

OPENING ARCHITECTURAL HORIZONS TOWARDS RURAL DEPTHS AND TRUTHS

by Nold Egenter

Mahatma Gandhi saw the real freedom of India coming from the positive changes happening in the rural depths of the country.

1.

HOSHIAR NORADDIN: ARCHITECTURE AND DOMINANCE

Under the title "Architecture and Dominance" Hoshiar Nooraddin recently (May 30 2007) wrote in the ArchNet:

- Do you think that **Schools of Architecture follow the culture of ethnical power?**
- Most of the world's countries are **composed of multi ethnical societies.**
- Yet each particular **country identifies its architecture based on the architecture of its dominant ethnical society.**
- There are many **negative consequences for such a powerbased architecture.**
- One of them is the gradual **disparition of the architecture of smaller ethnical groups,**
 - thus removing an important pillar of the **local cultural identity** of these smaller ethnical groups.
- In the era of globalization ... **this type of powerbased architecture should be put into question.**
- A new **concept should involve** architecture of all ethnical groups in any particular country.
- In fact, the **Schools of Architecture in these countries should play the leading role in view of this problem.**
(text slightly changed, but sense preserved).

I wrote the following answer (July 12 2007, also slightly changed):

- Thank you Hoshiar Nooraddin, "Architecture and Dominance" a very important topic. And you gave an important framework of questions.

It is true, I think this is a very important set of questions which needs to be discussed more in details. It demands somehow that national schools of architecture

- 1) give up imposing their elite style of architecture on the surface of modern nations.
- 2) develop a democratisation of architectural environments and habitat identities.

However, to understand the present situation better from its historical backgrounds and to critically analyse it as well as to plead for its change, its terms have to be discussed in the framework of different types of architecture and how they developed. We also have to have a closer look at the role of the architect and how it evolved. Last but not least we will shortly discuss the history of urban and rural value systems.

2.

WHAT IS ARCHITECTURE?

FROM THE ARCHITECTURE OF CIVILISATIONAL ELITES TO THE ETHNOLOGICAL AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERCEPTION OF ARCHITECTURE

What we understand as architecture is conventionally based on **monumental history** of sacred, governmental or otherwise important architecture and its varying styles.

Note that the term **excludes traditional buildings** or vernacular traditions of rural or ethnic populations. We can therefore say:

The term 'architecture' implies the **civilised part of buildings in a nation or culture**, that is

- the palaces and castles of the elites,
- or temples, churches or cathedrals for religious purposes
- the urban types of architecture with central governmental or commercial functions.

From this follows: In contrast to 'buildings' or 'constructions', the conventional term '**architecture**' is an **elite-term**.

- It describes the monumental architecture of the upper strata of societies,
- Conventionally it is described and theoretically dealt with by the disciplines of history and archaeology,
- or in particular by the history of art,
 - thus definitely implying a civilisational phenomenon.

From its earliest times, that is from the early civilisations with their palaces, temples and pyramids,

- it had this socially elitarian meaning,
- mainly because, at those times, it brought something entirely new into the world:

- 1) **large scale monumentality and temporal durability**
 - thus creating a definitely and durably occupied place in some geographical region
 - and, further, creating linear time, or 'eternity'
 - related to this geographically defined place;
- 2) some sort of **elementary aesthetics** and
 - impressive characteristics of monumental forms.**
- 3) **social differentiation** (e.g. ruler, territorial owners, builders and workers) and
- 4) **spatial social separation in the larger sense** (defensive character of architecture).

These new **parameters produced a tremendous difference towards the pre-dynastic rural population** with their fibroconstructive huts, granaries and barns, which had to be repaired and rebuilt frequently.

With many other characteristics derived from the monumental breakthrough of architecture like

- formation of cities and empires,**
- production of luxury goods,
- collection of taxes and exploitation of traditional populations,
- centralisation of power in governmental centres,
- education of elites,
- wars and conquest of foreign territories, etc.,

this created a cultural value system which continued to be vital in imperial and urban centres. In fact, in its basic civilisational conditions, this value system was preserved into our times.

However, in recent times, **it becomes highly questionable and problematic as part of a fairly unscientific socio-economic and cultural value**

system ('urban-rural dichotomy'). See <http://home.worldcom.ch/~negenter/469aDichotomyE_Intro.html>

3. NEW INSIGHTS OF ARCHITECTURAL ETHNOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY: SEMANTIC ARCHITECTURE - THE GENETIC LABORATORY OF CULTURE

With the recent extension of architectural research into traditional cultural domains we discover new architectural phenomena which **allow us to fundamentally question the conventional "urban-rural dichotomy" as merely a value system, supporting the elitarian concept of architecture.**

Traditional rural societies have developed an architectural phenomenon of great importance. It might change our perspectives considerably because it **substantially questions the creative power of early civilisations by showing that essential structural conditions of civilisation were already a basic prerequisite of neolithic sedentary societies.**

Neolithic and metal age agrarian villages had **developed an ingenious ritual system which to a great extent guaranteed their 'sedentary life'** within genetically related regional village clusters. They cultivated an **archive of village foundation which guaranteed the village founder-house line a reasonable local hegemony.** Documents of the village foundation were **fibroconstructive signs** produced with local plants. **They were cyclically renewed at the occasion of local festive events. In this way these foundation-documents could be preserved often through great periods of time, thousands of years!** We called these globally widespread fibroconstructive signs "**semantic architecture**". See: Egenter 1986

These ancient "documents" thus gained a great value.

- They guaranteed **great stability in sedentary agrarian regions because all accepted the corresponding values.**
- For the first time in the evolution of dwelling they allowed
 - the **accumulation of goods around the stable arrangement of the house**
 - and secured the **production surfaces for the cultivation of nutrition plants, in short, "agri-culture".**

At the same time these 'documents' expressed a **primary aesthetic principle of PRO-portion.**

Not the concept of proportion in the mathematical sense as the art historians propagated, but simply empirically, **as the protruding of a non-defined part of the bipartite form (PRO) above a clearly defined lower part called 'portion'.**

That this concept was of great importance, we can see much later, in its 'civilized' or 'monumentalized' condition. For instance in the **plant columns of Egyptian temples with their geometric and static "portions"** (shaft) and their crown of naturally protruding, thus (originally) mobile plants (PRO). [similarly also later in Greece: Ionian and Corinthian columns]. <1>

In a more general sense this **basic aesthetic principle** can also be called '**coincidence of opposites**' an important and evidently **very early aesthetic model, which became used as the 'common factor' in endless variations of signs and symbols! (Note the philosophical implications, by the way!)**

Not only that. From **collecting sources like** (e.g. Assyrian) **life trees** or signs and **symbols of deities like Ishtar in early Sumerian cities**, we can see that these **fibroconstructive symbols accumulated high values from the village settlers, who used them since neolithic times. They became sacred, or were considered as deities.**

Early civilisations copied the farmer's deities and territorial signs for the buildup of their empires (theocracy)

Using important elements of predynastic agrarian village cultures in 'monumentalised' form, the early urban societies, or civilisations, had created a value system of social control which dominantly expressed itself in architecture. But, since these **territorial symbols implied also aesthetic and symbolic meanings** (harmony of opposites) they were also used for control in other domains like **worldview** (philosophy, religion), and **aesthetics** of luxurious art-objects. Further, with **increasing differentiation of social structure** they were also used to create political and military power. Characteristic for this development was:

- centralisation of power and social elite** in monumentally protected temples and palace complexes,
 - which, related to **territorially representative deities**, developed into early cities and related states (**theocracies**).
- This early state form of theocracy**, in which **deities in monumental temples owned large domains of territories**
 - which were reigned by families who could relate their own genealogy to the genealogy of the particular deity
 - (from village founder principle to temporally extended myth!),
 - thus evidently had to do with the evolution of architecture in the anthropological sense.
- Often **fairly large, early types of empires** were controlled in this way (e.g. regarding Ancient Egypt, -> Kees 1980).

Rural societies had developed sustainable life conditions very early and globally.

There are indicators to assume that this process happened in many regions of the world, in Asia as well as in the West. It began earliest in ancient China, India, Egypt and Mesopotamia about 3000 to 2500 years before our time.

Its preconditions were the **primary sedentary societies**, that is the **neolithic village cultures**. Based on the rites of cyclic renewal of semantic architecture, they '**developped' sedentary life with the accumulation of goods in one place**, evidently also **domestic architecture** and **production of agricultural products**, which, in fact, were the **preconditions of civilisations**, the foundation of what is called higher culture.

Architectural anthropology works with the basic hypothesis, that neolithic, metal age and later traditional agrarian village cultures showed similar structural and social conditions in many different regions of the world.

In regard to forms and concepts: the Egyptian architect was not a designer but rather copied existing forms

Now putting **architecture in the anthropologically wider sense as something culturally important**, we discover quite surprising things. As we mentioned above, the **temple columns in Ancient Egypt were in fact copies of agrarian prototypes. Consequently they can be understood as fibroconstructive bundles transformed into monumental forms.**

That is to say, **originally fibrous symbols of the agrarian society were copied by the new aristocratic and elitarian society.** The transformation into stone was new, the form was very ancient and was evidently of high values in the traditional agrarian society. In fact it was not only an important territorial symbol of a village, but also a **symbol of harmony, of polarity, of complementarity, of coincidence of opposites, the primordial form of art and aesthetics, the early 'design' the prototype or model of many objects and forms.**

Note the **strange role of the architect**: not design was his task, but **he copied forms which had evolved with great value in traditional society.**

Using engineering work (hewn stone) allowed him to make it eternal, monumental, a new thing. **The temples too were reflecting the prototypes of the villages. There was the primary access-path and place system of the cults as practiced by the village cultures:** processions towards the holy places in the framework of the cyclic renewal of their fibrous forms. **But now this cultic access-place scheme was organised into a monumental and eternal temple.**

Note that, of course, the **farmers had no architects!** For their houses they had builders of whom they were part. And in the cyclic reconstruction of the symbol of the settlement foundation, the farmers themselves were keeping up the very ancient tradition through cyclic reproduction of the same form. **Thus, in fact, the farmers were the 'artists', not the architect! And art was a very conservative type of art.** The artist-farmers had the very conservative task to preserve the origins of art!

Later on, the urban elite, who in their cities had developed the urban type of art subjectively and individually invented by creative artists, ridiculed the farmers. "You have no invention, no creative capacity. Your "art" is repetitive, always the same!" Of course, the farmers did not respond. But among themselves they knew that the truth of 'true art' was on their side. "It is harmony, the most grandiose simplicity!" Or: "It is polarity in whatever form". And the wisest of all the farmers said: "Our art is the origin of human culture!"

How the architect became an elitarian designer

By building temples in stone for the deities, which owned the territory, which then was reigned by the king, the pharaoh, the architect helped the higher classes to establish their centralistic power and thus became a fairly important elitarian figure himself.

What we now understand in quite new ways:

- the forms and their original meaning were developed by traditional society,
 - that is to say by the neolithic and metal age farmers in their villages.
- The architect was not a designer in the early phase of civilisation,
 - as e.g. Spiro Kostof describes in his paper (1977) on **Ancient Egypt**.
 - He was an engineer. Through monumentalisation of traditional rural forms, he built up elitarian power.
 - By transforming cyclically renewed ephemeral architecture into durable monumentality,
 - the architect enabled the elites to conceive their activities in linear time concepts. Eternity!
 - Pyramids preserving their own personal and divine glory through the ages still let us perceive this gigantic madness.
- In ancient **Greece and Rome** the architectural tasks remained elitarian, focussed on public buildings and temples.
 - Except through the writings of Vitruvius, not much is known about the position and function of architects in classic antiquity.
 - But evidently the role of architects remained closely related to builders who had acquired the new monumental techniques
 - from early high cultures of the Ancient Near East and Egypt (Kostof and MacDonald 1977).
- In the **Middle Ages** too, the architect was not a prominent figure (Kostof 1977).
 - Design and construction of projects were organised and controlled by the institutions of three 'power blocks':
 - Byzantine empire, western successor states of Rome and Islam.
 - Important buildings were created, but architects were not important.
 - Italian Humanism and Renaissance in the 15th and 16th century developed the role of the architect as an elitarian designer.**
 - The revival of Greek philosophy (Aristotle) and the rising of a the humanistic worldview
 - moderated the medieval historicism and its concept of biblical creation
 - particularly in favor of the role of the architect as a god-like omniscient profaned creator genius.
 - Important in the formation of this role were the early writers of 'vitae' (artists' biography) and art historians
 - The Roman Church remained a dominating political power and important patron of architectural projects.
 - (See: Ettlinger / Wilkinson, in Kostof 1977)
- This important role of the architect continued with modifications
 - but he essentially retained the same elitarian Renaissance-role as quasi-divine and omniscient creator-designer
 - (France, England, United States). See Rosenfeld, Wilton-Ely, Draper, Esherick in Kostof 1977.

4.

URBAN RURAL DICHOTOMY - TWO ENTIRELY DIFFERENT CULTURES LIVING WITHIN THE SAME STATE

The problem today is therefore not so much a problem of two or several ethnical groups,

- but of **two very different cultures**,
- living together in the same state or country** but being
- separated by their being part of two separate and entirely different cultures:**
 - on one hand **the urban civilisation**,
 - with its 'great history' based on written and monumental sources
 - telling us about its divine creators, its great kings and conquerors, its great philosophers,
 - speaking to us about its great architects and builders,
 - all being based on what they considered their own inventions, and
 - on the other hand **the rural traditional, that is temporally cyclic society**
 - which continues more or less its own traditional lifestyle
 - their traditional festivals, their own local identity, etc
 - including their specific domestic architecture, their own local economy,
 - their own local laws and rights, their own age old convictions
 - permeating with great sustainability.....

The main problem consists in the fact that the "ingenious urban civilisation", in spite of its great deeds

- never had the time, and particularly not the intentions**
- to really study objectively the culture of its rural partners.**
- It was enough to devaluate it, to consider it without values.**
- Mainly also in order - to profit from it.

Thus, this "**urban / rural cultural dichotomy**" in fact is not studied scientifically. The **relation is tremendously blurred by a value system** which was set up by the urban civilisations and which lasted continuously up to our times.

From the beginnings, the **rural society has been culturally devalued**, conquered, subdued, then later apriori condemned as non-original, non-creative, archi-conservative etc.

- modern folklore studies** clearly show this devaluation even today.
- It is also active in **ethnology and cultural anthropology**, worldwide
 - (primitive society, 'primitive religion', 'primitive art', etc.)

In the larger global framework it appears as **1st and 3rd world value systems**

- Economically, but also in regard to religions, art, philosophy etc.
- It has to do
 - 1) with the history of Christian conversion,

- that is Christian missionaries devaluating cults in traditional cultures as 'primitive religion'.
- 2) with earlier cultural anthropology.
- In its early phase evolutionary concepts were projected on traditional societies all over the world.
- See: Edward Burnett Tylor (1832-1917), Lewis Henry Morgan (1818-1881) and others
- The evolution of culture, the evolution of society etc.

Thus, the **real problem about rural identity is there. It is a problem of this urban elitarian value system, which, in fact, is very non-scientific and arbitrary.**

In the following a practical example which is definitely the result of such processes:

Recently there was an **exhibition at the ETH in Zurich** in which architectural professors (Deplazers) and assistants closely collaborating with the building industry, **exhibited their fairly brutal invasion of rural cultural spaces (Eastern part of Switzerland) with their highly industrialised projects.** Since the constructive details of these houses are now all industrially prefabricated and often coated industrially with screaming synthetical colors, these 'neo-modern' designs look like ridiculous candyboxes in the traditional landscape.

It is evident. **There is no research in the domain of architecture and culture.** It is a pure matter of urban power against the local traditions, which are not theoretically manifested.

On one hand, on the level of tourism, the rural zones are attractive for the financially potent urban population due to cultural and climatic reasons. **On the other hand this rural identity will disappear because it is flooded with an architecture based on technological design, empty geometry and the universal concept of homogeneous space.**

5.

MODERN ARCHITECTURE IN THE CRITICAL LIGHT OF ANTHROPOLOGY: FROM TRADITION TO 'TECHNO' AND THE HUMAN PROBLEMS

In this framework of the **'urban rural dichotomy'** focussed on the way the surfaces of the earth are organised culturally it is interesting to critically look at modern (and post-modern) architecture. What is its relation to vernacular architecture? And to premodern elitarian architecture? What can we say from the anthropologically wider perspective?

First, there is a **tremendous difference between premodern architecture and modern or post-modern architecture.** Pre-modern architecture was still to a great extent

- using a kanon of fixed forms within certain styles,
- using facades as expression of the inside towards the outside,
- using systems of composition of forms in a hierarchical system,
- using windows, doors, gates, balconies as relatively autonomous 'buildings in the building'
- using symmetries indicating autonomy, or asymmetries to express differences,
- using extensive tile roofs marking the symbolic reference to the ancient origins of forms,
- using entrance parts as signals of the transition from the outside world to the inside world, and so on.

There were many parts stimulating the human user and his mind as signs and symbols related to events of the local history or tradition.

Modernism rudely **switched towards technology.** The age old **columns, symbols of the origins of architectural and cultural aesthetics, became 'pilots', technical elements to support weights.** 'Decoration' became a crime! Evidently the architects who shouted these banalities into the modern world, had not the least idea what was behind these forms or applications! In fact, architecture widely became a product of architectural alphabets!

Why was it possible? Zeitgeist? Development of technology? Propaganda? Doubtless, both there was a further reason often neglected. The art historian had established his absolutely senseless method of the **description of style to absolute excesses.** Eclecticistic architects could propose the same building in whatever style.

In fact, style was absolutely irrelevant, theoretically. The style mania of the art historians blocked the way towards a theory of general aesthetics. There were, in fact, concepts common to all styles like **'polarity'** (or coincidence of opposites) as **basic aesthetic principle** (vertical / horizontal polarity scheme) which were much more important in a very fundamental sense (Frey 1947). **Modernism did away with the styles and at the same time annihilated the fundamental aesthetic concept of categorical polarity.**

When the concept of polarity got lost, space became homogeneous, forms became geometrical, rational technocopies. Suddenly there were **apartment houses formed like oceansteamers in the city.** Similarly the endless **flattened strings of windows.** Similarly the **internal vertical and horizontal organisation of spaces copied from oceansteamers.** Etc. etc..The general banality of absolute geometrical rectangularity broke out. It formally destroyed great parts of the historical cities of Europe.

Thus, though modernism broke away from the art historian's architecture of palaces and cathedrals, from the history of styles, the elitarian values widely were kept alive, distinguishing high artful modern architecture from rural traditions of farmers and traditional craft.

Surprisingly, architecture, as it is taught today, in **national or urban schools has conserved this elitarian concept, this 'high value' definition of its past and its outlooks.**

Thus, paradoxically the **'urban-rural dichotomy'** outlined here in its basic characteristics, was a main and continuous factor throughout the history of the Ancient Near East and following Euro-Mediterranean history. And it continues into our modern present.

6.

NEW INSIGHTS DUE TO RESEARCH: ETHNOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY OF HABITAT AND ARCHITECTURE

However, the **crisis of modernism in the 60ies of the last century,**

- the narrow-minded attempt of the art historians to again introduce their history of style in the sense of post-modernism
- made many architects aware that they had to take their own initiative towards a wider concept of architectural **research**
- into **rural traditions of historical cultures,**
- into the **ethnology or cultural anthropology of the architecture of traditional societies all over the world,**
- thus **discovering that in many regions of the world, traditional cultures had developed**
- their own, often highly refined aesthetic traditions.**

- Studying this type of **'vernacular architecture'** we might not only understand
- that these forms and dispositions were important for their cultures, for their traditional locally bound lives.

- We might also - as we tried to indicate with Egyptian plant columns - find new and plausible explanations
- for civilisational forms which conventionally were misinterpreted, misunderstood.

In the framework of these newly defined perspectives many architectural researchers became aware

- how narrow the conventional outlook dictated by the art historians had been**
- with its limits on European materials, European history, stylish forms, whatever type of subjective aesthetics,
- omitting widely the dialogue of spatial arrangements with human life and human culture.

This will definitely be the new outlook, a much wider understanding for an **architecture**

- which includes the human condition in all temporal or evolutionary sequences,**
- in all cultures around the globe**
- thus allowing new types of arrangements or synthesis**
 - between urban and rural,**
 - historical and traditional,**
 - global and local "ethnic groups" or units.**

This means also opening new horizons towards rural depths and truths in all cultures of the world, in all countries globally.

Architecture as Place-Making

During the long transition from semantic architecture (place markers)

- to domestic architecture (huts and houses)
- and sedentary architecture (spatial organisation of settlements)
 - vernacular architecture had developed important spatial and formal patterns
 - which had then become important also in the civilised historical domain.
 - Such patterns are e.g. **the access place scheme** or
 - the vertical polarity scheme.**

These basic patterns were also fundamental for the aesthetic system and controlled the use of space in view of values related to demarcated places (monumentalised semantic architecture like altar, sanctuary, public monument etc.).

Surprisingly such ancient patterns have been preserved most clearly in premodern architecture

- in the form of plans and elevation, in particular and most purely in sacred buildings
- in many different cultures.
- See Dagobert Frey's study (1949) on the 'access place scheme' in Afro-Eur-Asian architecture,**
- or the paper in our website: http://home.worldcom.ch/~negenter/250_Frey/250b_Frey1aaa_TX_1Ezz.html

Architecture must develop anthropological research into human habitats and architecture

Some hundreds of years ago medicine has felt the need to develop research into various aspects of humans regarding illness and accidents.

If there are 100 students of medicine today finishing their education at the university with their licence, about 50 of them will go to work in research projects either on surgery, pharmaceuticals, or other fields of medical research. It is this an aspect which has positively advanced medicine in modern times. If on the other hand we have 100 architects passing their diplomas, no one will go into research! **All will end up in practice**, as designers, **integrating themselves into a contemporary 'style'**, becoming some sort of a **follower of a well know star-architect-pseudo-theology**, or trying to use their own imagination as the main instrument.

If architects do not themselves start to build up architectural research, art historians will continue to dominate this system, keeping it on the slippery grounds of subjective aesthetics and style, which are both far off from objectivity and scientific method. Architecture will remain a system of fashion, of starcult, of high investments for an increasingly short lived environment. Without intensive research the architect will never manage to be fully at the height of the increasing complexity of the architectural world.

Anthropological Research will produce new insights

Animal fables tell us **how man saw the animals before zoology** as science existed. **Dolphins and whales were considered fishes.** Apes were human monsters condemned to live in woods ('Orang Utan'), and so on....

It seems that, in **architecture, we are still on the level of fables about great creators designing shining palaces and mythical castles.** This is not a joke! In fact, the architect of today still widely lives with the post-medieval Renaissance myth of the divine creator genius who designs the world for humans out of his own imaginative universe.

Research into architecture with the anthropological perspective tells us quite different things about the evolution of architecture:

- It provides us with ideas how architecture as a field of human and prehuman activities evolved
- and what were the main steps of this development (see also Egenter 2001).
- We can distinguish the following fields:
 - 1) Subhuman architecture:**
 - the daily routined nest building behaviour of the great apes.
 - Unfortunately present primatologists do not understand to what extent nest building behaviour of all four Great Apes
 - structures their daily life physically, spatially, psychologically and socially!
 - Primatology is still theoretically fixed on the tool-maker concept maintained by prehistory.
 - Observation in the wild shows, that toolmaking is a very marginal behaviour.
 - In contrast to this, nestbuilding is a daily routined behaviour. Quantitatively:
 - one individual during his life builds a virtual tower 11 times the height of the Eiffel Tower in Paris.
 - Lots of impacts, physically, spatially, socially and mentally!
 - See: Yerkes 1929, Egenter 1998
 - 2) Semantic architecture:**
 - signs and symbols used by traditional rural societies
 - for food control and control of basic subsistence materials (hunting and collecting societies)
 - for instance in the case of the Ainu. See: Egenter 1991
 - for territorial control of productive surfaces and habitat organisation since neolithic times
 - (traditional agrarian village societies).
 - in regard to Ancient Near East and Egypt see: Andrae 1930, 1933, Heinrich 1934, 1957
 - in the case of rural Japan, see Egenter 1980 (German, Engl. 1994), 1981, 1982,
 - For India see: Vidyarthi 1976; <2>
 - for Europe see: Kapfhammer 1977
 - 3) Domestic architecture:**

- consists to a great extent of a composition of various types of semantic architecture
 - which selectively 'migrated' into the house. Some examples:
 - Domestic sanctuary/ house-god/ house altar etc. forming the place of high ontological values.
 - Similarly the central hearth with holy fire (seat of deity). later transformed into clay-hearth or stove.
 - Important elements are also beds and zones for sleeping in domestic plan.
 - Often the entrance-gate-building is formed as a separate building and is of great importance.
 - See: Egenter 1991(Ainu house) <3>
 - Regarding the Japanese house: Egenter 1982b, <4>

4) Sedentary architecture:

- the formation of settlements with the clustering of semantic and domestic architecture forming a local 'cosmos'
- which is respected by the members of this genetically related cluster of settlements
- and to some extent also by exterior populations.
 - See: Egenter 1980, 1982, 1994

5) Urban/ imperial architecture:

- the development of monumental architecture with the conception of early cities and early empires
 - See "Urban rural dichotomy" <5> <6>

This wider anthropological concept of architecture will make the three classes we initially described more easily comparable:

- traditional, or vernacular architecture, conventionally described by
 - folklore studies (traditional rural societies within nations) and
 - ethnology (traditional societies not yet integrated into modern states)
- historical or premodern 'high' architecture conventionally described in the framework of 'styles' and
- modern and postmodern architecture.

In this way 'high' architecture and vernacular architecture can be evaluated according to particular situations.

- We will discover for instance that **domestic architecture did not evolve on functional principles.**
- It evolved essentially through the combination of semantic architecture:**
 - roof, fire-place, entrance gates, windows and so on,
 - were originally individual types of semantic architecture (roof-hut, fire-heap, etc.)
 - with individual functions and developments
 - which, **according to specific local traditions, were combined to form different types of houses.**
 - If we accept this hypothesis, we will discover that **ritual customs in the domestic space of traditional houses**
 - can be understood as cyclic renewal rites originally focussed on semantic architecture.**
 - Traditional festive "decorations" thus often reveal as the primordial fibroconstructive installation or parts of it.
 - See e.g. 'kadamatsu' (New-Year's decoration) related to Japanese doors or gates.
 - Or see fibroconstructive 'seats of gods' (yorishiro) as cyclically renewed fibroconstructive prototypes
 - of Shinto-shrines as toposemantic signs in evolved wood construction (Egenter 1980, 1982, 1994).
 - Similarly in European folklore (See Kapfhammer 1977).

In short, we will be able to understand what is the relation of architecture to human life in the widest sense.

- We will understand that architecture is also a semiotic and symbolic system,
 - a very ancient and essential part of human orientation,
 - which created complex systems of culture, which we do not relate anymore to architecture
 - namely and particularly **art and aesthetics in general,**
 - but also signs, **script and many types of monuments,**
 - the **spatial structure of the human worldview.**
 - Even **philosophy and religion** have a great deal to do with the evolution of architecture, namely
 - categorical polarity as primary human level of cognition derived from the structure of semantic architecture.**
 - On the other hand, the classical antique** formation of an absolutely spiritual world (philosophy, Platon)
 - can be understood as a **dissection of primary polarity due to spatial extension**
 - triggered by the formation of early empires.**
 - Territorial extension produces vertical extension of polar parts of territorial sign:
 - Akhenaton syndrome: the polarity of temples and divine figures is extended to Aton, the planetary sun.
 - Platon syndrome: the evolution of Western philosophy too now appears in a critical light of territorialism.

In view of this great complexity of evolutionary processes of architecture in the anthropological framework,

- it is therefore very questionable, or even socio-psychologically dangerous
 - to reduce architectural forms down to mere technology and technical concepts of space.
 - They might have evolved through millions of years,
 - and consequently might have produced an enormous manifold of relations among humans and their spatial environment.
 - All this might break down if we accept that architecture is merely based on technological design.

Modernism, as well as post-modernism in architecture and urbanism are producing an enormous reductionism in the cultural, psychological and intellectual sense. Sensitive architectural observers have begun to perceive such processes for quite some time as highly problematic and dramatic in its impacts. See for instance Gert Kaehler's (1982) book 'Architecture as symbolism-decay - The steamer-analogy in architecture. Udo Kultermann, the well known art historian who wrote the famous book 'Geschichte der Kunstgeschichte' (The History of the History of Art) wrote the following critical passus in his "Architecture in the 20th Century" (:249) : "It will be an important challenge for architects, and society in general, to face the vast number of unsolved problems in both a pragmatic and imaginative manner. It is no longer possible to live with the illusions and ideologies that have dominated and veiled public debate. Architecture will have to be redefined according to the changes in the macro scale of worldwide transformations, as well as in those in the micro scale of human interrelation. Urban problems can no longer be separated from problems of social and political equality." See also Egenter: 20 Problems. UIA Barcelona Manifesto of an architectural anthropologist <7>

7. CONCLUSION

Maybe we should return to the beginning and repeat the final three sentences of Hoshiar Nooraddin as an international program:

- In the era of globalizationpowerbased architecture should be put into question.
 - Modernism and post-modernism are a tremendous reductionism
 - in regard to the cultural contents of architecture as a cultural whole.
 - A new concept should involve architecture of all ethnical groups in any particular country.
 - Architecture should be researched in its widest possible range, that is, in the framework of anthropology.
 - In fact, the important Schools of Architecture in all countries should form an international network
 - and play the leading role in view of this problem.
 - With new research, architecture could reveal as a much more important cultural feature than most of us think today.

NOTES

1) In his "Dancing Column" Rykwert (1996) discusses the Egyptian columns, in particular the palm capital, in the conventional sense as support of the crossbeams, "with palm leaves fastened to the crown to mask the joint..." (:311) and thus as decorative capitals. This is characteristic for the rationalistic constructs of the art historian, who - different from the architect - has no 'structural sense' for the most evident facts, the cultural change embedded in the temple forms. Not only the plant pillars, but also the monumental gates (pylons) and many other things clearly reflect their origins in a world of "fibroconstructive industries" - later being transformed into stone and monumental durability. Note that more than 100 years ago already, Gottfried Semper, the German star-architect and first 'architectural anthropologist' had proposed this theory already, but the art historians still today trivialize his anthropological approaches as 'history of ideas!' Evidently to protect their pseudo-theology of aesthetics, on which their social power rests.

2) Village Anthropology in India -- Some Critical Remarks. See: <http://home.worldcom.ch/~negenter/005_VillAnthIndZZ_IUAES98.html>

--The sacred pillars of Hindu Tradition in some temples of Singapore. Extracts of a travel notebook. See: <<http://home.worldcom.ch/~negenter/601aSingapoIntro.html>>

--The Maharashtra Holi Pole survey. See: <http://home.worldcom.ch/~negenter/602b_HoliPoSurvTxE01.html>

--Lakshmi - An agrarian Festival at Hatkatchora (near Jagdalpur, India). See: <<http://home.worldcom.ch/~negenter/600LakshmiIntro.html>>

3) The Master of the Wilderness, the bear lives in the upper part of our home. House and world-view among the Ainu in the North of Japan.

<<http://home.worldcom.ch/~negenter/015AcrobatArchives/InternetPublic/MasterOfWild.PDF>>

4) The Japanese House. Or, why the Western architect has difficulties to understand it.

<<http://home.worldcom.ch/~negenter/410aJapHouseIntro1.html>>

5) Urban rural Dichotomy: <http://home.worldcom.ch/~negenter/469aDichotomyE_Intro.html>

6) Urban rural Dichotomy: <http://home.worldcom.ch/~negenter/004ZagrVotr_part2_E/004ZagrVotr_part2a_E.html>

7) Egenter: 20 Problems. UIA Barcelona Manifesto of an architectural anthropologist.

<<http://home.worldcom.ch/~negenter/351UIAManif.html>>

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