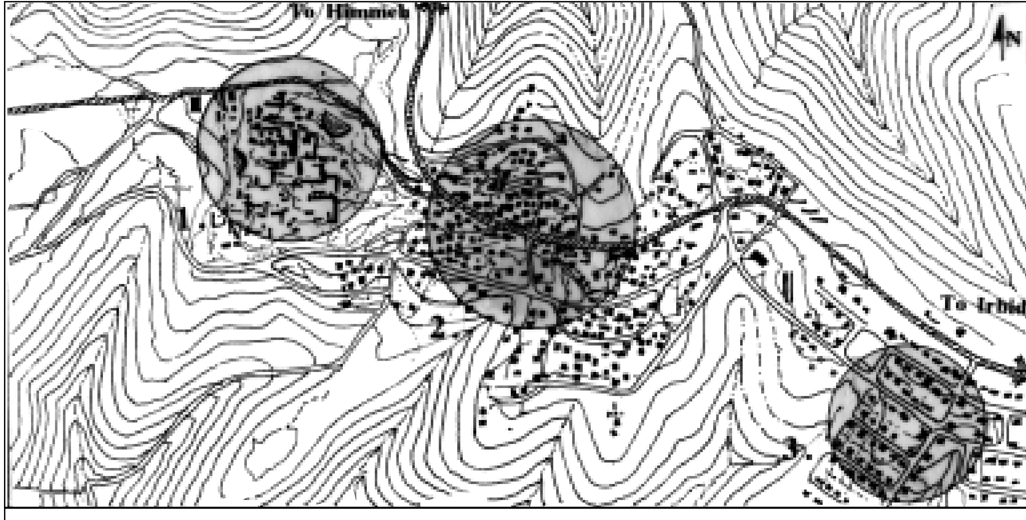


FIGURE 4. *Map of Jordan with a blow-up of the Bani Kinana region in the north near the Syrian border.*



1. Ottoman Settlement & Ancient Ruins
2. Mid-20th Century Expansion Following Transportation Network
3. Housing Project (1980s)

FIGURE 5. *Site plan of Umm Qais with the three main zones of expansion: the Ottoman settlement and ancient Roman ruins, the mid-twentieth-century expansion following the transportation network, and the new housing project.*

unfair. For example, a typical holding, consisting of a courtyard house with five to seven rooms and approximately five additional *donoms* of agricultural land, was bought by the government for only 12,000 Jordanian Dinars (JD). When the villagers objected, the government offered to sell them new housing units built by the Jordanian Housing Cooperation for about JD 10,000-19,000, depending on their size.[22]

The housing project to which the villagers were moved was built outside the old Ottoman village along the highway to Irbid. Its site was a piece of land that was previously unfit for housing development because of its 35-40 percent slope. After their eviction, villagers were not allowed to build new houses of their own; instead, they were forced to inhabit dwelling units whose plans were borrowed from design prototypes that did not fit their life-style. For example, most villagers kept domestic animals, grew crops, and had water wells in their courtyards. In their old dwellings they had also enjoyed proximity to their agricultural lands. In the new housing units, such culturally-embedded practices became impossible. Exiled to this new ghetto, their former paradise waited in vain for their return (**FIG.7**). Villagers make frequent trips to their former residences in the vacant and deteriorated old village, and there remembered sadly how their dignified and glorious past had been violated. In addition, now that the main source of their former living (agriculture) had been taken away, most villagers were forced to look for low-paying jobs in nearby urban centers such as Irbid. Faced with these conditions, it was not long before the villagers started to experience a sense of alienation from their old village. In fact, hostile feelings soon emerged between the villagers and their old settlement, which many began to view as a curse.

FIGURE 6. *Effects of gentrification at Umm Qais: vacant and deteriorated courtyard houses and sterile but picturesque environments.*

CONSERVATION EFFORTS AT UMM QAIS

After evacuation of the villagers, German and Jordanian archaeologists and architects started to call for the conservation of the old Ottoman courtyard houses. But although isolated and fragmented conservation projects started to appear, they lacked a cohesive approach or philosophy (FIG.8). In hindsight, it is possible to see how such projects failed for two reasons: first, because they failed to address the overall vernacular fabric of the village, with its streets and nodes and organic character; and second, because they failed to attempt to relocate at least some of the villagers back to the dwellings. In the absence of these crucial measures, the projects could offer little more than a museumification of the cultural heritage, turning a once vivid and living heritage into a staged artifact. The following is a brief synopsis of some isolated attempts to restore and adapt the village's courtyard houses and community structures.[23]

In September 1987 the restoration of Beit Malkawi was completed. This house was adapted to serve as a headquarters for archaeological teams (mainly German and Jordanian), and as a storage site for archaeological finds. Ironically, the house's original owner, Ahmad Malkawi, the former mayor *(mukhtar)* of the village, was asked to stay in one of the wings of the house and work as a guard. Thus, his family was the only one that was able to stay behind.

Another significant house, Beit Rousan, was adapted into an archaeological museum (FIG.9). This project tragically resulted in the demolition of authentic village walls to create larger internal courtyards, however. The walls of houses in Umm Qais had served as important space definers, helping create sequential movement from public, to semipublic, to private space. But this project compromised the historic spatial integrity of an important area of the village. In addition, the museum's emphasis on ancient findings marginalized the Ottoman heritage and the traditional life-style that motivated the design of building (FIG.10).

In 1991 the former village school was adapted into a resthouse and Italian restaurant (after relocating the school

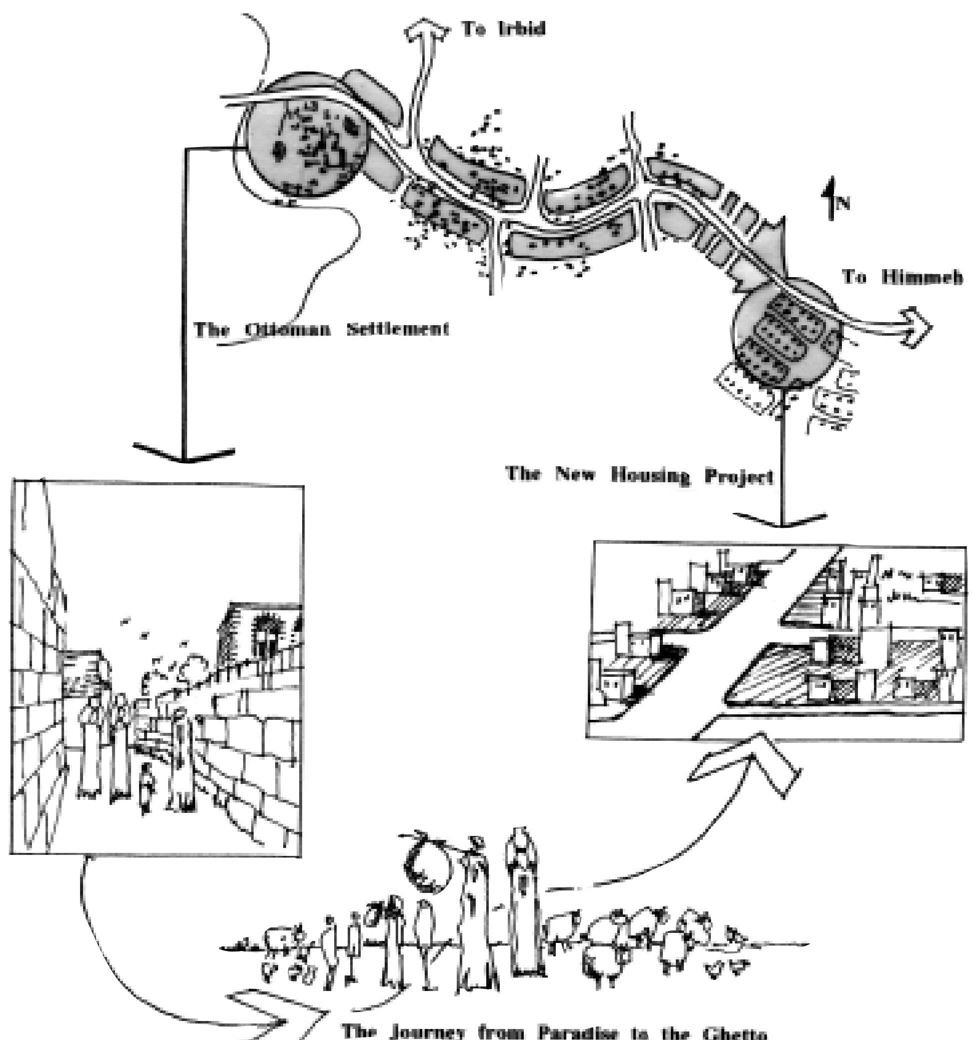


FIGURE 7. *The journey from paradise to ghetto. The relocation of the villagers from the Ottoman settlement to the new housing project.*

to the new housing project as a way to pressure the villagers to move). The project was primarily intended to serve tourists and upper-middle-class visitors from Amman. The adaptation, which was funded by Zara Investment Company, resulted in the unnecessary demolition of the north wing of the former U-shaped structure — consisting of two rooms, one from the turn of the century and another from the mid-twentieth century — and its replacement with a terrace and two cross-vaulted structures. Previously, three periods of vernacular architecture had coexisted harmoniously in the school. But the new structures are confused with the old ones, creating difficulty for any future reading of the history of the place (FIG.11). The new function for the building, as an Italian restaurant, was also strongly rejected by the local community, which considered such a use to be unsuitable for one of the village's previously most significant structures.

Finally, in 1994 the same investment company that had adapted the school proposed to the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities that the whole former Ottoman-era settlement be turned into a five-star tourist resort, with all associated amenities, including restaurants, bars, hotel rooms, and swimming pools (another *zaman* indiscretion). The ministry has so far granted the company initial acceptance for this scheme, although legal proceedings have not yet been finalized. One reason for the delay has been legal problems resulting from the change in land use (from archaeological

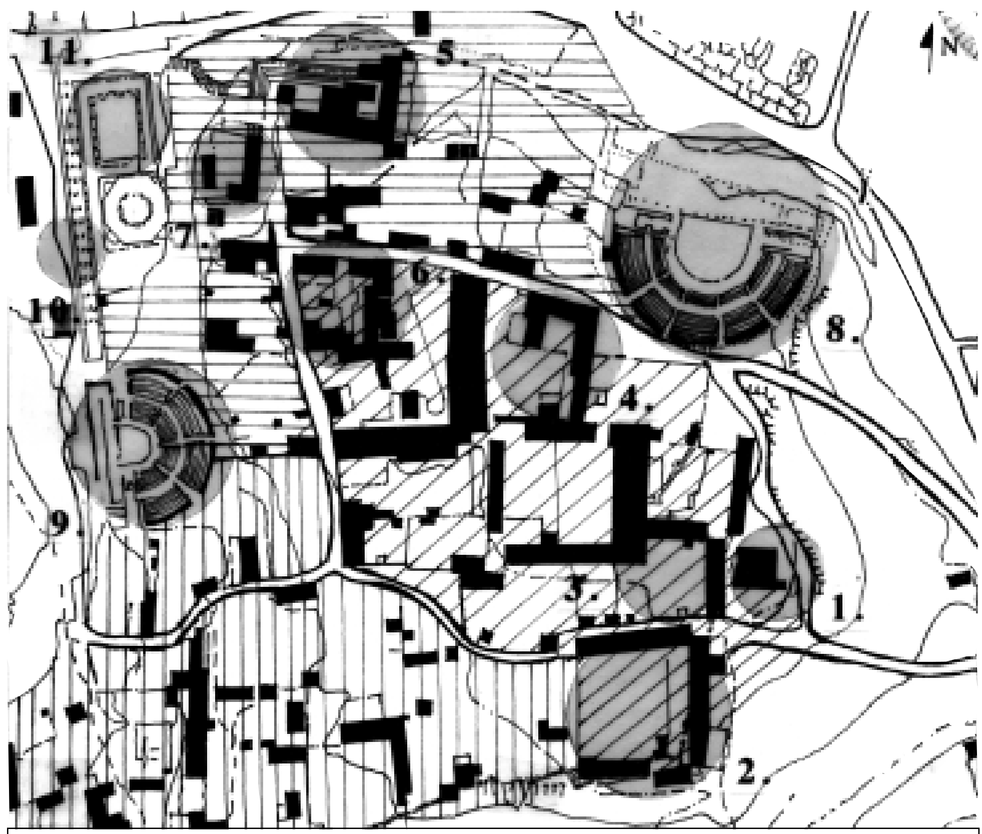


FIGURE 8. *Site plan of the Ottoman settlement and ancient ruins, indicating the three immigration zones of the late nineteenth century and the current main features in the village.*

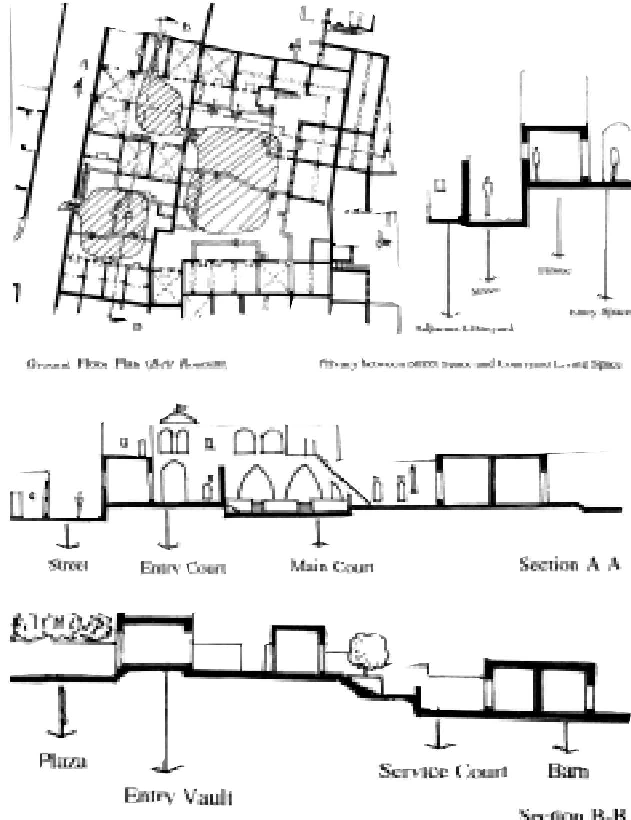


FIGURE 9. *Beit Rousan before the adaptation and demolition of walls which negatively effected the sequential flow of space and experiences. The documentation of this house and the whole village before gentrification was carried out by the author between 1987 and 1988.*

site to tourist resort). Another has been opposition from the local community. Although designs for the tourist resort call for the retention of uses in those courtyard houses that have already been adapted, the original inhabitants of the village feel they should be part of the decision-making process concerning redevelopment of the village, and should be able to operate and manage tourist facilities there.[24]

Recently, the author has sensed that new alliances are starting to form between the archaeologists (who once were the villagers' enemies, and who were the main reason the gentrification process began some fifteen years ago) and the local community. Neither approves of the proposed scheme for the village by the tourist investment company, and both realize that once the village is sold in its entirety to the private sector, all possibility of the villagers returning will be ended.

ETHNOGRAPHIC FIELDWORK AT UMM QAIS

A major source of information regarding conflicts at Umm Qais has been extensive fieldwork undertaken by the author over the last ten years. This research has been qualitative/exploratory in nature, based on analytic induction (working with the pieces to get to the general picture), rather than deduction.[25] In addition, the author has adopted a collective approach to inquiry, accommodating the value systems of the studied community.

Ethnographic fieldwork has been integral to this long-term effort. Since the author rejects the notion of a sharp division between background research, fieldwork and theory, fieldwork has been fully integrated into all phases of the research, with all its complexities and biases.[26] And during the last season of fieldwork at Umm Qais (1998), the author depended mainly on ethnographic fieldwork methods to elicit information from the local community.[27]

In the first stage of this recent effort, frequent participant observation and informal and unstructured interviews were conducted over an extended period of time. These efforts were characterized by a minimum of control over

FIGURE 10. (ABOVE) *Beit Rousan after adaptation into an archaeological museum.*

FIGURE 11. (BELOW) *The village school after gentrification and adaptation into a resthouse and Italian restaurant. The project resulted in a distorted reading of the evolution of place, since there is no distinction between the existing building and the new additions.*

informants' responses. Valuable key-informants in the village were also identified, facilitating the researcher's entry into the community. The purpose of this initial stage was to get the people of Umm Qais to open up and express themselves in their own terms and at their own pace.

In the second stage of the recent fieldwork, the author, with the help of undergraduate students of architecture, distributed some 250 copies of a letter to the community, containing a history of the conflict at Umm Qais and describing the rights of the indigenous inhabitants. The purpose of the letter, which was discussed in small focus groups all over the village prior to being distributed, was education and public awareness. In addition, 50 semistructured interviews, based on a previously determined interview guide, were conducted with representatives of various social and age groups. The interviews had several objectives; among these were to elicit local reactions to the gentrification process, to construct comparisons between previous and current living conditions, and to elicit reactions to the fragmented heritage-conservation projects in the old village and the comprehensive proposal for its conversion. The following is a brief synopsis of results of this ethnographic fieldwork.

Almost all interviewees (96 percent) were opposed to their relocation to the housing project and said they preferred their old life in the village. The 4 percent who favored life in the housing project credited their view to the availability of modern utilities such as electricity and running water. The entire community expressed eagerness to move back to the old village if it could be restored and upgraded with proper infrastructure. The interviewees expressed unanimous dislike for their new housing-project units, which they often compared to prison cells. And they elaborated on the unsuitability of such units for an agricultural life-style, since, among other reasons, they provided no storage space for grain, no courtyard space for daily cooking or the keeping of domestic animals, and little sense of community spirit. In addition, they sited a worsening of community economic conditions, since most young people were choosing to abandon agriculture for low-paying jobs in nearby urban centers.

In terms of changes to the old village, interviewees were generally accepting of the adaptation of the Rousan house into an archaeological museum, even though many felt the adaptation should have more closely reflected their living heritage and life-style. But the whole community was outraged by the closure of the village school and its adaptation into an Italian restaurant. They felt that the school represented a significant part of their past, and that it was inappropriate to change such a former place of education and learning into a place of sin and alcohol-drinking.

Almost 95 percent of the interviewees expressed disapproval of the plan to sell the village to the investment company for redevelopment as a five-star resort. They proposed instead a scenario in which they would be able to return to certain parts of the old village and participate in smaller tourism-related projects with the help of the government. They felt this option could also improve the quality of heritage tourism in the village by bringing life back to it. All villagers expressed a desire to be included in the decision-making process, and all opposed secret deals between what they referred to as a "strategic investor" and the government. They felt they were being denied such a voice, however, because their local council had been disempowered.

One clear finding of the fieldwork at Umm Qais is that different interest groups, with various degrees of legitimacy and power, hold different pasts to be of value, and at times these pasts are deeply contradictory. Archaeologists value the ancient city of Gadara at the expense of the more recent Ottoman settlement. Conservationists value the recent past of the Ottoman village and its courtyard houses. Investors value the potential for capital accumulation through transformation of the village into a tourist resort. And members of the local community value an authentic way of life manifested through a living tradition of agriculture and life in large courtyard *(hosh)* houses, which they associate with long-term economic stability and the sense of belonging to a shared place.

THE ETHICS AND POLITICS OF COMMODIFYING THE PAST

If heritage tourism is to be endorsed as a major component of a national economy such as that of Jordan, a dynamic and balanced interaction should be maintained between living cultural heritage and investments in tourism. In an attempt to establish principles to govern such a fragile and sensitive relationship, ICOMOS (The International Council on Monuments and Sites) has recently been researching an International Cultural Tourism Charter (ICTC).[28] In the following sections, this article will try to reflect on the realities and complexities of heritage tourism at Umm Qais with respect to the principles of the ICTC.

The case study of Umm Qais indicates how heritage conservation is a complex activity with many ideological, political, and economic ramifications. Yet before discussing the politics of consuming the past, it is essential to understand how important cultural changes have been initiated during the second half of this century. Harvey has suggested that such cultural change may be credited to the shift from modernism to postmodernism.[29] He has argued that postmodernism has surrendered itself to processes of commodification and commercialization of the environment and social life. Thus, a shift has taken place from a culture of production (Fordism) to a culture of consumption and flexible capital accumulation.

If historic sites are to be developed for tourism, excellence, protective strategies, and thorough research should guide this development in order to ensure a genuine cultural experience for the tourist and protect the rights of host com-

munities.[30] Due to its rich ancient, classical and modern history, the majority of tourists coming to Jordan (about 78 percent) seek a distinguished cultural experience. Yet tourist products and services in Jordan (e.g., museums, visitor centers, and site management and interpretation) were given a "poor" or "fair" rating by about 40 percent of tourists. One reason is that tourist products in Jordan suffer from overemphasis on antiquities and a below-standard level of service and facility provision.[31] At the same time, local strategies for improving tourism overemphasize the economic dimension, viewing the country's cultural resources primarily for their money-generating potential. Such an emphasis, however, tends to negate the very raison d'être of cultural tourism, for when culture is exclusively viewed from a demand/supply perspective, it is reduced to a packaged experience. True cultural tourism, on the other hand, is a socio-culturally embodied phenomenon with diverse dimensions and untold influences, of which economics is but one.[32] This would seem to indicate that in Jordan the tourist experience should be emancipated from its present economic emphasis so it can begin exploring alternative value systems and paradigms.

Gentrified environments, such as that of Umm Qais, by contrast, offer little more than a means for capital accumulation and the construction of new social identities for those who occupy such places at the expense of their authentic heritage and the well-being of former inhabitants. Meanwhile, in return for long-term economic stability through their former agricultural activities and related local industries, those who are displaced are forced to accept short-term and occasional economic stability in the form of demeaning, low-income jobs in the tourist industry.

The case of Umm Qais shows how the commodification of the living heritage presents serious ethical problems associated with the fashionable *zaman* approach to heritage conservation in Jordan. Developing strategies and theories of conservation and interpretation in historical and cultural sites—in addition to facilitating research on the sensitive interaction between tourist investment and the cultural heritage of a host community—may help shift cultural tourism away from such an exclusively economic approach, to one with a more dynamic socio-cultural focus.

The ICTC is aimed at establishing guidelines to promote such a dynamic interaction between tourism investment and cultural heritage. One of its principal objectives is to facilitate and encourage a dialogue between conservation interests and the tourism industry about the importance and fragile nature of heritage places, collections, and living cultures. Yet, achieving a sustainable future for these cultural assets presents a serious challenge for policy-makers, especially at a time of increasing globalization.

FEUDAL LANDLORD (INVESTOR) VS. PEASANT (VILLAGER)

Unfortunately, no such dynamic interaction between tourist investment in heritage places and the rights and needs of host communities has been maintained in Jordan. The balance has clearly shifted in favor of capital investments, benefiting certain empowered individuals at the expense of the authenticity and continuity of cultural heritage and host communities. In general, the author is not against private investment in heritage sites, but he is critical of the dynamics of such investment in Jordanian villages such as Umm Qais. Here a just representation of all stakeholders (e.g., investors, the host community, and archaeologists) has not been retained.

At Umm Qais, the current approach to heritage conservation and tourist investment continues to empower certain interests, and privilege certain pasts, above others. In particular, the local community has been marginalized and disempowered. Architects or conservationists have unintentionally abetted this process by lending the legitimacy of their specialized knowledge to the insensitive plans of investors, and their participation has helped communicate a distorted view of the motives behind such projects to the public. Granted, consensus is very hard to achieve in such contexts: investors usually seek capital accumulation; conservationists are interested in protecting the built environment; and the local community is concerned with improving its living conditions and sustaining its heritage. But specialists need to play a more active role in attempting to reconcile these competing interests, rather than serving the interests of investors alone.

Most investors claim their projects for historic sites will aid the community at large by providing job opportunities for local residents. But such claims must be seen as camouflage for their primary goal, flexible capital accumulation and monopoly control over the heritage resource. For this reason, one-time monetary compensation for displaced residents, or even replacement housing, will always be an unfair trade-off. Ironically, most local inhabitants end up returning to their own villages as low-income employees (e.g., maids, waiters, and cleaning staff). By hiring the local community at sweatshop rates at the tourist village, tourist investment companies are further able to eliminate all possibility that competing small tourist operations might flourish in the area. In seeking such monopoly control, tourist investment companies act as feudal landlords in heritage-conservation and community-development clothing.

The reality of what has happened at Umm Qais strongly contradicts the principles of the ICTC. For example, Principle Four of the charter stresses that host communities and indigenous people should be involved in planning for conservation and tourism. Principle Five emphasizes that tourism and conservation activities should benefit the host community. The charter further stresses that a significant proportion of the revenues derived from tourist investments

and programs in heritage locations should be allocated to the conservation and interpretation of those places. And it states that tourism projects, activities and developments should minimize adverse effects on the cultural heritage and the life-styles of local host communities. One means of achieving such objectives, and a just division of benefits between tourist investment and the living heritage of host communities, is to encourage genuine public participation and promote a serious and educated monitoring of tourist investments in fragile, culturally-live sites like Umm Qais.

STAGED VS. LIVING HERITAGE

One of the primary objectives of the ICTC is to communicate the significance of heritage and need to conserve it both for host communities and for visitors. Yet, ever since the residents of Umm Qais were evacuated, the village has deteriorated, and it is now in danger of becoming a dead artifact, which can no longer communicate its significance either to the public or its previous residents. The current comprehensive proposal to develop the site as a tourist village would complete this "freezing" process by packaging the artifact for the pleasure of a passing audience. Meanwhile, the living architectural heritage, together with the lives of its former inhabitants, has been denied the right to evolve, mature and regenerate.

At such sites in Jordan, the living past, which could be a valuable source of inspiration, is being replaced with staged, beautifully wrapped, and essentially fake environments. And cultural landscapes with rich living histories are becoming mere displays of artifacts and building forms without the support of a genuine way of life.[33] Such trends will eventually result in a schizophrenic separation between the contemporary inhabitants of such places and their cultural heritage. All parties involved in heritage-conservation projects need to remember that a country's most important resource is its people, and that without them, culture and cultural production loses its special meaning.

Conservationists, in particular, should not be passive participants in the conservation process. When possible, they should call for genuine community development and discourage all types of gentrification and relocation. They should further be wary of being used by investors seeking legitimacy for self-serving schemes. In addition, local communities need to develop strategies of resistance to help them oppose developers and gentrifiers. One such strategy might entail the formation of local development councils, which might draft their own plans for development and investment. Yet to form an opposition is not enough; opposition must be serious, active and educated. Cultural literacy will be key to this effort: local inhabitants and their local councils must become educated and informed about the values and significance of their cultural heritage, their past, and the importance of its proper continuity and interpretation.

There is much at stake in such an effort. Regional cultural heritage can be seen as a source of inspiration for future generations and a means of resisting globalization. Along these lines, many sociologists, anthropologists and geographers have argued that proper heritage conservation may be used as an effective counter-force to the cycles of capital accumulation expressed in many new developments.[34] And architectural historian and theoretician Kenneth Frampton has argued for the importance of heritage conservation and the continuity of regional architectural forms and characters as a way to resist popular commodification of the built environment and social life. Regional architectural form may become particularly instrumental in such resistance to late capitalism and flexible accumulation if not only the form, setting, and structures are conserved, but also the underlying technologies and know-how.[35]

This article has argued that heritage conservation should not to be undertaken as a specialized activity of learned archaeologists or historians for the pleasure of the elite. Nor should it be seen only as a means for capital accumulation as practiced by empowered investors, or as high-class heritage commodification for the purposes of constructing new social identities for members of the middle and upper-middle classes. Rather, heritage conservation should be seen as a complex activity aimed at enhancing cultural continuity, genuine community development and participation, and the reaffirmation of the sense of belonging to a shared place and way of life.

There is such a thing as native truth. This brief synthesis of ethnographic fieldwork at Umm Qais has attempted to show how such truth may emerge if the point of view of the local community is taken into consideration. Native truth may then form the foundation for a sensitive and dynamic development policy in places such as Umm Qais, one that creates the desired dynamic and balanced interaction between cultural heritage and tourist investment.

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19. Shami, "Umm Qeis."
20. A cadastral pattern is one describing property ownership lines.
21. Kienzle, "Umm Qais."
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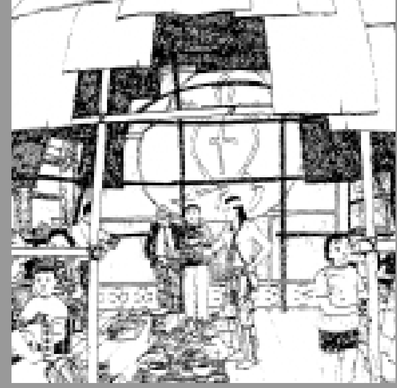
All photos and drawings are by the author.



On Design

A Spiritual Celebration of Cultural Heritage

KATHARINE E. LEIGH AND ABIMBOLA ASOJO

This article examines the architecture of contemporary sacred places as a manifestation of culture and tradition in Native American, African, and African American communities in the U.S. today. Tribal and urban minority groups in the U.S. are currently engaged in a struggle to create new identities that demonstrate their cultural heritage and role in society. Through case-study analysis, ancient forms of sacred places are compared to the elements of contemporary cultural and spiritual spaces. The article explores in particular how reinterpretations of the meaning of traditional forms, materials, ceremonial artifacts, and design and planning processes have been used to help forge modern identity.

Sacred architecture is never devoid of content. It is not a rational, inanimate object, but an animated and dynamic setting that is charged with meaning. Enchanted natural places are typically points of confluence, where disparate elements dramatically meet — the edge of the sea; mountain heights; great waterfalls. . . . It was, and still is, an artifact built to delimit sacred ground. In time [sacred space] came to symbolize the meanings and to accommodate the rituals of the religion it was built to serve. . . . [R]eligious architecture is fundamentally built myth, which symbolizes a culture's belief systems . . . and accommodates and facilitates the enactment of shared rituals.

— *T. Barrie*[1]

Since the 1970s the pace of cultural revival among Native and African American communities in the United States has accelerated, leading to a renewed search for identity that demonstrates cultural heritage and position in society.[2] The civil-rights movement and new legal and economic opportunities have furthered such processes. According to K. Singh, "Culture can no longer be looked upon as a secondary element to economic growth, rather culture itself provides the social basis for development."[3]

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Culture, whether defined as heritage, tradition, or ethnicity, has also moved to the forefront of world conscience. In May 1998 participants at the Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development in Stockholm, Sweden, called for cultural reaffirmation through economic-development actions, cultural policy-making, heritage preservation, and respect for human rights. According to D. van Bekkum, culture has emerged "as the exclusive form in which humans as individuals and as groups can exist." Such a view stands in contrast to the "prevailing notion among specialists years ago that culture would vanish into nationality in the course of modernization."[4]

The preponderance of cultural environments developed since the 1960s in Native and African American communities clearly demonstrate how assimilation and acculturation have not consumed tradition in the way once imagined. The nature of these new spaces, which accommodate ritual and embody cultural values and traditions, reinforce a renewed attention to the relationship between physical place and tradition. Nevertheless, such spaces must generally be understood as reinterpretive acts. As Weinstein-Farston has written, "For some minority communities, the past has actually been long lost, and communities must interpret upon their past heritage to build a new identity for the future."[5]

This article uses a cross-cultural examination of selected new sacred places to reveal how the built environment may articulate and reaffirm cultural values. Through this examination, it attempts to show how certain similarities have emerged and been demonstrated in the way ancient elements have been reinterpreted for use in the contemporary built environment.

SETTLEMENT HISTORIES OF NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

As extensions of ancient societies, one might expect Native and African American communities today to begin their search for potential influences and sources for the design of contemporary cultural and spiritual facilities by examining their early traditions. This research examined the vernacular built heritage of two Native American tribes — the Makah and the Wampanoag. Contemporary communities of both groups are descended from tribes of coastal dwellers who engaged in fishing and whaling, as well as other, more common settlement activities.

Both tribes built extended structures to accommodate many people under one roof, and relocated their housing to interior streams and hunting grounds during summer seasons. The Makah of the Pacific Northwest built longhouses from cedar planks, while the Wampanoag of the Northeast built dome-shaped *wigwam* structures. Within both cultures, the built environment was primarily used for shelter and was created in direct response to the need for seasonal mobility, proximity to ocean-related activities, and access to indigenous materials. (The scale difference between the constructions of the two groups owed largely to the use of large timbers from tall Northwest trees by the Makah, as opposed to the reliance by the Wampanoag on smaller saplings.) A further similarity in settlement history between the two groups was their relative geographic isolation. While the Wampanoag were found in many of the coastal areas of Massachusetts and interacted with other northeast tribes, the Gay Head band this research chose to study relocated to the small island of Martha's Vineyard off Cape Cod. The Makah were the southern-most Northwest tribe. Although they interacted with other tribes, their activities were largely confined by rugged mountains to the coastal areas of Washington State.

As mentioned above, the community life of the Makah was supported by a multifamily housing system. It revolved around the activities of survival, celebration and family. When required for family celebrations and tribal ceremonies, a chief's house would provide a gathering space for the entire community. Indoor ceremonies often incorporated costumes featuring oversized carved and painted wooden masks. At such times, ceremonial dancing would take place beside a hearth, often with a screen by one wall as a backdrop for action. According to a modern tribal publication: "The Makah . . . didn't separate function and economics from the spiritual realm. Life was a whole. No activity was apart from that wholeness, therefore spiritual well-being entered every act. Illness — or an unsuccessful hunt, or a poor salmon run or berry harvest — came when the harmony was temporarily broken. Ceremonies could restore the harmony. . . ."[6]

Makah longhouses were built at ground level without an excavated foundation. Planks for walls were laid on edge horizontally between posts, or set vertically in trenches, with a shed roof often completing the structure. Makah building technology made use of both the oaks and conifers (cedars and firs) found in the area. Using planks from these large trees, a typical house might accommodate from four to six families, and could be 60 ft. or more in length and 35-40 ft. in width. Each village might also feature one larger structure, perhaps more than 300 ft. long, which might be used as a residence by the village leader or be reserved for celebrations. The interior areas of Makah longhouses were furnished with two tiers of shelves running around the perimeter walls: the upper tier was used for storage, the lower as both a sleeping and work space. Each longhouse contained multiple hearths, and the ceiling was constructed of loose boards which could be angled to let out the smoke or closed to keep out the rain. Inside, the environment was dank and smoky, but such conditions contributed to the preservation of dried fish and other foods, which were hung on racks from the upper shelves.

In the 1800s potlatch ceremonies were introduced to Makah culture, creating highly ritualized uses for such dwelling spaces. At such times, a village leader would supervise as gifts were given, food prepared, skills demonstrated, competitions

held, and dances performed. With time, specific decorations, songs and ceremonies — as well as prized heirlooms such as embossed copper sheets — came to be associated with specific families. Canoes and house fronts were also often painted with characteristic figures and totems, and support posts were sometimes carved to resemble simple giant figures.

In contrast to such cultural practices, the Wampanoag community structure was based on the basic unit of a two-family cooperative. The extension of the traditional *wigwam* form into a short longhouse to accommodate more than one family may have been occasioned by the practice among tribal leaders of adopting widowed or orphaned individuals or to accommodate a related familial relationship. *Wigwams* were constructed of bent saplings tied together to form a dome-like frame, which was then sheathed with sheets of birch bark, slabs of elm or conifer bark, mats, or animal hides. A doorway would be formed of two overlapping walls. *Wetus*, semi-permanent structures, were also sometimes used for habitation when tribal members traveled inland to hunt. At this time they would take some bark mats and wall coverings with them. The size of a Wampanoag house varied according to the activity and construction ability of its makers. Lengths of 20-40 ft. were common, but records exist of *wigwams* that were 60-100 ft. long.

A key aspect of Wampanoag religious belief was reciprocity. The tribe, which was also known for having welcomed the Pilgrims to North America, also had a reputation for hospitality. Furthermore, Wampanoag heritage placed importance on the unity of the community and the need for the individual, as a part of that community, to find his or her own direction and means of self-expression within the spirit world. Three religious ceremonies were central to Wampanoag traditions: the unity circle, which involved a gathering of neighbors and family; spiritual gatherings that coincided with the full moon; and *pow-wows* that were open to the public.

SETTLEMENT HISTORIES OF WEST AFRICAN COMMUNITIES

The sacred spaces of three coastal West African ethnic groups—the Ibos, Yorubas and Asantes—were also examined as part of this research. While a diversity of spiritual beliefs existed within the region in which these cultures emerged, religion was generally considered an integral part of everyday life. This was evident in the location of shrines or temples in close proximity to dwellings and the use of sacred places for both ceremonial and community activities.

Ola Balogun has stated that in spite of their basic simplicity, West African habitations often received sculptural intensity through a remarkable balance of volume and form.[7] African artistic genius was also strongly asserted in decorative embellishment of the built environment. Varying decorative patterns were sculpted or painted onto walls and wooden doors, ranging from figurative designs to complex abstract patterns which revealed an exquisite balance of form, color and shading. Painting was carried out as an extension of architecture rather than as an independent form of expression.

Within the diverse communities of West Africa, traditional architectural forms included simple rectilinear clay structures, round clay structures, tents, sophisticated tombs, obelisks, palaces, pyramids and monumental structures. Several historians have classified traditional West African architecture according to form (tent, beehive, and underground), and style (Sudanese and Impluvium).[8]

The first group, the Ibos, today inhabit southern Nigeria. Their sacred spaces traditionally took the form of meeting and spirit houses associated with the various deities they worshipped. Traditionally, the Mbari Ibos built rectangular or square temples (*mbari*) that were sometimes three stories high. Four major columns supported such structures; timber was used for their rafters; and, until the advent of tin roofing, their pyramid-shaped roofs were constructed of thatch. The temples were usually completed in an elaborate manner, with both interiors and exteriors decorated with murals, and with elaborately carved doors and columns also painted with geometric patterns. N. Elleh has noted that once such a temple was completed, it remained a monument; the act of its construction was regarded as an act of worship.[9] In addition to such temples, the Ibos built elaborate burial chambers for their dead, which were lined with carved wood.

The second study group, the Asantes, live in present-day Ghana. Their sacred beliefs surrounded ancestor worship, and the shrines and temples they built to honor their ancestors were based on a courtyard system, with a central court usually joining four buildings, one of which was closed off. Such a courtyard might be used as a meeting space, a children's play yard, or a food preparation area. To demonstrate wealth, windows were ornamented with gold and silver inlay and applied finishes.

The Asantes were governed by a monarchy. Historical surveys indicate that the king's palace would be located in a town center, overlooking a central playground for children. The palace consisted of several buildings around a series of courtyards, with the main entrance leading to a court 200 yards long. Palace roof structures generally took gabled forms, and walls were well decorated with symbolic ornamentation. The Asantes also built royal mausoleums, which contained several rooms to house the remains of their kings. The link between the living and the dead made these mausoleums uniquely celebrated buildings.

The third African group studied was the Yoruba, one of the largest ethnic groups in Africa today, residing in southwestern Nigeria as well as neighboring Benin, Togo, and Sierra Leone. According to N.Q. King, people of Yoruba descent have had a profound influence on world culture.[10] They were transported as involuntary migrants to Brazil (where they are known as Nago), Cuba (Lucumi), Sierra Leone (Aku), Jamaica, the United States, North Africa, and the

Islamic world. King believes no other African group has contributed as much to the culture of America as have the Yoruba.

In terms of sacred space, Yorubas traditionally built many shrines because they did not regard any single location as the permanent abode of a divinity. The great number of such shrines accounts for their small size, and many were designed to accommodate only a priest and one or two attendants, while ordinary people would congregate in the open spaces outside. The Yorubas also considered certain natural formations, such as groves, hills or mountains, to be sacred. Yoruba religious objects included amulets, charms and masks.

Like those of the Asantes, Yoruba dwellings were built with four rectangular units facing each other across a common courtyard. These are today referred to as Impluvium-style houses. According to Yoruba monarchical tradition, the king's palace was a sacred place. Palaces were designed as larger versions of Impluvium houses, and they included elaborately carved columns that supported gabled roofs along the courtyard perimeters. Susan Denyer has noted that Yoruba palaces sometimes had as many as a hundred courtyards, and that each of them could be of enormous size, larger than an ordinary house.[11] The largest palace in the Yoruba Oyo Empire was twice the size of a sports field. Each of its courtyards was reserved for a special function: the largest for public assemblies or dancing at festivals; the smaller ones for private activities of the king. Some courtyards might be paved with quartz pebbles and pot sherds. The largest Yoruba palace today is in Owo, in southwestern Nigeria, covering an area of 44 hectares (4,400 acres).

REINTERPRETATION OF SACRED SPATIAL ELEMENTS

The accompanying chart presents a comparison of the Native American and African cultures examined, identifying how forms, materials, building technologies, and ceremonial artifacts were used to create sacred spaces (FIG.1). As can be seen, the sacred spaces of these ancient societies shared certain features. The existence of such commonalities provides an opportunity to compare ways in which traditional sacred ele-

TRIBE / COMMUNITY	LOCATION	COMMUNITY FORM	SACRED PLACE TYPOLOGY	BUILDING FORM	MATERIALS / TECHNOLOGY	CEREMONIAL ARTIFACTS	COMMENTS
Makah	Northwest coast of U.S. (Washington)	Village	Chief's house or ceremonial house	Longhouse with shed roof	Conifer and oak planks, posts and rafters Walls not tied structurally at the corners 35-40 ft. wide by 60 ft. long	Painted relief carvings on facades Wall panels or screens Totems and carved timbers wooden painted and carved masks	Structures were made mobile depending on the season. Ornamentation denoted rank and family crests.
Wampanoag	Northeast coast of U.S. (Massachusetts)	Village	No formal structure	Wigwam or *wetu* (dome-shaped)	Sapling frame with sheets of birch bark, slabs of elm, or conifer bark Mats or hides with lashed ties (min. 10-ft. diameter at the base)	Not integral with the structure Object orientation: pipes, tools, etc.	Seasonal dispersal of families.
Ibo	West coast of Africa	Village	Temple or shrine with restricted-access spirit house	Rectilinear with pyramidal roof	Adobe block Timber rafters Thatched roof of raffia palm	Wall murals Carved doors and columns Geometric patterns painted on walls Painted and carved wooden masks	
Asante	West coast of Africa (Ghana, etc.)	Town	Temples with shrine	Four rectangular structures tied to a central courtyard (Impluvium style)	Adobe block Timber rafters Thatched roof of raffia palm Shutters embellished with gold and silver	Wall murals Carved doors and columns Geometric patterns painted on walls Pot-sherd surfaces Kings' skeletons held together with golden wire	Worshipped ancestors and venerated their mausoleums.
Yoruba	West coast of Africa (Nigeria, Benin, Ghana, Togo,	Town	King's palace and temples with restricted-access shrines etc.)	Four rectangular structures tied to a central courtyard (Impluvium style)	Adobe block Timber rafters Thatched roof of raffia palm Courtyard of pebbles and pot-sherd surfaces	Wall murals Carved doors and columns Geometric patterns sculpted. on walls Carved masks, amulets and charms	Social structure was based on a system of monarchy. Kings were regarded as sacred.

FIGURE 1. *Aspects of Traditional Communities.*

ments have been reintroduced in the design of contemporary sacred spaces. Such cross-cultural analysis may reveal how reinterpretation of such elements facilitates transmission and/or transition of cultural learning from one generation to the next.

The following sections present a comparative analysis of selected contemporary Native American, African and African American sacred places. The specific sites were defined as places in which cultural symbolism could be attributed to the presence of spiritual beings, or where religious-based ceremonies and worship are conducted. Such spaces are sanctioned and consecrated by their respective communities. In these places, noncommunity members are welcomed, but their presence is only of minor importance. The cultural and spiritual centers selected excluded certain primarily public facilities — for example, museums, smokehouses, sweat lodges, day-care centers, and retail outlets. Halliday and Chehak have identified a host of such potential Native American spiritual places.[12] However, these authors examined limited examples of sacred places as defined by this study.[13]

The process of selecting spaces was made difficult by the fact that published information about such cultural and spiritual centers is extremely limited, especially with regards to the interrelationship between the built environment and spiritual celebration. The task was further complicated by the goal of the study to document projects that incorporated culturally sensitive design processes.

In the course of researching possible case studies, extensive discussions were held with members of the American Indian Council of Architects and Engineers (AICAE). Few of the suggested spaces that emerged from these discussions incorporated design professionals from the Native American community, or involved a design process deliberately intended to enhance Native American tribal values. Similarly, in researching spiritual centers in the African and African American communities, it was found that important elements of spirituality emerged only from a shared experience among African Americans, who regard their passage to freedom as synonymous with the historical release from slavery.

In the end, two spatial typologies, the cultural center among Native Americans and the church as a place of worship as used by African-Americans, were examined. The investigation explored the preservation of community heritage through inclusion of elements and details which symbolize community ritual and considered the role of culture-based design decision-making in the creation of contemporary form. Several questions framed the development of the project observations, interviews, and surveys questionnaires:

- What was the relationship to cultural elements in new building types?
- What elements were critical to successfully enable the structure to inform future tradition?
- In order to empower cultural heritage, who was involved in the design process?
- Were cultural needs communicated in an uncon ventional manner?

The projects selected were chosen as representative of three time periods: the 1970s, the early 1990s, and the present day.

CONTEMPORARY NATIVE AMERICAN SACRED SPACES

The first Native American project studied was the De'aht Elder's Center in Neah Bay, Washington, completed in 1973. The building's form was designed to reflect the personal memories of tribal elders, conversations with tribal members, and historical information from archeologists at Washington State University. According to architect Johnpaul Jones of Jones & Jones, which designed the building, "the center is a revival of Makah architecture, a statement of their values and interest in maintaining their Native culture."[14]

Specific features of the building are used in support of the Makah tradition of gathering and ceremonial worship. Reflecting traditional dwelling form, the structure is built at ground level without an excavated foundation, and its shed roof is angled away from the water, allowing its northeast-facing windows to present a view of Neah Bay **(FIG.2)**. From the outside, these elements are reminiscent of the facade of ancient longhouses. Structurally, the cedar columns along the window wall and adjacent to the kitchen and food preparation area, and the large-scale cedar beams perpendicular to the window wall, recall the basic skeletal structure of Makah longhouses **(FIG.3)**. These elements are treated in a way that resembles the craftsmanship of ancient beams from nearby Ozette.

Programatically, the elder's center features a large dance room, surrounded by seating at two levels, opposite a large stone fireplace. The central hearth and peripheral seating for ceremonial participants symbolizes the ceremonial nature of the center. To this basic spatial unit was added an upper level

FIGURE 2. *De'aht Elder's Center, Neah Bay, WA. The planked exterior resembles ancient longhouses in its color, orientation to the beach, and heavy wood timbers.*

FIGURE 3. *De'aht Elder's Center, Neah Bay, WA. The perception of the massive structural elements is reinforced along the main path of entry.*

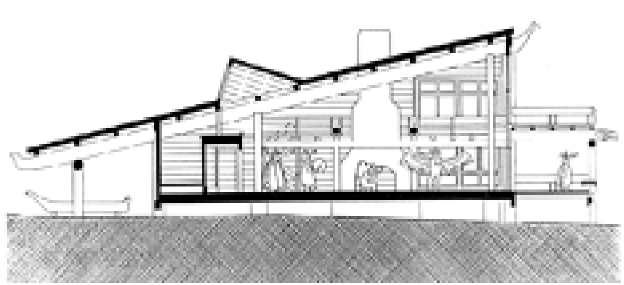

FIGURE 5. *De'aht Elder's Center, Neah Bay, WA. This original cross-section drawn by the architect, suggests that the elders will engage in spiritual celebration. The canoe shed, and carved terminations of beams were not included in the final project. (Source: Jones & Jones, Seattle, WA.)*

designed as tribal work space, in a way which may symbolically recall how functions such as food preservation and tool storage occurred in the upper reaches of a longhouse. Outside, upper- and lower-level decks wrap around all sides of the building except the kitchen/service area. Such an arrangement permits symbolic passage "through" the kitchen, an area traditionally designed to ensure that food could not be poisoned by challengers. A final feature of the building plan is an extension of seating areas toward the water with doors that provide unobstructed views to the bay **(FIG.4)**.

In cross-section, it is possible to see how the center's long shed roof, massive columns and beams, and plank siding are reminiscent of ancient forms **(FIG.5)**. The structure itself can also be read as resembling a whale, beached for harvest, at the site of the original village of De'aht.

FIGURE 4. *De'aht Elder's Center, Neah Bay, WA. The upper and lower decks recall the two-tiered benches in old longhouses. The structure faces the bay, as did original longhouses. (Photo courtesy of Jones & Jones, Seattle, WA.)*

In terms of decorative features, two floor-to-ceiling totems have been installed on the interior window wall. Although their symbolic content was not referenced through site interviews, elders did note their figures were relevant to Makah tradition. A dark golden ochre stain was also applied to the building's exterior planking to depict the coloring of original longhouses, derived from hearth fires and smoking fish. A more elaborate plan for carved and shaped beams, resembling tribal canoes used to hunt whales, (which would have extended through the northeast facade) was never realized. And although the landward side of the building was originally intended to be devoted to canoe storage, this area has now been taken over by out-buildings and winter fuel-wood storage.

Such a simple visual analysis can only provide one level of understanding of the building. Full spiritual and emotive understanding can only be derived from the experience of walking up the wooden ramp under the massive roof beams and entering the warmth of its interior spaces.

The second Native American building studied was the Longhouse Education and Cultural Center on the campus of Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington **(FIG.6)**. This building, also known as the "House of Welcome," sits on a site once marked by a large boulder with Salish bear symbols. Completed in 1992, and sanctified by tribal elders, it serves as a gathering place for all Salish nations, and is home to the college's Indian Studies Program. It was also designed by Johnpaul Jones of Jones & Jones.

The structure, in essence, is a full-scale adaptation of a Salish longhouse **(FIGS.7,8)**. There are no permanent rooms, and uses fire and smoke inside, while providing up-to-date toilet and kitchen facilities and classroom spaces. In the classroom spaces, seating is accommodated as built-in shelves along the window walls. Outside, the land is treated as an extension of the spiritual qualities inside. Indian elders advised throughout the project, and after comment from one community member, the original plan was modified to align the hearths.

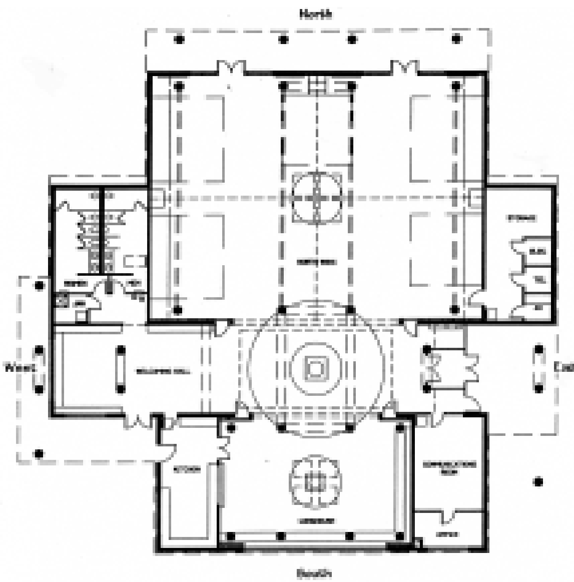

FIGURE 6. [ABOVE] *Longhouse Education and Cultural Center / "House of Welcome," Olympia, WA. The entry is dramatically emphasized by the installation of a monumental Thunderbird, reminiscent of older painted relief sculptures but here represented in contemporary manner as a free-standing totem. (Source: Jones & Jones, Seattle, WA.)*

FIGURE 7. [RIGHT] *Longhouse Education and Cultural Center/"House of Welcome," Olympia, WA. The plan shows the recentered hearths which traverse the welcoming hall. (Source: Jones & Jones, Seattle, WA.)*

Decorative elements provide an important feature of this building. A massive Thunderbird, carved and painted by Makah Greg Colfax and Skokomish Andy Wilbur, is perched over its front entrance. The interior window covers are cedar-bark mats, illustrated with creation stories by Skokomish artist Bruce Miller; other figures from Native American mythology adorn screens around the two central fireplaces (FIG.9). The hoods over the fireplaces are finished with hammered copper, the most common metal used by Pacific Northwest tribes prior to European contact.

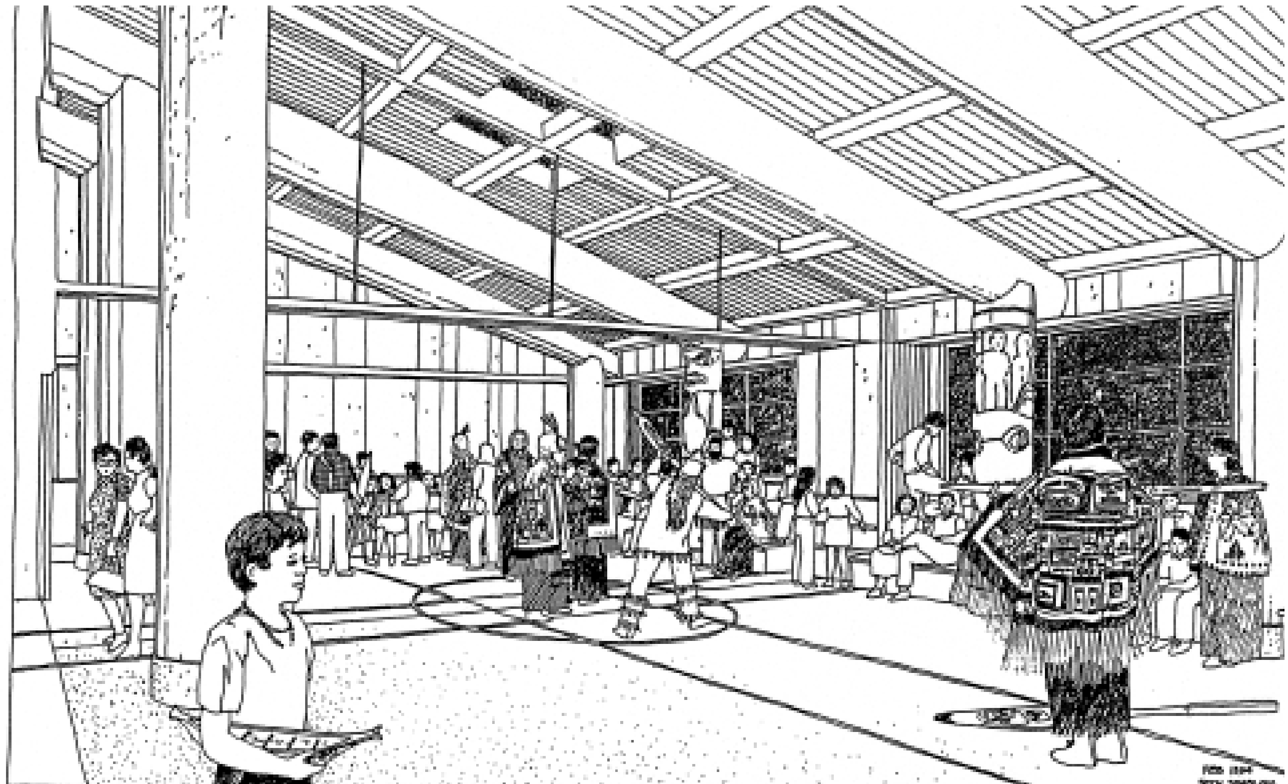

FIGURE 8. *Longhouse Education and Cultural Center/"House of Welcome," Olympia, WA. The flexibility provided by moveable walls enables larger gatherings to be accommodated. Large-scale beams, bark window coverings, and interior window ornamentation reflect the heritage of the Northwest coast tribes. (Source: Jones & Jones, Seattle, WA.)*

FIGURE 9. *Longhouse Education and Cultural Center/"House of Welcome," Olympia, WA. Painted bark window coverings and a copper-covered hearth are part of the building's symbolic ornamentation. The entire environment reflects a sense of warmth and welcome to native and nonnative visitors alike. (Source: Jones & Jones, Seattle, WA.)*

The third Native American example, the Aquinnah Cultural Center on Martha's Vineyard island in Massachusetts, is currently in development stages (FIG.10). Planning for this cultural center and museum was a joint effort between tribal members, elders, and Native American professionals led by Jones & Jones. As part of the planning process, a series of community discussions, meetings, and charrettes were used to create a phased effort by which spaces were established on a gradient from private to public. The planning process also reflected the Wampanoag tradition of reciprocity. The planning team looked at traditional structures and talked about the many activities to be accommodated. Elements of the existing landscape also helped shape the vision of the cultural center: for example, the presence of sea breezes, the access through wooded areas, views, and the presence of cranberry bogs. Among aspects of the project that emerged from these team explorations was a desire by the community for the center to include a native plant and herb garden.

Both in plan and form, the final building design takes its physical expression from Wampanoag longhouse and *wetu* structures. A three-part design enables the complex to fit surrounding landforms. One structure includes the Wampanoag Longhouse with Elder's Lodge. A second, the Aquinnah Longhouse, provides space for the museum and its support spaces. A third structure, the Gay Head Longhouse, will serve as a community building and contain classrooms, a day-care center, and a kitchen facility. A number of factors were specifically mentioned by the tribal planner as important to the design of these contemporary structures.[15] These included energy efficiency, federal restrictions, and the overall scale of the buildings in relation to the land. The tribe was also interested in the possibility that technology might be used enhance the message the buildings provide to noncommunity members.

CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN AND AFRICAN AMERICAN SACRED SPACES

The first African example, the Dominican Church in Ibadan, Nigeria, was constructed during the 1970s (FIG.11). The facility is modeled on the traditional West African hut, a form directly attributed to ancient African culture and one which reinforces the nature of community. A significant tenet of the Dominican Order is the vow of poverty. In his design for the building, the Nigerian artist Demas Nwoko attempted to integrate traditional elements and natural materials with contemporary forms and materials in ways that respected the church's need for simplicity.

Major elements from the Yoruba culture in this region can be seen in the engravings on columns and the wall treatments in the sanctuary. In a way similar to traditional African palaces or shrines, the sanctuary partially circumscribes the altar, reinforcing a central focus. Decorative elements, such as woodwork on the altar, seats, and ironmongery, also recall the traditional artistry of the region. A pond around the perimeter of the church relates to the Yoruba appreciation of natural forms.

Contemporary materials, such as reinforced concrete, concrete block, and a long-span aluminum roof, were carefully blended with these traditional elements to reinforce the simplicity of the building's form and recall ancient clay surfaces. As such, the structure directly exemplifies a common message surrounding and encompassing a system of community values and traditions among community members and clergy. The success of the effort can be seen when the build-

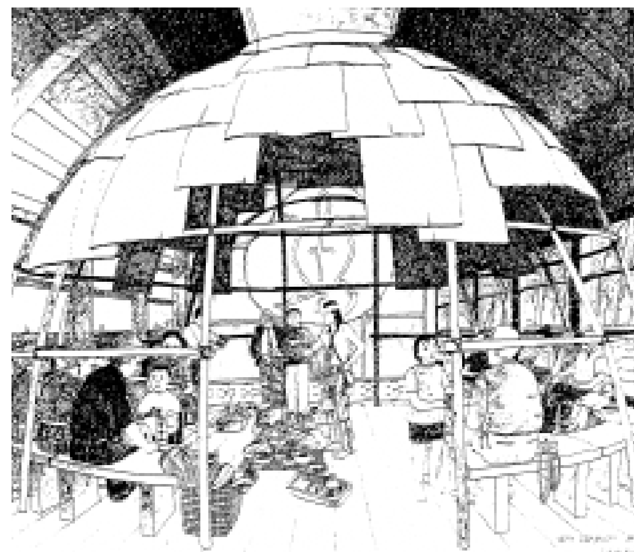

FIGURE 10. *Aquinnah Cultural Center, Martha's Vineyard, MA. The Wampanoag building heritage is expressed through a* wetu *form introduced into the longhouse in which community members will carry out their activities. (Source: Jones & Jones, Seattle, WA.)*

FIGURE 11. *Dominican Church, Ibadan, Nigeria. The structure is modeled after the traditional Yoruba hut, and illustrates major cultural elements, including column carvings, exterior covered gathering spaces, and a roughly fashioned steeple.*

FIGURE 12. *SMA Church, Ibadan, Nigeria. This structure illustrates the adaptation of traditional hut form executed in Western materials. The steeple is a contemporary interpretation, reflecting an uplifting notion of spirituality.*

ing is compared to another facility of similar form, which utilized Western materials: the SMA Church in Ibadan (FIG.12). The attempt to tell a story in this building is somewhat hindered by the introduction of nontraditional materials.

The second African American example is Saint Benedict the African Church, built in 1990 for a neighborhood of African Americans in Chicago. While concerned with representing community heritage, both the church's building committee and the architects they chose, Belli & Belli, were also concerned with creating a place that would uplift the spirit.

The final design for this project incorporated a *parti* based on interlocking circles (FIG.13). This idea, which was actively advocated by the building committee, was based on the multiple circular forms of traditional West African compound dwellings. African form was reinforced through the choice of wood decking for the sanctuary ceiling (FIG.14), a semicircular seating plan, and trees planted below grade along the interior walls. At the same time the scale of the sanctuary is heightened to reinforce the notion of "hope," parishioners are afforded a panoramic view of the hut-like interior.

The building's other decorative elements include a stone wall at the baptismal pool and wrought-iron grillwork that exemplify natural forms common in West African culture. The altar and ambo are carved from walnut similar to patterns derived from African woodcarvings. Carved wood elements are also introduced in the sanctuary.

The third African/African American example is Saint Mary's Catholic Church, scheduled for completion in Houston, Texas, in the year 2000. The parishioners of this community were insistent upon retaining an African-American architect, both to alleviate misconceptions and stereotypical responses, and to employ African American professionals (African Americans currently comprise only a very small percentage of registered architects and design professionals in the U.S.).

The design firm chosen, Archi.technic/3, Inc., approached the cultural-based design issues in the project through the use of form, materials and artifacts. The architects collaborated with building committee members, who engaged in detailed research on historical African forms. To reaffirm the sense of the parishioners' African origin, the building committee insisted upon a circular plan similar to that of traditional African huts (FIG.15).

A key feature of this project is the concept of a gathering space, developed at the entrance to the sanctuary, which provides a transition from open exterior space to interior sanctuary. A baptismal pool, modeled to resemble Goree Island in Senegal, was placed in this gathering space. In a recent sermon, the parish priest made an analogy between the African American quest for spirituality and the passage from enslavement to freedom. Thus, the design of the church attempts to incorporate symbolic forms related directly to a particularly African American sense of identity.

Another important feature of the building is its exterior courtyard, which was designed both for meditation and as a way to integrate natural environment with building structure. In a manner reflecting the courtyard concepts of early African settlements, this exterior space is located at the place where parishioners gather before and after services, immediately adjacent to the main circulation route through the building.

The building's decorative elements include carvings proposed for the altar, walls, and Stations of the Cross. These reflect African origins, but, more importantly, will serve as a prompt for shared cultural story-telling.

FIGURE 14. *Saint Benedict the African Church, Chicago, IL. The ceiling system reflects the traditional hut form and uses wood decking to emphasize its circular form. (Source: St. Benedict Building Planning Committee.)*

TRADITIONAL SIMILARITIES

The above descriptions of contemporary projects reveal the numerous ways in which traditional elements are manifested in contemporary Native American, African, and African American

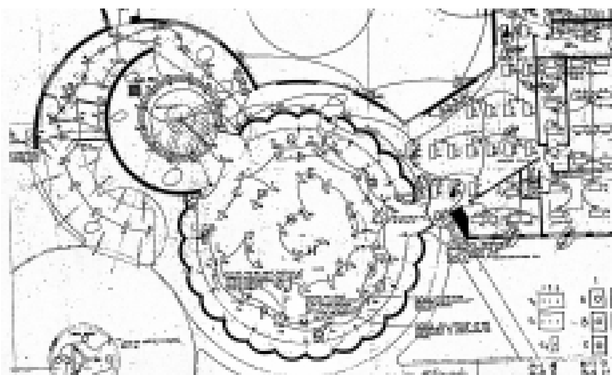

FIGURE 13. *Saint Benedict the African Church, Chicago, IL. The plan illustrates the interlocking circular features of the interior walls, which surround the sanctuary and adjacent gathering space. (Source: St. Benedict Building Planning Committee.)*

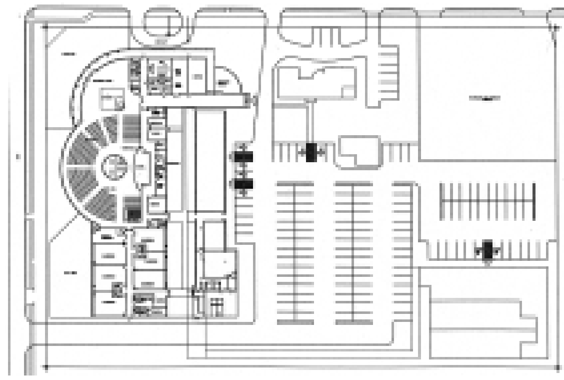

FIGURE 15. *Saint Mary's Catholic Church, Houston, Texas. Preliminary planning reflects curvilinear forms in the sanctuary and gathering spaces in addition to rectilinear classroom facilities. (Source: St. Mary's Building Planning Committee.)*

sacred space. The accompanying chart breaks these essential connective threads into several categories, and it reveals how the impact of traditional culture is considerable in the design of contemporary sacred spaces (FIG.16). As the chart indicates, common characteristics of contemporary sacred spaces, modified by assimilation yet reinforced by tradition, include an emphasis on centrality, indigenous form represented with the use of contemporary materials, and the expression of spirituality through spatial planning. Cultural needs are communicated through every part of the planning, materials, and artifact-selection processes, and symbolism plays an important role, from the overall form of the building to individual decorative features.

For the most part, ornamental features remain traditional in nature, either carved or painted, although the quality of these elements has benefited from improved materials and technology. Cultural artifacts tend today to be used as focal points and as the culmination of vistas, in a manner which emphasizes the use of traditional forms. The projects also include elements which are more celebratory than in the past: for example, baptismal pools, speaking platforms, doors, windows, and trim details.

Many choices are available in the design of contemporary sacred spaces other than those which overtly reproduce past components. However, many of these plans, materials, forms or artifacts do not convey the appropriate message. Nevertheless, modern materials and forms have been successfully incorporated in all the projects in an effort to provide inspirational links to heritage. This is evident in such features as the spiraling shape of the African churches and the dark quality of the Makah Elder Center's planked siding. In the African American churches, the use of circular, interlocking forms may also be understood as demonstrating a sense of sacred cultural complexity, introduced to the world of Western rectilinear planning.

In terms of program, the new building projects expand functions related to teaching and the transmission of tradition through the community. This may perhaps be most overt in the interpretative function of the Native American projects, which use site and facility to tell the tribal story. The case studies also show how, for funding or functional reasons, such "secular" functions as museums, day care centers, educational

FACILITY / LOCATION	FUNCTION	PLAN FORM	SPECIAL FEATURES	MATERIALS / TECHNOLOGY	SYMBOLISM	COMMENTS
De'aht Elder Center Date: 1973 Neah Bay (WA)	Ceremonies Community center Social-service offices	Longhouse plan with shed roof	Dance floor Central hearth Unobstructed view toward the bay Large open space Rear access from kitchen Canoe shed	Plank siding Post-and-beam construction Blue metal roof	Totems at interior glass walls Perimeter seating	Excavation of ancient houses confirmed oral traditions. Structure is lighter and brighter on the inside than old smoke houses would have been. Original carved beams were eliminated.
Longhouse Education and Cultural Center / "House of Welcome" Date: 1992 Olympia (WA)	Ceremonies Spiritual worship Education/learning Exhibitions	Longhouse plan with gabled roof	Central Hearth Landscape is integral and symbolic	Beams similar to more northern coastal tribal form Plank siding Post-and-beam construction	Bark window coverings Painted totems Floor patterns	During the design of the facility changes were suggested related to the location and alignment of hearths.
Aquinnah Cultural Center (in progress) Martha's Vineyard (MA)	Ceremonies Community center Education Museum	Extended *wigwam* plan with domed roof	n/a	n/a	*Wigwam* interior structure	Layout of the complex relates the spaces to one another in a symbolic manner.
Dominican Church Date: 1970 Ibadan, Nigeria	Spiritual worship Community center Education, Seminary	Round plan	Gathering space Pond around building perimeter	Stone, Reinforced concrete Concrete block Long-span aluminum	Carved doors, columns Ironmongery Wooden stools and altar	Adaptation of traditional form utilizing modern materials.
SMA Church Date: 1994 Ibadan, Nigeria	Spiritual worship Community center Education, Seminary	Round plan	Gathering space Outside structure around the perimeter	Reinforced concrete Concrete block	Wooden doors, altar and pews	Adaptation of traditional form utilizing modern materials.
St. Benedict the African Church Date: 1990 Chicago (IL)	Spiritual worship Education Community center	Interlocking circular plan, with hut-style roof	Gathering space	Concrete Wood Stone	Stone baptismal font Wrought-iron grille Walnut altar and ambo Sanctuary around altar	Planning similar to interlocking forms of West African compounds.
St. Mary's Church (In progress) Houston (TX)	Spiritual worship Education Community center	Combined circular and rectilinear form	Gathering space Meditation courtyard	Concrete Concrete block	African art Baptismal font	Combines rectilinear, circular, and courtyard concepts from Africa.

FIGURE 16. *Aspects of Contemporary Sacred Spaces.*

classrooms, spaces for age-specific programs, and galleries and retail stores may be combined with community sacred places in contemporary projects in the broader interest of cultural reaffirmation. In such a process of blending, cultural elements are often incorporated as special features: ceremonial dance areas, gathering spaces, artifact displays, and areas for meditation and contemplation. Certain functional elements, such as hearths and perimeter storage/shelving/seating, may also present a dual sacred/nonsacred identity.

THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

As the chart in Figure 16 shows, the most prominent and recurring themes begin with traditional building form: the longhouse, *wigwam*, *wetu*, or hut. But the process of integrating such traditional building elements into a contemporary context requires consideration of not only building function but also cultural meaning. The entirety of the physical location — pathways, trails, views, exterior gathering spaces, natural forms — must be considered along with cultural messages to be interpreted by the community and the public. Furthermore, opportunities for the development and disclosure of special functions or features, perhaps unknown to the planner, may be created through planning processes which empower the community. This may require adjustments to traditional practice, particularly with regard to Native American groups. While the case studies show the planning expectations of African American communities have been greatly influenced by Western mannerisms and strategies, a successful planning strategy among Native American groups may require that time be introduced as an independent variable in order to allow ideas to develop or surface as necessary.

Personal interviews with community members revealed how each of the projects was successful in creating meaningful cultural forms and selecting meaningful materials and ceremonial artifacts with which to facilitate spiritual celebration. An important reason was that in all cases community members were highly active participants with professional design and planning team members. Both the Native American and African American groups requested professional contributions from members of their own cultural group — or at least one similar in tradition. Such a process also engaged the participants in thinking not only about built space but about the context of the natural environment.

In the case of both the Native and African American examples, architects worked toward translating community needs. In the Native American examples, the professional role was one of facilitation. In order to assist each tribal group in establishing a unique spatial plan, Jones & Jones considered the critical requirements of gathering, worship and ceremony. The designers then asked for cultural participation from four worlds: spirit, land, animal, and people. In the African and African American examples, the planning process was largely driven by the common knowledge and beliefs of building committee members, who orchestrated the design-development process. In both cases, however, the relationship between community and professional was collaborative, with all involved working to empower the specific cultural heritage. For example, concerning the design process for Saint Benedict the African Church, Associate Pastor David Baldwin commented: "Our building committee felt strongly that ours is an African-American community, with the emphasis on 'American'. No one wanted to be hit over the head with African design or art, yet we did want this structure to reflect the culture of its worshipers."[16]

Sacred structures send different messages to community and noncommunity members. Nabokov and Easton have written that "different forces—economic, ecological, social, technological, historical and religious—contributed to both the hidden significance and actual appearance of Native American architecture; their extensive survey of Indian architectural traditions suggested that unseen social and religious meaning [were] encoded into buildings and spatial domains."[17]

In some instances — for example, the metaphor of the beached whale identified with the Makah Elder's Center — meanings may become lost when an activity ceases to be part of the common culture. For some community members, culture becomes interpreted — that is, separate from meanings intended by designers, but still viable in support of oral tradition, story-telling, religious activities, and ceremonies carried out by the community. Such subtle messages are difficult to transform in cross-cultural communication. In fact, with regard to the Makah, such messages would preferably be kept private. To be effective, however, symbolism must root itself in the shared spiritual understanding of community members, and elements must not be readable only by a few.

The contemporary sacred buildings of both the Native and African American groups employ systems of restricted access to control ritual information. However, misconceptions may arise among outsiders when meanings are identified only as "different," particularly in facilities where public access is encouraged to support learning about the culture. To serve as useful facilities for intercultural exchange, such facilities would benefit from "guides" that enhance the interface between community and noncommunity members. As E. Guidoni has pointed out, basic orientation is very important. "[Once] the ideology is understood, it becomes possible to view the constructed [environment] from within the society and, in that way, to go beyond ethnocentric classification. The boundary between the reality of construction and the way it is 'interpreted' — understood, explained, rationalized — by the . . . populations responsible for [such built structures] is no longer an impassable one for investigators from the outside."[18]

SUMMARY: REINFORCING TRADITION

Despite the importance of religious beliefs among Native Americans, Africans, and African Americans, the primary forces behind cultural activity today seem to be those surrounding personal/group identity and political standing. In this regard, the widespread appearance of new sacred spaces within these groups since 1970 may be taken as an expression of the capability of minority communities in the U.S., when economically empowered, to construct significant spiritual centers.

This discussion has also shown that the design of contemporary Native and African American sacred spaces reflects the interests and needs of specific communities. On a case-by-case basis this may involve assembling a number of functional activities which may not consistently reflect ancient heritage. A dichotomy between community members who assimilated European models and those who have continued their reliance on oral communication, memory, and adherence to ancestral beliefs also underlies the renewal of indigenous religion in Native and African American communities. Nevertheless, successful new sacred spaces seem to have one element in common: their reliance on a community-based design process. In such a design paradigm, the architect or designer may play the role of facilitator, or the community itself may take the lead in design decision-making.

According to the preamble to the action plan of the Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development: "New trends, particularly globalization, link cultures ever more closely and enrich the interaction between them, but they may also be detrimental to our creative diversity and to cultural pluralism; they make mutual respect all the more imperative."[19]

The phenomenon of cultural invention for political or social purposes is not new. And in many cases it can be shown to involve a return to ancient forms and symbols, as in each of the projects examined. What is difficult from an architectural standpoint is for this activity to result in visually distinctive, spiritually or emotionally persuasive buildings that are culturally specific in a manner understandable to contemporary users.[20]

Through examination of two diverse but similar communities and their sacred places of celebration and worship, this article has illustrated how distinctive elements, framed by participatory design processes, can enable groups whose identities may have been weakened by historical events to establish communication with the "other," while creating contemporary cultural identities through reinterpretation of past traditions and beliefs.

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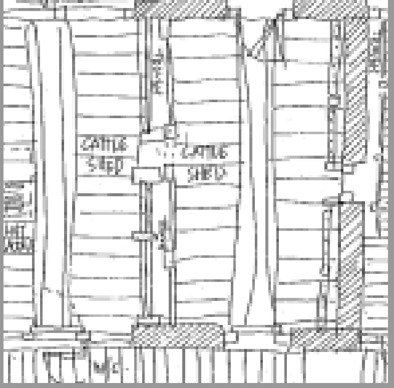
All photos are by the authors, except where otherwise noted.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Field Report

When Tradition Becomes Luxury: Swiss Agriculture, Architecture and Tourism in Symbiosis

ROSEMARY LATTER

This report discusses a wealthy society where traditional buildings are important both as a way of sustaining local cultural identity and attracting tourists. It examines how and for what motives such structures can be cherished in the context of the village of Les Diablerets in the Swiss Alps. While sustaining an original settlement and its customs, the village also plays host to a strong tourist industry in the form of a winter ski resort and a summer outdoor-pursuits location. The report discusses how the people of this mountain region reconcile the differing effects of agriculture and tourism on their culture and environment. The high status of, and affection for, local vernacular architecture in Les Diablerets may be compared with trends and attitudes in some developing countries, where traditional principles have been shed in favor of presenting a modern image to the global market.

The genuine love the Swiss hold for their traditional buildings is clearly demonstrated by the large number of visitors to the Ballenberg Open Air Museum, where over thirteen groups of buildings are represented and cherished.[1] One of these groups provides a small cross-section of the houses and farm buildings of the Bernese Oberland. The mountain valleys of this area, no longer as remote as they once were, have always provided a refuge: once from marauding armies, and now from urban congestion.[2] It was in the early nineteenth century that tourists first began to affect the lives and buildings of

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people living in adjacent mountain regions. How has this influx affected the agricultural identity of the indigenous population? And if they have prospered as a consequence of tourism, how have they sustained their traditions?

The defense by the Swiss of their national identity is exemplified by their reaction to proposed membership in the European Union. In a recent referendum, the Swiss population rejected membership in this body, largely because of fears the country would become dominated by it. For example, the Swiss expressed fears that local industries, such as cheesemaking, so influential in the rural economy and way of life, would become subject to European directives curtailing the output of small producers, who have always been free from such regulation.

Yet despite such fierce defense, the notion of Swiss identity has never been clearly defined. The modern Swiss state may even be seen as a paradigm of resistance to uniformity. It has existed for 150 years as a confederation of 23 cantons, each with its own special characteristics. Such a make-up implies a built-in aversion to centralization that has enabled the traditions and institutions of each region to remain distinct, and the ethnic, linguistic and religious origins of its citizens to thrive in an ethos of coexistence.

Throughout its existence, the Swiss confederation has also harbored a strong and well-integrated tourist industry. The relation of this tourist industry to traditional buildings, and the customs and mechanisms for their support — whether political, social or economic — can best be examined in the context of a representative area.

THE DEVIL'S PEAKS

The village of Les Diablerets lies at the head of a mountain valley in the French-speaking commune of Ormonts-Dessus, Canton de Vaud **(FIG.1)**. Above the village rises an imposing *massif*, or mountain range, which forms a natural barrier with neighboring Gsteig in Saanenland (part of the German-speaking Canton of Berne just over the Col de Pillon pass). At a height of 1,200 meters, Les Diablerets is prone to heavy snowfalls in winter; and falls of 1.5 meters occur regularly in the village, which, together with the five surrounding glaciers, provides the setting for a successful ski resort. The valley is easily accessible by train and car, and in addition to skiing and other winter sports, it offers numerous opportunities for summer outdoor leisure, including walking, climbing, paragliding off the mountainsides, and mountain-biking.[3] In order to explore the impact that such tourist activities have had on the local economy, environment, and traditional buildings, it is necessary to understand the situation prior to the arrival of such tourist activities.

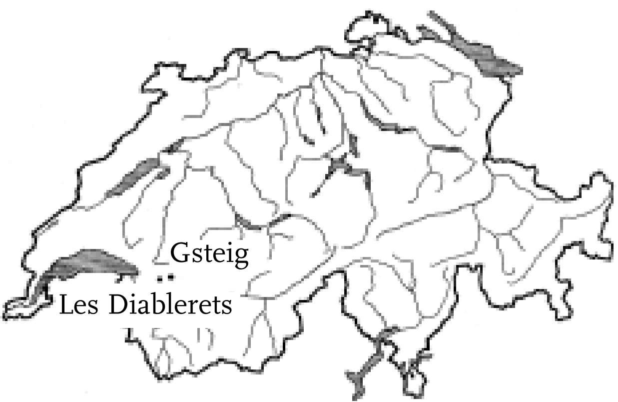

FIGURE 1. *Map showing the location of the village of Les Diablerets. (Based on: M. Gschwend,* Bauernhäuser der Schweiz*, Blauen, Schweizer Baudokumentation, 1988.)*

Because of its difficult terrain and hostile climate, the valley of Les Diablerets was not permanently inhabited until the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Before this time it served primarily as a safe haven from invaders — particularly from the Hungarians in the tenth century. Positioned at a strategic point in the Alps, the valley also changed hands several times, having both French and Germanic rulers. The most influential of these was the (Germanic) Bernese government of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. Such Germanic influence in a French-speaking area can still be detected in the *patois* (dialect) of the local people, which contains many words of Germanic origin. A tradition of skilled craftsmen traveling over the mountain from Saanenland to build the majority of local chalets also persisted well into the twentieth century, and can still be detected by examining construction details and engraving techniques, and by tracing carpenters' marks.[4]

In the closed world of the village there were few activities other than farming. The odd clock-maker and teacher supplemented a nineteenth-century workforce which was primarily dedicated to raising dairy cattle and other livestock on rich local grass to produce milk, butter and, particularly, cheese.[5] The seasonal rhythm of this agricultural society was determined by the *remuage*, or transhumance, which might happen seven or eight times a year, as cows and goats were moved to find the best pastures. The spatial effects of ownership or grazing rights over small and disparate parcels of land at different altitudes necessitated that each family construct three or four buildings which they could inhabit at different times of year. At the beginning of this century, the sight of all these buildings prompted the first foreign tourists to assume, erroneously, that the valley had a large population.

With the opening of a road to the nearest main town, Aigle, in the 1830s, and across the mountain to Gsteig in 1885, the valley emerged from its isolation. An increase in the amount and variety of transport brought cheaper goods such as cereal crops from outside. And as such crops became uneconomic to grow locally, certain communally used buildings such as mills were abandoned. The first hotel, the "Le Grand," was built in Les Diablerets in 1856. A railway connection and electrification brought further

changes by 1914. Relatively rapid social change followed in the wake of exposure to industrial society, with many people leaving the valley to work in the factories of Aigle and Bex, or in the service sector of Montreux and Lausanne.

Tourism started to develop in earnest in the valley after the economic crash of the 1930s and World War II. Visitors came from foreign countries as well as other regions of Switzerland, since the characteristics of the valley met the need of an emerging urban middle class for an alternative to the urban life-style. This included a desire to encounter nature at its most rugged and escape pollution and ill health. The 1970s were pivotal years, as the people of the area turned away from agriculture towards tourism for their economic survival.[6] A comparison of employment figures from 1968 to 1972 shows a 5 percent reduction in agricultural work, a 5 percent drop in construction jobs, and an 8 percent rise in tourist-associated occupations.

Today the village trebles its population of 1,370 during high season, and more than a quarter of the community is involved in tourism.[7] The residents of Les Diablerets maintain considerable responsibility for local planning policy, and they have promoted measures enabling local people to rent out rooms, houses, or even barns to tourists. This provides a wide range of accommodation, which is good for visitors, while it prevents the exploitation of the settlement by outside investment companies.

The shift in the indigenous attitude toward tourism, and the acceptance that it has now become even more economically beneficial than agriculture, can be sensed in the changing perceptions toward the mountain range that looms over the settlement. Once the mountains were superstitiously spoken of as harboring demons, *les diables*; now, as the setting sun turns the peaks pink (and the cable car takes another cargo of wealthy skiers up to the glacier), they are lyrically praised for their beauty.

INTEGRATING FARMING

The shift from an exclusively agricultural economy to one based largely on tourism must be understood in relation to the sharp decline in farming in Ormont-Dessus in the last forty years. The small nature of typical farmsteads, averaging ten hectares in size,[8] and their dispersal on often steeply sloping hillsides, has made agricultural mechanization difficult and production unsustainable. Today only 22 percent of the population is engaged in agriculture, producing only 15 percent of community revenue. Compounding this problem is the demographic trend of aging single men running farms, and the difficulty they have finding young women prepared to share such a hard life.

Nevertheless, farming is essential to the tourist industry, and farmers are keenly aware of the two levels on which they function. To maintain the picturesque landscape, the scenery needs tending, and summer cheese-making has been changed into something of a performance art in some mountain locations. On a more practical level, mowing the fields for hay in late summer means that short grass will provide a firmer key for winter snows, helping to prevent avalanches.

To preserve the benefits of traditional agricultural practice, the government now subsidizes farmers and has developed a complex system of remuneration, depending on the height of a property above sea level, the number of livestock kept, and the degree of slope. A subsidy for milk production is also offered, whether sold or not, and some degree of mechanization also helps in terms of hay-making and cheese production. But farm families must often still supplement their incomes by taking part-time or seasonal work in the tourist industry. On farms too small to offer complete subsistence, women may rent out rooms or take part-time seasonal work in hotels and shops. Men may work on the ski lifts and *pistes* from 9 AM to 5 PM, an occupation that fits well with the early-morning milking routine and leaves time to see to the cows again before nightfall. These jobs, while not seen as prestigious, supplement family income and ensure that young people, in particular, do not have to leave the village to look for work in the towns and cities. In addition to these economic supports, local and regional policies also encourage long-term planning for forestry and the careful use of natural resources. Such policies are generally practical in their emphasis, allowing farmers to maintain a vested interest in properties which may have been handed down to them through several generations.[9]

Economic patterns such as those described above have led to the creation of buildings in Les Diablerets that are far more complex than idealized romantic visions would suggest. However, once an observer has some knowledge of the processes that happen inside them, they are easy to read from outside, offering excellent examples of form following function. With colored patterning, rich carving, religious and superstitious inscriptions, and almost fluorescent boxes of flowers, their decorations also give powerful insights into the personal relationships that people have with them **(FIG.2)**.

Usually, a village house has a basement of masonry, two upper floors of timber construction, and a slightly pitched saddle-back roof. The structures are quite substantial, and although they are sometimes split between two owners down the line of the ridge, they are more often in single-family ownership. The kitchen occupies the back of the building, with the slope of the hill allowing access from "ground level." Two living rooms at the front open onto the valley, with two more directly above. The vast timber chimney is used for smoking meat, and occupies the space above the kitchen. The facades are richly decorated with sculpted brackets, carpenters' marks, painted patterns, and inscriptions and mottoes carved in relief. Most houses have a separate compartmented barn for grain storage, although on the outskirts of the village there are some larger houses with combined barns and byres for over-wintering livestock.

In addition to such a village house, a farmer may have several other buildings dispersed on the mountain slopes

FIGURE 2. *The inscription "Jehan Tille fondateur de ce petit logis, 1671," indicates the work of a carpenter building his own house and using it to display his virtuosity at carving.*[10] *La Forclaz.*

according to his pattern of grazing rights. These structures are occupied for several months of the year, by part or all of the family depending on the age of the children. Located as high as 1,600 meters, such summer "chalets" were traditionally used for making and storing cheese, and a few still retain this function (FIG.3A,B). The word *chalet* comes from the root *cal*, meaning stone; and these buildings are either wholly or partially constructed of stone, defeating the notion of the timber chalet now simplistically thought of as the "national architecture of Switzerland."[11]

Combining lodging, byre and barn under the same roof, such buildings can house humans, cows, pigs and goats. The kitchen, with its large fireplace, is the principle room. It is here where cheese was traditionally made before being stored in adjacent cool rooms for transport down to the village for sale. In addition, summer chalets contain one or two rooms that open onto a gallery and can be accessed by a narrow stair on the valley side. These rooms provide simple but cozy accommodation and are heated by a stove fed from the kitchen.[12] The byre at the back of the building is located under the hay storage, easily reached from the steeply sloping mountainside.

CORRUPTION BY NOSTALGIA

Such traditional buildings are a potent symbol of a life without rapid change, particularly when the edifices themselves, or the customs associated with them, have survived several centuries. Their presence is a reminder of a time, sometimes sentimentally regarded, before the concept of globalization. According to Miles Danby, "the desire for modernity, however, is now concurrent with a growing nostalgia for the built environment of the past and an implicit belief that the new environment cannot be as beautiful and emotionally satisfying as the old."[13] However, the temptation to twist the reality of hard rural lives lived in cold, dark and lonely conditions into a marketing fable is tempting — especially in the context of a vernacular architecture that acts as a stage setting for imaginary characters.

Invocations of tradition have emerged as a theme in recent IASTE debates. The word "invocation" has as its dictionary definition "the calling upon God in prayer." People do indeed resort to notions of ethnicity, nationalism and religion to bolster their identity when they feel overwhelmed by globalization. Thus, it is often emotion, as opposed to reason, that leads to a false or exaggerated view of the traditions and customs that sustain a society. Vernacular buildings,

being so rooted in their culture, evoke memories and inspire feelings; therefore, "evocation" might be an appropriate word to describe the effect they have on people's emotions. Yet, rather than denigrate the importance of emotional attachment to place and buildings, it is important to recognize the real part that such attachments may play in national psyche and the projection of image.

An odd distortion of such an emotional identification is happening in the Graubunden region in eastern Switzerland. Here, in Maienfeld, "Heidi's Mountain" is open to tourists (FIG.4). According to the promotional material, a visitor can tour the "original house where Heidi lived," and "take photos with Heidi sitting at her table or try the bed where she slept."[14] In fact, Heidi is a fictional character in a tale first published in 1880 about traditional rural life in the Swiss mountains. The story is now a children's classic, along with the likes of *Anne of Green Gables* or *Treasure Island*.[15]

One visitor to "Heidi's Mountain" was recently disappointed to learn that Heidi never existed, and that there was another "original" Heidi's mountain further down the valley. Is this exploitation? If so, is it exploitation of Swiss heritage, foreign tourists, or vernacular architecture? The Swiss themselves have a healthy skepticism and robust attitude toward

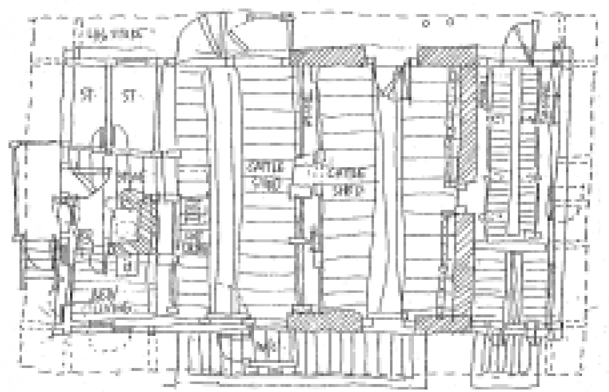

FIGURE 3A,B. *A summer chalet on a high mountain pasture still used for sheltering cows and making and storing cheeses. Plan shows walls of stone construction as hatched. (Drawing by RG.)*

FIGURE 4. *Promotional leaflet for the Heidi "experience."*

such marketing ploys. When one Gstaad tourist office employee was asked for information about the Heidi "experience," he said he hadn't heard of it; but he laughed and commented to his colleagues that it sounded like a great idea, and that they should think of starting one in Saanenland.[16]

The romanticism of the hard life of the mountain child and its popularity with the public illustrates the affective power of a story not just on an autochthonous culture, but on the imaginations of people from completely different backgrounds, who through the luxury of foreign travel can choose to live a little part of it. The distinction between empathy for the lives and hardships of real people and the fantasy projections of fictional figures thus becomes shadowy.

In Les Diablerets visitors can purchase and take home miniature reminders of such a story and the emotional response associated with it. Local gift shops offer a choice of souvenirs ranging from clocks in the shape of houses with cuckoos in the attic windows; to barometers in the form of little houses out of which a man comes to predict rain and a woman to predict fine weather; to snow domes with scenes of mountains and alp

FIGURE 5. *A new barn is built using frame construction, with the outer wall being "overclad" with logs. Gsteig.*

horns; to ubiquitous imitation miniature cow bells. Traditional buildings feature prominently in the best-selling items and provide a major feature of the environment which attracts tourists.

The intention here is not to judge the validity and meaning of the Swiss attachment to their traditional buildings, but to examine the undercurrents present in the idealized physical and mental landscape of this rich country. Indeed, this emotional attachment shows how people operating successfully in a global economy still have a fundamental need to maintain the apparent certainties of the past for reassurance, and that buildings provide a strong physical manifestation of this need **(FIG.5)**.

These sentiments, however, can be contrasted with the attitude toward vernacular buildings in the tourist developments of other parts of the world. Today such developments are hurried along, and local people are not allowed the same time to reflect on the value of their local building traditions that the Swiss were afforded when tourism first arrived in their country. According to Danby: "The growing influence of professional designers, planners and engineers, parallel to rapid urbanization, has spread the prestige of increasingly expensive methods of building technology. This has usually been accompanied with a social devaluation of traditional methods of building technology."[17] The result is that many poorer countries today have shed notions of traditional society in favor of modern images and values.

Of course, it may be argued that the luxury of regarding the vernacular heritage as valuable is a social phenomenon of rich countries. But it is also true that, as they experience the modernization process, developing countries tend to go through a cycle of shedding symbols of their past, only to arrive later at the need to reinvent a heritage narrative that has little to do with the reality of the image they have struggled to create. When discussing the reasons for such transformations, Danby notes how "feelings of status and a desire for modernity may . . . be powerful influences."[18] Thus, the technological, climatic and cultural lessons embodied in traditional methods and forms are often disregarded because of certain negative connotations that attach to them in the minds of indigenous developers and politicians.

By contrast, the example of Les Diablerets and the valley of Ormont-Dessus shows how traditional agricultural economies can be sustained to a certain extent in alliance with the demands of global tourism. The application of appropriate traditional technology in the service of architectural heritage may even be marketed as a luxury holiday experience **(FIG.6)**.

FIGURE 6. *Building an extension to a chalet at the Col de Bretaye for rental during the tourist season. Vernacular building techniques are alive and in demand, in this case for the production of luxury chalets at a premium price. Constructor: Daniel Mermod.*

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The author undertook this report while working on her doctoral thesis "The Significance of Language and Dialect for Vernacular Architecture" in the Postgraduate Research Department at Oxford Brookes University, England. As part of the research team at the Centre for Vernacular Architecture Studies, she was responsible for compiling the multilingual lexicon of vernacular architectural terms included in *The Encyclopedia of Vernacular Architecture of the World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). The author acknowledges the support of the Postgraduate Research School at the School of Architecture, Oxford Brookes University, in the production of this report.

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All illustrations are by the author, except where otherwise noted.

Review Article

Encyclopedia of Vernacular Architecture of the World

REVIEWED BY PETER NABOKOV

Encyclopedia of Vernacular Architecture of the World
Edited by Paul Oliver. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1997. Three Vols., 2,384 pp.

It is hard to imagine a more unruly and idiosyncratic passel of cultural data than that encompassing the nonpedigreed, usually owner-built shelters, homesteads, hamlets, settlements, and space-using practices produced and perpetuated since the dawn of time by anonymous, ordinary members of small-scale, rural, tribal or peasant societies. Such people have worked within the constraints of their localized, cultural traditions, employing mostly available, organic building materials to confront virtually every climatic condition on the globe. This always surprisingly inventive range of constructions (which their makers generally take for granted) has been fair picking for a host of different disciplines — architecture, art history, anthropology, sociology, folklore, psychology, natural history, etc. From theorizing about the conditions which produced humankind's First Hut, to deciphering the jerry-rigged refugee hovels in the wake of yesterday's political or environmental disaster, the result has been an extraordinary difficulty in establishing universally agreed-upon principles of organization and analysis.

The physically unwieldy and semiotically dense examples of material culture known as "vernacular architecture" come in every conceivable shape; they are made from every possible kind of material, raw and cooked; and they are used for every conceivable purpose. Moreover, their logic stems from tradition's tussles with practicality on the one hand and modernity on the other, and they hide as many social, psychological and religious meanings as they reveal. They are as ancient as the hills, or they were built yesterday out of oil drums and blue plastic. Learning to "read" any single one of their traditions can consume a lifetime. How could one possibly hope to tame and separate, categorize and subdivide, contextualize and exemplify such a rampantly independent and changeably responsive range of data?

Throughout a long academic career devoted, with striking consistency, to just this task, the British scholar Paul Oliver has sought to bring the "largely unrecognized

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FIGURE 1. *Neglected timber houses, Harem, Bosphorous, Turkey. (Source:* EVAW, *Vol. 1.)*

phenomenon" of the reliance of the great majority of the world's peoples on and attachment to these structures to academic light and respectability. As he informs us in his too-brief autobiographical preface to this monumental new work, his childhood exposure to southern England's Wessex province, where living village traditions were interlocked with stone-walled barns and timber-framed buildings, first impressed upon him the mutually reinforcing relationships between folk life and built form. But it was his field trips within West Africa in 1964 that made him intellectually aware of "the different patterns of use, the values associated with the buildings and the means of coping with a hot, humid climate and restricted building resources."

Oliver's distinctive ideological commitment to the vernacular was ignited during his tenure in Ghana, as well. While teaching at Kumasi's University of Science and Technology, he investigated the architectural impact of forced resettlement on Gurunsi and Tallensi tribespeople following construction of the Volta River dam, and he was appalled by the uncongenial, uniform prefab housing that was imposed on them. Often alone among academics, in book chapters and public lectures Oliver has insisted that the vernacular become more than a

subject for objectifying analysis. As early as 1969, in his edited anthology *Shelter and Society*, he urged that community planners "turn to vernacular communities for evidence of neighborhood character shaped by agglomeration of buildings. The broken streets, the closed vistas, the twists and turns and changes of level of an Andalusian village or shaded casbah are evidence of the inter-relationship of built forms which may go to make an integrated community." He even wondered: "is it that there are [in the vernacular], qualities here to which intuitively we all respond — to human scale, to human dimension, human values, human society?"

Once the 1960s were over perhaps Oliver did not feel comfortable wearing his heart so nakedly on his sleeve. Nonetheless, in his next two ground-breaking anthologies (*Shelter in Africa*,1971, and *Shelter, Sign and Symbol*, 1975) he continued to hammer on the humanistic contributions offered by vernacular design strategies, and to argue that academics should also study the survival of the vernacular spirit under conditions of catastrophe or extreme poverty. Upon completing his own summa for a more general readership, *Dwellings: The House Across the World* (1987), Oliver took early retirement from his academic post at the Architectural Association's Department of Arts and History and was promptly asked to compile this *Encyclopedia*. An unstoppable ethnographer and consummate networker, Oliver took full advantage of conferences and publications set up by the Built Form and Culture group and the International Association for the Study of Traditional Environments. Traveling for two years to collect data, take photographs, and recruit indigenous scholars, Oliver eventually corralled more than 750 contributors from more than 80 countries and a reliable editorial staff to put the world's oldest and newest architectural traditions on the academic map for good.

At times the results look (in a generous serving of many thousands of photographs and drawings), and read (in clearly translated and tightly, if homogeneously, edited entries), like a spellbinding revelation from another galaxy. The sheer range of building types, arcane terms, avenues of analysis, and embedded meanings can be dizzying. That earnest if slightly token phrase, "cultural creativity," never has to be employed; the ingenuity, complexity, and human-scale elegance of these manipulations of raw materials by "bottom-up" traditions (as contrasted with elite "top-down" professional creations) is obvious on practically every page.

In terms of structure, the compendium's 2,384 pages are broken into three volumes, representing two principal parts. The opening volume, or Part One, "Theories and Principles," moves expeditiously through an A-to-Z sequence (actually Aesthetic through Structuralist) of theoretical "approaches and concepts" in order to squeeze from these buildings their fullest possible meanings. The volume then covers "Culture Traits and Attributes," a grab-bag of largely sociological topics, ranging from domestic routines, food, and concepts of "home," to language, play and Westernization. Following a third, almost transitional section on "Environment," the bulk of this first of three tomes zeroes in on the sheer physicality of vernacular buildings, capitalizing on the proven documentary strengths of European folk-life studies to scrupulously inventory and typologize materials, designs, modes of construction, graphic symbolism, and multiple functions.

Although specific examples abound here, nearly always coordinated with generous black-and-white visuals, the ruling

FIGURE 2. *Internal courtyard, Kawaii Kanjiro house, Kyoto, Japan. (Source:* EVAW*, Vol. 1.)*

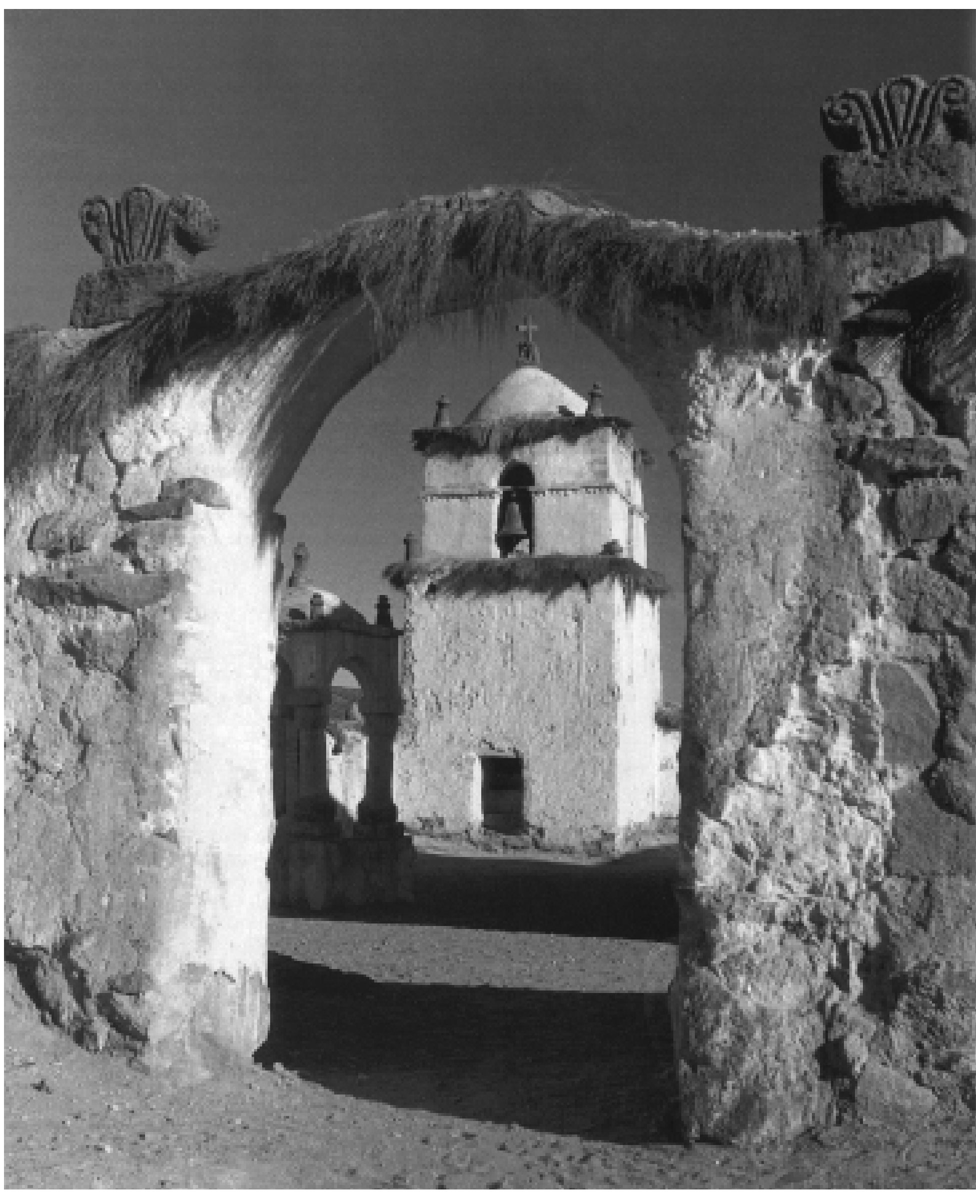


FIGURE 3. *Church in Parinacota, Arica region, Chile. Built in 1789. (Source:* EVAW, *Vol. 1.)*

point of view in the first volume is the scholar's. Here is a definitive breakdown of angles of theoretical vision, analytical vocabularies, and aspects of context, design and utility of which any serious investigator of vernacular architecture simply must be aware. It is an invaluable summa of the field, upgrading its status on the academic landscape for the first time since Amos Rapoport's *House Form and Culture* (1969), implicitly dignifying the creativity of vernacular builders around the world, and, one hopes, offering conceptual and practical guidelines for the urgent work of documenting, restoring and representing this long-neglected human heritage.

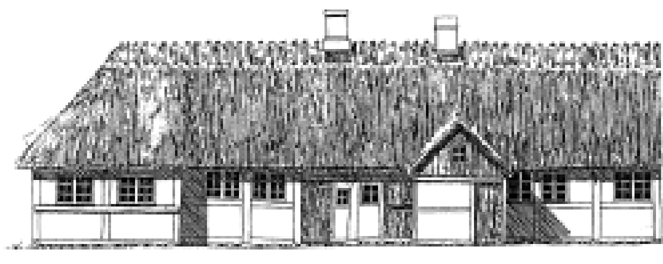
With the theoretical groundwork thus laid, Volumes Two and Three, entitled "Cultures and Habitats," set out to march, with giant descriptive steps, through a generous sampling of the more-or-less distinctive house-building traditions of seven "continental regions." Oliver and his authors begin with Asia, East and Central, tromping from west to east, and north to south, across huge zones that are "related as far as possible to geo-physical and climactic features, and . . . broadly correspond with the distribution of vernacular architecture traditions." Depending on the reader's personal origins, sometimes the experience is like roaming anew through the hometown of one's childhood or reliving forced trips to summer vacation sites — only now having names for those shanties, barns, churches, and front porches (that most likely have been torn down or disintegrated since then), and discovering for the first time from which cultural roots they sprang.

Front-loading the *Encyclopedia* with theoretical material in Volume One does free up these geographical entries in Volumes Two and Three for an inventory of exclusively

descriptive building profiles. But throughout these sections, "See also" and "Reference" indicators in the page margins also tell where to flip back to Volume One for more generic background material (on, for instance, uses of "coral" or "stained glass") and any relevant conceptual implications, or to jump forward to Volume Three's comprehensive Bibliography. The impact of these crisply physical descriptions allows no theoretical orientation to flourish so well as, appropriately, that foundational approach of folk art studies: diffusion.

Of the countless permutations of the tug and pull between conservatism and adaptation present in these areal essays, few present the diversity of mixed genealogies or far-flung influences as well as Volume Three's "Caribbean Islands" section. As Henry Fraser writes, since the early seventeenth century, "the Caribbean was the arena for an almost continuous European power struggle." In photos and text we peruse this "creolization of the multiple colonial traditions" in terms of slightly miniaturized Spanish-, English-, Dutch-, French- and Danish-influenced buildings. Most such structures were modified to accommodate new conditions of heat, light, rainfall, and social status. And some were constructed by the new indigenous *comprador* class, standing shoulder to shoulder with mud-and-thatch native homes. Today they appear as an extreme example of the almost eerie international architectural museum left in colonialism's wake.

It was the conscious intent of Oliver and his co-editors to create an "interactive" relationship between Parts One and Two, so that, as he explains, "a common building feature (e.g., Matrilocal residence) is not explained in Part Two every time a reference is made to it; an explanation of its relevance to building is to be found in Part One, sometimes through a specific example." But this can also force heavy reliance on the Glossary, Lexicon, Bibliography and Index, found at the close of Volume Three (the early portions of which cover Latin America, North America, and Sub-Saharan Africa). So if you wish to explore, say, the full study of a domestic Maori dwelling, or *whare puni*, in Volume Two (which covers Asia, East and Central, Australasia and Oceania, Europe and Eurasia, Mediterranean and Southwest Asia), you are not only advised to crack open Volume One to Section VII, Number 5, Item G (which it takes a while to discover is also on p.585) for architectural symbolism among the New Zealand Maori. But you will also want Volume Three for architectural terms, as well as pages 2,263-72 for bibliographic references on Maori dwellings. All this can leave you juggling eighteen pounds of encyclopedia on your lap or table top, while fighting off other architecture-seeking patrons who have gotten wind of this treasure. For me, it's well worth the trouble, except for the fact that in digging into a mountain of such wonders, it is easy to get sidetracked by some building, tradition, window, material, or architectural response beyond one's wildest dreams. Indeed, I suspect that once word gets out, this work will be pilfered by a highly democratic clientele. In the past few weeks my review has been interrupted by a steady stream



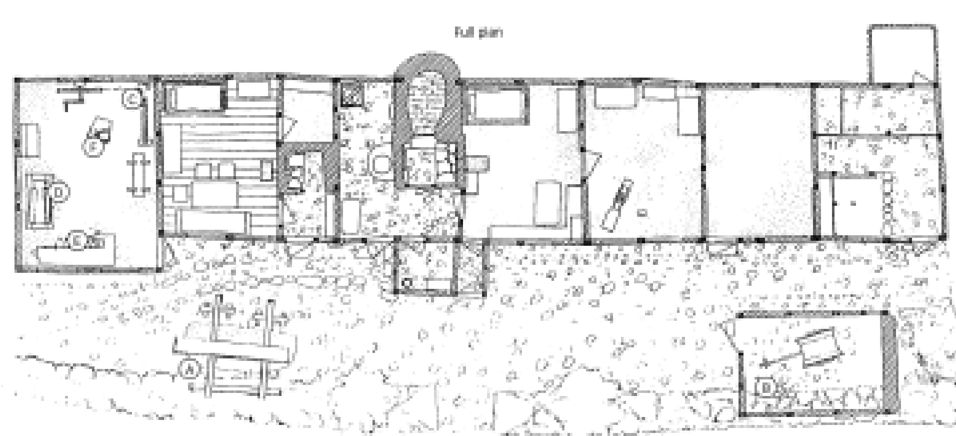


FIGURE 4. *Plan, part elevation, and section of a wheelwright's shop, Denmark: A) sawpit; B) small outhouse for storing sawn wood; C) lathe with fly wheel; D) hub cradle; E) carpenter's bench; F) chopping block. (Source:* EVAW*, Vol. 1.)*

of insistent xeroxers: a novelist delighted at the New England entries, a poet giddy over the glossary, a painter fixated on proportional measure in Micronesia, a builder blown away by the South Indian Toda tribe's sacred dairies, a friend's ten-year-old who immediately opened her shutters so they would function like Iranian wind-catching *badgirs*, and a landscaper who unapologetically snatched the diagrams on southern Sudanese cave shelters from my hands.

This reader cannot help wishing for a few additional essays: a more definitive history of vernacular architecture as a subject, a subfield, or even a literary and artistic model — perhaps an update of Oliver's marvelous Part One of *Shelter and Society* (1969), which provided one of the field's earliest intellectual histories. This could have smoothly led into even greater detail on the intricacies of working with three tiers of contributors: consultants, advisory board, and entry authors — for one is curious to eavesdrop on the debates which governed the multitude of choices that went into such a project (the lessons learned during the actual editing, the sacrifices of data that hovered on the borders of categories or acceptability, the decisions about not including more advisories on how different scholars and disciplines conduct field research into vernacular buildings). All this constitutes the exciting, often-exasperating, superstructural "work" of vernacular architectural documentation and interpretation, and one hungers for more.

Also, this reader would have liked a separate discussion on the social, technological, bureaucratic and other pressures that constantly harass, denigrate and suppress vernacular motivation and imagination. For example, contributor Patricia E. Green writes that one reason for the "sad decline" of vernacular technologies among Jamaican villagers (certainly a factor in their waning elsewhere as well) is that "there is often the stigma of it being 'old-fashioned', or 'primitive'." If these volumes get the international distribution they deserve, a decided benefit of this coverage could be to restore cultural pride and preservationist sensibility to the inheritors of these down-home traditions.

Of course, any cultural summary of such omnipotent ambition (which must, nonetheless, be written and produced by mere mortals, constrained by their own cultural/national/personal/professional frames) is bound to run into this sort of nit-picking. Any presumed blind or underplayed spots will also appear all the more glaring when one of the work's overriding goals is to stretch beyond such constraints and view the world through the built forms of many voiceless, and usually defenseless Others. I, for one, am delighted to forgive Oliver's project for nearly all my unmet longings, as they are more than made up for by its monumental riches. Nonetheless, the following struck me as deserving some sort of redress — somehow, sometime.

Despite the fact that Oliver desired his work "to be transparent, to reveal its omissions and imbalances, so that indications may be given for future research," the *Encyclopedia* offers too few such suggestions, or "state of [any particular] field" assessments. In fact, the sheer range of structural types, their variable time depth and cultural intricateness, plus the unavoidable distillation of so much unfamiliar material and cultural diversity, cries out, in my estimation, for almost each major entry to be climaxed by a "Further Study" paragraph or two — in the manner, for instance, that the Smithsonian Institution's *Handbook of North American Indians* helpfully ended each of its separately authored entries. It could suggest the amplitude or (as is more likely the case with vernacular architecture studies) the woeful paucity of additional research material, together with hints as to each author's disciplinary orientation — a needed frame for such an academically ecumenical reference. Such an addition might highlight horizons of documentation and research for the enthusiastic reader. It could "open up" the very process of preparing these unavoidably incomplete descriptions, so as to invite the sort of engaged, fieldwork-based studies for which Oliver has waved a banner his entire professional life. And as for conducting those investigations, the *Encyclopedia* provides too few on-the-ground pointers. Some chronicle of architectural fieldwork methodologies, styles of interweaving verbal and visual ethnography, techniques of photographic documentation, the vices and virtues of particular approaches to drafting plans, elevations and axonometrics, would have helped us nonarchitects, who must make it up as we go along.

One also rummages pretty much in vain through these essays for those informal moments when the builders themselves — the house-dwellers, tradition-bearers, or "organic intellectuals" (as distinguished from academic specialists) — are allowed to tell us what it is like to bear the glories or burdens of these traditions, and how they conduct the triage operations on what to salvage and what to cut loose under the brunt of modernization, relocation or calamity. Both Bror Westman's all-too-brief discussion of the multiple meanings of "home" and Robert Mugerauer's equally brief treatment of the "phenomenological" approach to architecture, for example, would benefit greatly from turning over some rights to these purported sentiments to their true proprietors: to hear from occupants, oral traditions, and proverbs as well as the summarizing scholar. Because the vernacular has often been associated with the primitive, the underprivileged, or "a lifestyle of inescapable inconvenience," descriptive works on culture by outsiders — and also, if truth be told, by native academics overly impressed by Western theoretical concerns and canons of scholarship — can overlook the rewarding, round-the-clock experience of using these dwellings and spaces, which "brings them to life" and often contains their ineffable spirit. They can forget that part of the reason why these buildings work is that they give aid and comfort to the cultural practices, formal and informal, which take place within them.

Even though Oliver correctly observes that "exhaustive research in the language of architecture within specific cultures has been disappointingly rare," I have also found it profitable

when conducting architectural fieldwork to poke into folkloristic sources and ethnographic life histories, and to inquire into previous field workers' notes and rescan ritual liturgies, to ferret out such material. More than mere emblems of authentication, these native points of view and experiences could awaken readers to indigenous perspectives and dignify their reflexive awareness of the paramount role of architecture in the maintenance of their own cultural identities.

Perhaps the trickiest aspect of fieldwork into any architectural tradition is to arrive at its underlying ethno-aesthetic principles and the everyday verbal articulations and unspoken, kinetic aspects of its design and building processes as they unfold. Four methods immediately come to mind for getting inside the intentions of vernacular builders. The first is to learn the native tongue well enough to gain entry into Oliver's "language of architecture." The second is participatory observation, where you get your hands dirty — and, often, your pride injured — in the actual building process, pitching in with keen eye and alert ear as one's fellow builders "do their architectural thinking." Unfortunately, ascertaining what "looks" or "feels" right in a completed native building or spatial configuration calls for the least common academic practice, according to Henry Glassie's typology of scholars' responses to material culture. "Ideally," he writes in the *Encyclopedia*'s opening entry, "ethnographic study elicits co-cultural response, seeking to discover through observations and interviews how people feel about the buildings they see and use. . . . [But] especially in the study of historical buildings, the student is removed from the creators and users. In isolation with objects, scholars are forced back upon their own responses to material evidence." Yet the great majority of this entire work's examples are contemporary, or at least not so historical that some measure of admittedly difficult sleuthing and participatory ingenuity cannot turn up more indigenous clarification.

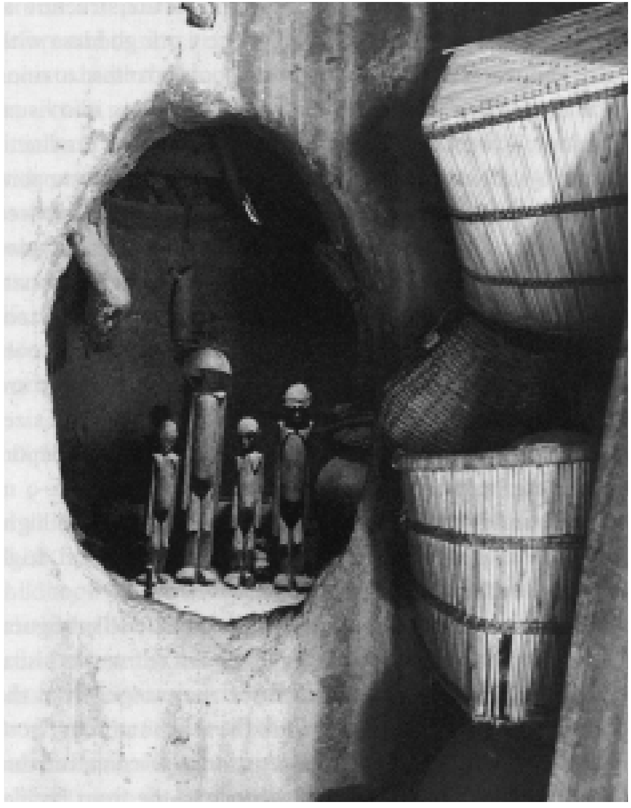


FIGURE 5. Thildu, *the house of the spirits, from where the ancestors continue to protect the Lobi family group, Ghana. (Source:* EVAW, *Vol. 1.)*

A third window into the aesthetic standards and world views of native house-makers can be their own graphic representations. Sometimes the most unexpected determinants of form acquire observable profile in such renditions as the *Encyclopedia*'s unfortunately rare inclusion of a Ngaju Dayak village drawing in Volume One. The fourth method is even more intersubjective: actually living in such buildings for long enough to see how they work on proxemic, sociological and symbolic levels. It was only after spending significant months in a South Indian village, for example, that I realized that those uneven, cow-dung-coated mud surfaces flooring the modest verandahs in front of nearly every thatched South Arcot home actually provided hipbone depressions and raised head supports for dozing together with one's hosts during those lazy hours following the main meal on a hot day.

But in the face of Oliver's overwhelmingly successful feat of rationally organizing, sequencing and describing the products of the world's vernacular building traditions, these should only be considered as thought-provoking responses in the grander conversations these volumes have invited. What is without question is that the subject is now on the world's screen forever, with cultural and academic respectability at last, providing ample materials for university syllabi, including reviews of relevant theories and case-studies — all in one place. (On the other hand, Cambridge University Press and Oliver must not be held accountable for the stylistic consequences of the most inspirational catalog of design options ever published, for this work will certainly lure out of the woodwork those alternative/appropriate *bricoleurs* who have gone into hiding for the last twenty years). Indeed, this is a noble return to the entire world of perhaps its most ignored, *because* most encompassing and "taken-for-granted," cultural products. The *Encyclopedia*'s disciplined consistency of layout design, tightly controlled entry lengths, and writing style are counter-balanced by the expansive range of building and settlement types, and the luxurious array of visuals. And it is the Oliver project's and Cambridge's smart, sustained editorial control over a tough, collaborative decade which, despite today's academic climate of disciplinary destabilization, bottom-line impatience ("do we really need a full course in this stuff?"), and post-modern antiromanticism, have successfully placed this vernacular celebration squarely before all our eyes. I challenge anyone to try and look away.

Book Reviews

Traditional Buildings of India. Ilay Cooper and Barry Dawson. Thames and Hudson, London, 1998. 192 pp., 220 illus.

Scholarship on the architecture of the Indian subcontinent in the last decade has lavished much attention on British colonial projects and the development of metropolitan centers. Among recent works have been Metcalf's *Imperial Vision*; Evenson's *Indian Metropolis*; Lari's *Dual City*; Dossal's *Imperial Designs and Indian Realities*; and Dwivedi and Mehrotra's *Bombay*. Other recent books have focused on particular forms of elite traditional architecture, such as G.H.R. Tillotson's *Rajput Palaces*; S. Tillotson's *Indian Mansions*; and Varma and Shankar's *Mansions at Dusk*. But for a vast region that sustains a myriad societies and built forms, books on indigenous buildings and ordinary structures have been surprisingly scant. Ilay Cooper and Barry Dawson address precisely this lacuna and make a welcome contribution in surveying a variety of vernacular built forms throughout India. The elegantly brought-out book combines Cooper's interest in handicrafts and wall decoration with Dawson's expertise in travel photography to make the illustrations a visual treat.

The terrain the authors set out to cover is extensive, and it would be unrealistic to expect they would be able to present expertise and familiarity with every bit of it. Thus, while the authors' attempts to treat all regions equally is admirable, some regions such as Rajasthan and the northern parts of the country are clearly more familiar to them than others. For a survey as broad as this, the selection of buildings is also a challenge, because, despite the best efforts to be comprehensive, a work like this can touch only on a limited number of built forms. Therefore, more than completeness or objectivity, a clear articulation of selection motives would help readers understand the choices. Similarly, descriptions of buildings in the book reveal more of an interest in materials and construction than in the makers, the processes of making, or the inhabiting of structures. Identifying an analytical framework would have supported this bias and made the book stronger. Referencing sources and including plans, layouts and diagrams of structures would also have greatly enhanced the value of the book.

Studies of vernacular architecture have frequently fallen prey to simplistic dichotomies between traditional and modern, changeless and innovative, timeless and historical, low and high, ordinary and monumental, rural and urban, formal and informal; and this book is no exception. The reality of a culture and its built environment, however, normally blurs such glib oppositions. Inconsistencies in the book reveal the authors' efforts to mediate such dualities. For example, they offer an overview of a canonical history of Indian architecture from ancient times to the Mughal period in an effort to link the "monumental" with the "vernacular." And they speak of the "gradual evolution" of forms from ancient times to the present and offer brief historical views of the development of such building types as the wooden houses of Kashmir and the *haveli* of Delhi. Yet, many building forms are discussed in the ethnographic present, and still others, such as the rural architecture of the Gangetic basin, the authors claim, have "changed little over a millennia." Such assertions of changelessness or presumed continuity

beg more detailed investigations — especially when social, political and economic contexts have undergone substantial change.

The dichotomy between elite buildings and ordinary ones is particularly difficult to maintain. The authors set out to exclude "monumental" architecture with a caveat: except "when they reflect vernacular forms and techniques." Thus, mosques sponsored by royalty, elite palaces, and even some prominent temples of South India (temples at Madurai and Mamallapuram, for instance) make their way into the survey. Similarly, the distinctions between *kaccha* (temporary) and *pucca* (permanent) architecture are regional, and the social characteristics associated with short-lived and long-lasting building materials do not hold up in the northeast or in the central parts of India. Even the distinctions between codified and informal architecture are muddied in Kerala, where ordinary houses as much as temples were built on interpretations of ancient codes, or *shashtras*. The authors' assertion that "*kuccha* architecture is truly vernacular" also raises the question of authenticity in vernacular architecture. Perhaps what these disagreements point to is the need to re-evaluate the canonical histories of monuments as much as the definitions of vernacular.

The book is important in giving a glimpse of the beauty and wonder of ordinary buildings and as a reminder of all that has yet to be researched and understood. There is a desperate need for books on "indigenous architecture" in non-Western societies. Students of architecture in these places continue to reassert their faith in modernism and look to the West for answers. Yet the historical and cultural roots of their own built environments are often unfamiliar to them. At the same time, nostalgia and the search for authenticity in traditional architecture may become a means of reconnecting with a mythic and innocent past. Along these lines, this book will introduce readers to an appealing and rich variety of built forms in India. But it shies away from investigating important discontinuities and dysfunction. Are non-Western societies and their built forms thus fated forever to be trapped within the exotic and picturesque images the West has created of them? Can we continue to celebrate the conservative aspects of tradition and deny them innovation and invention? Can we continue to seek out the aesthetic as the authentic? Are we going to deny non-Western societies modernity so we can have and cherish their naiveté? Or can we empower them to espouse the modern in their own terms? ■

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Architecture of the United States. Dell Upton. Oxford University Press, New York, 1998. 335 pp., 189 illus.

Though the title does not state that this is a history of architecture in the U.S.A., its appearance in the Oxford History of Art series "by art historians at the forefront of new thinking" suggests that this was the publisher's intention. A conventional linear or chronological history it is not; Upton has used a thematic approach to organize his study while at the same time endeavoring to broaden its scope. "I use 'architecture' to stand for the entire cultural landscape, including so-called designed landscapes, urban spaces and human modifications of natural spaces. I de-emphasize the traditional distinctions between vernacular and high styles (or academic, monumental) building. . . . In short, I assume that architecture means all sorts of building, at all scales, made by all Americans, including those whose ancestors lived here before the first Europeans arrived." Such an approach has many pitfalls, both for the author and for the reader, implying all-inclusiveness, and neither explaining nor accounting for the inevitable omissions. At best, the approach can only be exemplary, especially in what Upton refers to as a "short book" (330 pages.)

Conscious that a chronological history may be sought by the reader, Upton recommends Leland Roth's *A Concise History of American Architecture* for "neophytes" (1979), and "for more knowledgeable readers," Pierson and Jordy's ongoing *American Buildings and their Architects* (1970-). Upton's book has been welcomed by academics, who are cited on the cover as applauding its originality and incisiveness. This praise it definitely justifies, but the book has its antecedents in part in James Marston Fitch's *American Building: The Forces that Shaped It* (1947), and Burchard and Bush-Brown's *The Architecture of America: A Social and Cultural History* (1960). Like Fitch, Upton opens with a discussion of "an American icon" (or two), Thomas Jefferson and Monticello, which enables him to reflect on house design and to introduce one of the heroes of the book, who is, unexpectedly, Frank Lloyd Wright. The subsequent five chapters are based on the themes of Community, Nature, Technology, Money and Art. Of course, one could argue with the focus and the titles; others such as Belief, Privilege, Power, Economy, Commerce, Landscape, Migration, and Settlement could have replaced or augmented them.

At times, Upton's perception of the United States reminds me of the Steinberg *New Yorker* cartoon which depicted the view westward from New York as virtually uninterrupted emptiness until San Francisco appeared on the horizon. The "sites mentioned in the text" in the twenty states west of the Mississippi, average fewer than one per state; and California equals them in total (map pp.8-9). Of these, several are Native American, and it is one of the strengths of the book that Upton gives his recognition to American Indian and African American traditions, as well as those that have drawn inspiration from them. Such examples are not discussed in a single chapter, but are dispersed, as are other form-makers, in several chapters: e.g., monumental earthworks under "Community," and cosmic order and the exploitation of the "primitivist metaphor" in Chapter 3, "Nature." Here Upton also speculates on the possible application of Chinese geomancy (*feng shui*) to design in the San Francisco Bay Area (an "ideal site"), while admitting that "no one has yet demonstrated the use of geomantic ideas in designing any specific Chinese-American building." This chapter ranges broadly through the picturesque, the sublime, and the concept of *genius loci* by way of Downing, Olmstead and Vaux, and the Regional Plan Association of America and its Radburn and Baldwin Hills housing projects. Maybeck's "associationalism," Wright's "organic" architecture, and Greene and Greene's Japonisme lead to a skeptical view of the "theological parable" of a sustainable, ecological, "green" architecture.

The most consistent of Upton's chapters, and that which is most demonstrative of the book's inclusiveness, "Nature," nevertheless, totally ignores the "entire cultural landscape" of the midwest and west, which was remodeled for the production of beef and grain, gridded by railroad grants and the Homestead Act, and peppered with settlements. Likewise, the buildings of small-town America are virtually unacknowledged among all the "sorts of building . . . made by Americans." Thus, corporate buildings of Main Street, chain stores, filling stations, movie houses, supermarkets, and the strip (except for a two-line reference to *Learning from Las Vegas*) are overlooked, and there is no mention of that most pervasive of all U.S. building types — "vernacular" in the American use of the term: the mobile home. Meanwhile, Chapter 2, "Community," where these structures might have been considered, overstates the significance in North America of the *Laws of the Indies*, and emphasizes "Authority" in planning principles. Camp meetings, Quaker meeting houses, and Mormon churches stand for "cultural authority," but the architecturally significant Shaker communities are not mentioned.

Public housing is incisively and adequately discussed in Chapter 5, "Money"; and bearing in mind the breadth of building with which the work deals, it seems carping to indicate omissions. Nevertheless, it surprises me to find only a single phrase noting "the great public works of the Tennessee Valley Authority," and none describing the landscape projects of the WPA. It also seems strange to read of tall buildings, "skyscrapers," and office blocks in the same chapter, with no discussion of the steel-framing systems and the invention of the elevator which made them possible. Ventilation, though, is generously and usefully dealt with, along with balloon framing, under "Technology" (Chapter 4). "Art," Chapter 6, discusses the "M" architects: Maybeck, Morgan, McKim, Mead, and Moore, but hardly touches on the Moderne. In concentrating on "American" architecture, Upton has played down its European roots in the modernist phase. For me, among the most serious omissions is any recognition of the significance and influence of the émigré architects such as Mies van der Rohe (one passing phrase), Ludwig Hilberseimer, Marcel Breuer, Felix Mendelsohn, Walter Gropius, Eero Saarinen, Paolo Soleri, and in design education Joseph Albers and Laszlo Moholy-Nagy; only Rudolph Schindler and Richard Neutra are admitted.

Episodic, anecdotal, discursive, witty and informative in turns, *Architecture in the United States* is a courageous, highly readable, if idiosyncratic book, which still bears the indelible impression of Upton's courses at the University of California at Berkeley. It will doubtless enliven the reading lists of many Cultural Studies courses, and the 18-page, 13,000-word Bibliographical Essay is a valuable resource and an indication of the author's own prodigious reading. I, for one, hope that the comprehensiveness that is promised in the Introduction may one day form the basis for a much larger work by the same author, which will do full justice to his scholarship, his approach, and his subject — which appears to be nothing less than the total manmade environment, past and present, between the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans, south of the 49th Parallel to the border with Mexico. He may well be the only author currently writing who could do it. ■

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Nomad Tent Types in the Middle East, Vols.1 & 2. Peter Alford Andrews. Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, Wiesbaden, 1997.

If Arthur Upham Pope had not noted in his *Survey of Persian Art* in 1939 that "No European historian of art ever seriously considered tents and pavilions as architecture," these extraordinary volumes on the tents of the Middle East would never have been written. That chance remark triggered the thirty years of dedicated research by Peter Andrews that informs this classic study.

These volumes are extremely timely, for they provide a unique historical record of tent types, many of which are already extinct. For instance, in 1955 there was evidence of some seventy Turkmen trellis tents in use in the Emirdag region of Anatolia; while some were still in use in 1968, there are none in the area now. The books catalogue the diminution of the traditions of tent-dwelling peoples of the region by recording the declining numbers of tents. And they record the shift to plastics from traditional tent cloths in many areas and the disappearance of skilled tent builders, some named in the text. One can but be grateful for this monumental study — for monumental it is. The sheer size and scope of the subject is daunting, for the tents described are found in regions as far apart as Mongolia and North Africa, and refer back to tent precedents over the last millennium.

In terms of structure, the study accompanies and informs the map "The Middle East: Nomad Tent Types," published in 1990 by the Tuebingen Atlas of the Middle East (TAVO) (Wiesbaden: Dr.Ludwig Reichert Verlag). This map, also by Andrews, describes the distribution of the huge variety of framed and velum tent types in the region.

Ultimately, Andrews' work is planned to comprise four books. What is reviewed here are Volumes One (text) and Two (illustrations), describing only framed tents: ones in which the supporting structure and the cover are independent. The frames of these structures are contrived so they may stand on their own, stable, without any covering; but many are also reinforced by woven webbing on the frame, which confines the tensional forces. The covering is usually inert, a dead weight lying on the frame, often made of felt — which, though heavy, would not be strong enough under tension to be used as a velum. The most commonly known tent of this type is what is known in the West, apparently erroneously, as the *yurt*.

The remainder of the study, Volumes Three and Four, are expected to be published presently and describe the velum tents of the region. These consist of interdependent covers and supports, the removal of either of which would lead to collapse of the structure. In such tent systems, the velum fulfills a supporting and stabilizing function by virtue of its tensional strength, stretched as it is with guy ropes secured to the ground and bearing against its supports, holding them in place. The most common velum tents in the region are the black tents.

Concealed within the first fundamental category of "framed tents" are a wide variety of structures, including a range of different trellis, ribbed, tunnel-vaulted, vaulted, arched and arched armature, bender and lean-to tents, temporary shelters and removable coverings. If one also considers that nomadic groups may change the basic form of their tents according to season and site, to accommodate changes in climate, location and length of stay at a campsite, then the range of tent forms described is awesome.

To describe all these forms, the book is structured according to main types, with brief texts describing their distribution and history. Each subtype is then described in detail, under a standard sequence of headings for easy cross-reference. These headings cover geography, construction, use, decoration, symbolism, ownership and climate. For each heading, information is given for a number of tents, and, where possible, one tent is chosen for closer case study. A short bibliography is given at the end of each section, and the text is well referenced throughout. Many of the tent types are beautifully illustrated in figures in Volume Two.

The results are stunning. This book is obviously a must for any anthropologist, ethnographer or historian interested in nomadic peoples and their tents. But I would also recommend it to architects with a more general interest in structures. What can be achieved in some of the harshest environments in the world with sticks, strings and fabric — not only to create shelter, but also comfort and near luxury — will open the designer's eyes to a multiplicity of untapped possibilities.

At the end of Volume One, three more analytical contributions are also included: by Andrews on "Historical interconnections in the Turkmen traditions of tentage"; M. Cantlivres-Delmonst on "Trellis tents, rib tents and armature tents in Northern Afghanistan"; and R. Tapper on "Felt huts, haired tents, scene changes and thought structures." These essays are well illustrated by plates in Volume Two, and provide for in-depth analyses of different approaches to understanding nomadic dwellings and their meanings in society. The essays also provoke thoughts for further work. R. Tapper, for instance, suggests that the forms of the tent and camp ritual could have anatomical connotations, and he

questions whether essential characteristics of different tribal societies may not be reflected in their tent forms.

For the lay reader, the most difficult problem with these books may be some of the language contained in them to describe the tents. I found myself reaching for my Persian and Turkish dictionaries, even though the books contained a series of glossaries of technical terms. It is a tribute to the scholarship of Andrews that he has been able to master and include such a wide range of local terms, which, in themselves, form an important historical record of disappearing traditional structures.

The book also evokes some questions of history and interpretation. Why were the Assyrian reliefs with their depictions of tents not used as source material? More fundamentally, what precisely is a tent? And why are the tunnel tents of Sistan in Afghanistan (Vol.2, Plate 71, Type 34) with their woven ribs of reeds, rushes and tamarisk canes and mats of rushes (phragmites) included, while the similar structures of the *mudhifs* of the Marsh Arabs of Southern Iraq are not included? The answer to such questions may be obvious. To complete this study, which provides such a monumental contribution to knowledge of tents in the Middle East, some limits had to be set.

I end this review as I began by expressing my gratitude to Peter Andrews, and his wife Mugul, for undertaking and completing such a classic study. I look forward to reading the next two volumes on velum tents. ■

Susan Roaf
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The Architecture of Historic Hungary. Dora Wiebenson and József Sisa, editors. MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 1998. 328 pp., 305 illus.

Since the early 1990s scholars have been hard at work reviewing newly available historical records in Central and Eastern Europe. In this book, Dora Wiebenson, in collaboration with seven Hungarian scholars, traces the forces that have influenced Hungary's architectural evolution, reaching far beyond the country's historical boundaries. *The Architecture of Historic Hungary* is a worthy reference book, a successful presentation of facts, and a meticulous work of scholarship, refreshingly unbiased and without nationalistic coloration.

The book consists of twelve chapters, each of which stands on its own. Ample notes provide valuable sources for further detailed study, and maps accompanying each chapter depict territorial changes during each historic period. Shifting boundaries reflect the changes in political power: at times of internal political and military strength, places of importance appear evenly distributed throughout the territory; yet during times of political and military crisis, the urban centers huddle closer together in an effort to protect themselves.

The first chapter briefly touches on an unsolved mystery — the childhood of Europe — featuring mysterious peoples who occupied the lands north and south of the Danube River: the Celtic, the Teutonic, and the Slavic peoples. At one time, the Danube served as a great divider between territory occupied by the Romans and lands to the north where such "barbarians" dwelled. Yet the original inhabitants of these areas, involved mainly in agriculture and trade, developed sophisticated manufacturing and building technologies long before the arrival of the Romans. Today the physical remains of Celtic tribal centers and burial sites still exist, having miraculously survived systematic plunder, waiting to be rescued and protected by professional archeologists and historians.

In time, the sophisticated planning, design and building methods of the Romans left the landscape south of the Danube dotted with military camps and urban centers, temples and villas. Although most of these were destroyed or converted to other uses, urban and suburban patterns were established for the centuries to follow. It was not until the arrival of the Magyars (in 895 AD) that this was significantly altered. This marked the beginning of the radical territorial changes that intensified during the medieval Kingdom of Hungary. Eventually, the borders of this

kingdom expanded north to encompass the territory of modern Slovakia. The first rulers of this vast early state adapted Christianity and imported Western styles and methods of building from northern Italy and southern Germany.

The second and third chapters draw a comprehensive picture of the development, from early to late, of highly decorative Romanesque and Gothic styles in the region. They also relate how the Mongolian invasion in the thirteenth century induced the design and building of fortified structures, castles and bastions. In the Middle Ages, French Gothic was the leading architectural style — as, indeed, French was spoken by the upper classes. At the time Europe was a family of nations, and waves of political power moved from place to place, back and forth from West to East. European nobles and kings maintained several residences throughout Europe, and architects and artisans migrated, following the crown heads and nobles. The Parler family of architects, who designed Gothic cathedrals in Bohemia, was sought for style throughout central Europe in the late fourteenth century.

Power shifted to Hungary in the fifteenth century. The king, Mathias Corvinus, expanded the territory and brought master artists and intellectuals to Hungary directly from Italy. At the time the fashionable Gothic gave a way to the new Renaissance style, with a particular Hungarian flair. "Italian masters carved the decorative parts of architecture — such as windows and door frames and cornices, in Italy conceived as independent of structure — while the structural parts of building were designed by Hungarian masons. In this way a new, decorative Renaissance architecture, still reminiscent of the architecture of the Middle Ages, evolved" (p.46).

The territory of historic Hungary remained unchanged for many centuries until the falling of Buda in 1541, at which time the Kingdom of Hungary was divided into three parts. The upper part of Hungary joined the Habsburg Empire; the Transylvanian Basin remained an independent kingdom; and the Turkish Empire occupied the third part. This division had great architectural and cultural consequences, with the portion occupied by the Turkish Empire being affected most dramatically. The Turks brought in their own unique architectural style and building types: military structures, baths, and Muslim *djamis* were erected, and Christian churches were converted into Muslim places of worship. Meanwhile, fortified buildings and castles with bastions and towers were erected in all the surrounding territories as defenses against Muslim expansion.

In the early seventeenth century Hungarian aristocrats mobilized with the Habsburgs against the Turks. Protestant nobles were forced to convert to Catholicism, and the Counter-Reformation and the arrival of the Jesuits resulted in a surge of construction of churches, palaces and monasteries in the Baroque style. After the Turks were purged in 1686, the Hungarian diet remained subservient to the Austrian monarchy. However, the Hungarians managed to preserve much greater political independence than the other nations of the Austrian Empire. In the eighteenth century the need to construct large-scale buildings led to a new structured, academic system of architectural learning. Leading European architects continued erecting palaces, Jesuit churches, cathedrals and monasteries — including the Palace of Invalides, the Royal Palace at Buda, Kalocsa Cathedral, and many other Baroque structures.

In the late eighteenth century, Neoclassicism, inspired by the French Enlightenment, was embraced by the Hungarian nobility. Prince Esterhazy employed French architect Karl von Moreau, who designed several modern, Neoclassical buildings for the prince and other nobility. "When we consider that numerous national and local institutions were built in this style, it is understandable that neoclassicism became identical with the Hungarian idea of the rise of the nation" (p.159).

Neoclassicism survived the first half of the nineteenth century, but soon after the Hungarian nobles discovered the new West European fashion, they began favoring the Gothic revival for their country residences. In the second half of the nineteenth century, Neo-Gothic continued to be favored in church architecture. Neo-Renaissance-style theater and opera buildings were erected in Budapest, inspired by the Parisian and Viennese theaters. At this time Hungarian architects who had studied abroad in Italy, France and Germany gleefully provided their clients with a choice of historical architectural styles.

The last four chapters of the book may be particularly interesting to readers of this journal. Chapter nine documents folk building types, describing in particular the development of the Hungarian house and its variations. This is followed by chapters ten to twelve, which give a comprehensive picture of the present search for a new architectural expression, starting with the design by Lechner of the Museum and School of Applied Arts (1892-1896), and extending to buildings completed in the 1990s. The projects discussed present a collage of various personal styles, some

imaginative and daring like the mortuary chapel of the Farkasret Cemetery in Budapest, built in 1977. The confident outlook of contemporary Hungarian architects is well expressed in the concluding paragraph to chapter twelve: "Other European countries seem to be in a better position to develop their own modern tradition. Yet the strength of Hungarian architecture lies in its ability to adopt, by judicious acceptance and assimilation from many sources, current ideas to contemporary solutions." ■

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A Hut of One's Own: Life Outside the Circle of Architecture.
Ann Cline. MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 1998. 153 pp., 61 illus.

"How do we regain our experience in a world of mass culture?" This question, posed by news commentator Roger Rosenblatt, is the essential theme of *A Hut of One's Own*. In her response, Ann Cline proposes retrieving intimacy of experience through a life "directly lived" (another phrase borrowed by Cline, this time from Guy Debord's description of what spectacle is not: "everything that was directly lived has moved away into a representation"). For Cline, an Associate Professor of Architecture at Miami University in Ohio, such retrieval is achieved through the "making" of a physical place and of a lived narrative which it contains: "tiny abodes of modest convenience and comfort, prolonging for as long as possible, pleasures contained in the mundane tasks and rituals of delay."

Cline presents a selective and eclectic history of the diverse manifestations of the "hut" type, and in so doing she draws attention to the common language among these, as well as the cultural necessity each fulfills. The reclusion and rustic domesticity of the poets of China at the turn of the last millennium and the "image of rustic experience" choreographed by eighteenth-century gentlemen who installed "ornamental hermits" on their estates both permitted the wildness of primitive existence to suspend the processes of civilization. Cabinets of curiosity arranged by philosophers like Francis Bacon in the seventeenth century, which evolved into entire houses of curiosity, and ultimately to exotic folly gardens in the eighteenth century, all served as houses of pleasure which offered resistance to the mounting forces of rationalism. A survivor's shelter carved into the ruins of a bombed-out World War II city and a brightly colored *casita* parked in an abandoned lot in the Bronx share in an "intensity of inhabitation." These examples relate to one another, because as landscape inhabitation, each derives its meaning and is activated by an exacting practice. The most poignant of these rituals, according to Cline, is the Japanese Tea Ceremony — an amalgam of intimacy and order — wherein freedom is created through refined rusticity.

The domain of "intense inhabitation" in *A Hut of One's Own* is a place both at the edge of sparse normative and richly ordered existence. Its definition, therefore, requires the gauging and qualifying of existence as such, and brings to mind Giorgio Agamben's struggle to define the "life" at stake in his text *Homo Sacer*. Agamben claims to begin his study where

Michel Foucault has left off. In *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault describes the threshold of the modern era as a process by which "natural life begins to be included in the mechanisms and calculations of state power, and politics turns into biopolitics." In order to arrive at an understanding of "natural life," Agamben recalls the distinction between the twin Greek terms delineating life: "*zoé* [bare life], which expressed the simple fact of living common to all living beings, and *bios*, which indicated the form or way of living proper to an individual or group." These are, according to Agamben, a fundamental categorical pair in Western politics, and he insists that a link must be constructed between them in order for the "voice and language" to be united. Cline identifies a very similar binding to Agamben's polarity of bare life and political life when she invokes the presence of both intimacy and order in the hut.

For Cline, the hut has served historically "as a truly experimental fragment," and her depictions of its temporal as well as tactile iterations are highly evocative. Less convincing is the book's parallel premise that the hut's greatest significance "may derive from the many non-architectural ideas it engages." Are the qualities which she attributes to the hut — necessity, faith and fantasy — in fact, "non-architectural"? Quite the opposite seems true. The hut as experimental fragment represents the very essence of architecture, and not a thing apart. The final "interval" chapters of each of the book's sections recount the histories of huts which Cline herself has built and disassembled over the course of her life. In these, Cline attempts to distance herself and her subject from the rhetoric and internal dynamics of the discipline of architecture. Her carefully constructed huts, fabricated in unfinished plywood and corrugated metal with exposed bolts, attempt to achieve a raw quality — a "primitiveness." However, she fails to recognize that in our day plywood does not reflect modesty of intention or scarcity of means, but rather a critical and reflexive posturing. Such a structure, therefore, inserts itself, at least as much as did Lauger's rational hut, into the very discourse of architecture that is supposedly being rejected. For all of her striving toward authenticity, it is ultimately inauthentic for Cline to imagine she can disassociate herself from her own sophisticated and trained sensibilities.

I recently attended a Christening ceremony which took place in the Baptistery at St. Dominic's Church in San Francisco. The Baptistery, a traditional eight-sided chamber with a shallow conical roof and faceted ceiling, measures no more than twelve feet in diameter and contains a single pedestaled water bowl at its center. The circumference of the chamber's octagonal wall was just long enough to accommodate the few invited family members, close friends, parents, godparents and the child, and we each found our place along its length. As the sacrament of the baptism was administered, I realized, perhaps for the first time, the power of an architecture to configure experience: to house a collective intimacy through the formality of ritual. This profound intimacy was, however, not merely the result of the familial gathering, the meaning of the rite, or the beauty of the child. As we stood along its wall, the love, faith and kinship of the congregation were transposed onto the building itself. The symbolic gestures and spoken affirmations were imbedded in the very stones of the chamber. A perfect correspondence was made between the participants and the material reality of the building. My memory of the baptism is "architectural" — which is to say I am unable to separate the ceremony's programmatic intentions from its spatial qualities. The immediacy and sensuality of the experience in the Baptistery resonated in much the same way as does the hut for Cline. The hut is in my view representative of architecture at its highest fulfillment — the union of spirit and body, artifice and practice. ■

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Conferences and Events

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

"Holidays, Ritual, Festival, Celebration, and Public Display," Bowling Green, OH: May 21-23, 1999. Conference sponsored by the Bowling Green Center for Popular Culture Studies and the Department of Popular Culture, Bowling Green State University. For more information, contact: Jack Santino, Department of Popular Culture, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio, 43403-0226. Tel.: 419 372 2983; Fax: 419 372 2577; E-mail: jsantin@bgnet.bgsu.edu; Web: http://seeing2020.com/holiday.

"Embracing an Inclusive Society: The Challenge of the New Millenium," Washington, D.C.: June 3-6, 1999. National conference of the National MultiCultural Institute. For more information, contact: NMCI, 3000 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 438, Washington, D.C., 20008. Tel.: 202 483 0700; Fax: 202 483 5233; E-mail: nmci@nmci.org; Web: http://www.nmci.org.

"Re-imagining Indigenous Cultures: The Pacific Islands," Honolulu, Hawaii: June 14-July 16, 1999. Conference sponsored by the East-West Center and the University of Hawaii. For more information, contact: Asian Studies Development Program, East-West Center, 1601 East-West Road, Honolulu, 96804-1601. Tel.: 808 944 7639; Fax: 808 944 7070; E-mail noharaw@ewc.hawaii.edu.

"Machiavelli, Power and the Future of the City," Akron, OH: June 24-27, 1999. International conference sponsored by the University of Akron. For more information, contact: Richard V. Knight, Institute for Future Studies and Research, Department of Public Administration and Urban Studies, University of Akron, Akron, OH 44325. Tel.: 303 972 5117; Fax: 330 972 6376; E-mail: machiavelli@uakron.edu; Web: http://www.uakron.edu/machia.

"Colonialism: Its Impact and Legacy," Victoria, B.C., Canada: June 24-27, 1999. International conference sponsored by the World History Association. For more information, contact: Bernice Wood, Continuing Studies in Education, University of Victoria, Victoria, B.C., V8W 3P4, Canada; E-mail: bwood@uves.uvic.ca; Web: http://www.woodrow.org/teachers/world-history/.

"Urban Form Transformations: Interpretations and Operative Methodologies," Florence, Italy: July 22-26, 1999. Sixth International Seminar on Urban Form, sponsored by the University of Florence. For more information, contact: Prof. G.L. Maffei, Sezione "Architettura e contesto," Dipartimento di Progettazione dell'Architettura, Universita degli Studi, Via Cavour, 82-50129, Firenze, Italia. Tel.: +39 055 2957721; Fax: +39 055 275 7720; E-mail:progcontesto@prog.arch.unifi.it; Web: http://www.let.rug.nl/isuf/.

"International Conference on Popular Culture," Cambridge, England: Aug. 1-8, 1999. Sponsored by the Popular Culture Association, and others. For more information, contact: Pat Browne, Popular Press, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green OH, 43403. Fax: 419 372 8095; E-mail: abrowne@bgnet.bgsu.edu.

"Drawing Conclusions: Learning from Urban Design Interventions for Development," London, England: Sept. 23-24, 1999. International seminar sponsored by the Development Planning Unit of Open House International. For more information, contact: DPU, 9 Endsleigh Gardens, London, WC 1H 0ED, England. Tel.: +44 171 388 7581; Fax: +44 171 387 4541; E-mail: dpu@ucl.ac.ak; Web: http://www.ucl.ac.uk/dpu/draw.

Pioneer America Society, 31st Annual Conference, Washington, PA: Oct. 7-9, 1999. Theme: "North America's Trans-Appalachian West." Submission deadline for related presentations on all facets of folk and vernacular culture is Aug. 15, 1999. For more information, contact: Dr. David T. Stephens, Geography Dept., Youngstown State University, Youngstown, OH, 44555. Tel.: 330 742 3317; E-mail: dtstephe@cc.ysu.edu.

"European Cities in Transformation," Paris, France: Oct. 22-23, 1999. Conference sponsored by the European Urban Research Association (EURA). For more information, contact: Prof. Christian Lefevre, LATTS, Ecole Nationale des Ponts et Chaussees, 6-8 Avenue Blaise Pascal, Cite Descartes, 77455 Marne la Vallee, cedex 2, France. E-mail: lefevre@latts.enpc.fr.

"The Material Culture of New England," Deerfield, MA: Oct. 22-23, 1999. Symposium sponsored by the Grace Slack McNeil Program in the History of American Art at Wellesley College and the Office of Academic Programs at Historic Deerfield. For more information, contact: Dr. Kenneth Hafertepe, Director of Academic Programs, Historic Deerfield, Inc., Deerfield, MA, 01342; E-mail: hafertepe@historic-Deerfield.org.

"Sites of Recovery: Architecture's (Inter)disciplinary Role," Beirut, Lebanon: Oct.25-28, 1999. Fourth International "Other Connections" Conference. For more information, contact: Sites of Recovery Conference Committee, Department of Architecture and Design, Faculty of Engineering and Architecture, The American University of Beirut, Beirut, 11-0236, Lebanon; or Sites of Recovery Conference Committee, Department of Architecture and Design, Faculty of Engineering and Architecture, 1850 Third Ave., 18th Floor, New York, NY, 10022; E-mail: sitesofrecovery@aub.edu.lb; Web: http://www.aub.edu.lb/sitesofrecovery/.

Construction Industry Development in the New Millenium, Singapore: Oct. 27-29, 1999. Second International Conference on Construction Industry Development and First Conference of CIB TG 29 on Construction in Developing Countries. Organized by the School of Building and Real Estate, National University of Singapore, in association with the International Council for Building Research and Documentation (CIB). For more information, contact: Dr. Goh Bee Hua, Conference Secretary, Construction Industry Development Conference, School of Building and Real Estate, National University of Singapore, 10 Kent Ridge Crescent, Singapore, 119260. Tel: (065) 874 3549; Fax: (065) 775 5502; E-mail: bemvl@nus.edu.sg.

Guide for Preparation of Manuscripts

1. GENERAL
The editors invite readers to submit manuscripts. Please send three copies of each manuscript, with one copy to include all original illustrations. Place the title of the manuscript, the author's name and a 50-word biographical sketch on a separate cover page. The title only should appear again on the first page of text. Manuscripts are circulated for review without identifying the author. Manuscripts are evaluated by a blind peer-review process.

2 LENGTH AND FORMAT
Manuscripts should not exceed 25 standard 8.5" x 11" [A4] double-spaced typewritten pages (about 7500 words). Leave generous margins.

3. APPROACH TO READER
Because of the interdisciplinary nature of the journal, papers should be written for an academic audience that may have either a general or a specific interest in your topic. Papers should present a clear narrative structure. They should not be compendiums of field notes. Please define specialized or technical terminology where appropriate.

4. ABSTRACT AND INTRODUCTION
Provide a one-paragraph abstract of no more than 100 words. This abstract should explain the content and structure of the paper and summarize its major findings. The abstract should be followed by a short introduction. The introduction will appear without a subheading at the beginning of the paper.

5. SUBHEADINGS
Please divide the main body of the paper with a single progression of subheadings. There need be no more than four or five of these, but they should describe the paper's main sections and reinforce the reader's sense of progress through the text.
Sample Progression: The Role of the Longhouse in Iban Culture. The Longhouse as a Building Form. Transformation of the Longhouse at the New Year. The Impact of Modern Technology. Conclusion: Endangered Form or Form in Transition?
Do not use any numbering system in subheadings. Use secondary subheadings only when absolutely essential for format or clarity.

6. REFERENCES
Do not use a general bibliography format. Use a system of numbered reference notes as indicated below.

A condensed section of text might read as follows:

In his study of vernacular dwellings in Egypt, Edgar Regis asserted that climate was a major factor in the shaping of roof forms. Henri Lacompte, on the other hand, has argued that in the case of Upper Egypt this deterministic view is irrelevant.[1]

An eminent architectural historian once wrote, "The roof form in general is the most indicative feature of the housing styles of North Africa."[2] Clearly, however, the matter of how these forms have evolved is a complex subject. A thorough analysis is beyond the scope of this paper.[3]

In my research I discovered that local people have differing notions about the origins of the roof forms on the dwellings they inhabit.[4]

The reference notes, collected at the end of the text (not at the bottom of each page), would read as follows:

1. E. Regis, *Egyptian Dwellings* (Cairo: University Press, 1979), p.179; and H. Lacompte, "New Study Stirs Old Debate," *Smithsonian* 11 (December 1983), pp.24–34.
2. B. Smithson, "Characteristic Roof Forms," in H. Jones, ed., *Architecture of North Africa* (New York: Harper and Row, 1980), p.123.
3. For a detailed discussion of this issue, see J. Idris, *Roofs and Man* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1984).
4. In my interviews I found that the local people understood the full meaning of my question only when I used a more formal Egyptian word for "roof" than that in common usage.

7. DIAGRAMS, DRAWINGS AND PHOTOGRAPHS
Illustrations will be essential for most papers in the journal, however, each paper can only be accompanied by a maximum of 20 illustrations. For purposes of reproduction, please provide images as line drawings (velox, actual size), b&w photos (5" x 7" or 8"x 10" glossies), transparencies

(4" x 5", or slides), or digitized computer files. Color prints and drawings and photocopies are generally not acceptable.

Digitized (scanned) artwork should be between 4.5 and 6.75 inches wide (let the length fall), and may be in any of the following file formats. Photos (in order of preference): 1) b&w grayscale (not rgb) TIFF files, 300 DPI; 2) b&w grayscale Photoshop files, 300 DPI; 3) b&w EPS files, 300 DPi. Line art, including charts and graphs (in order of preference): 1) b&w bitmap TIFF files, 1200 DPI; 2) b&w grayscale TIFF files, 600 DPI; 3) b&w bitmap EPS, 1200 DPI. Zip cartridges are the preferred media for digitized artwork.

8. CAPTIONS AND FIGURE PREFERENCES

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