CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN THE TRADITIONAL BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Continuity and Change in Native American Pueblos
Paul Oliver

Cultural Change and Tradition in the Indigenous Architecture of Oceania
Paul Meskell

Altermity and Escape: The Cultural Imaginary of the Urban Landscape
Gija Wallis De Vries

Essaouira: The Urban Transformation of a Compact Medina
Mohammad Eltabbed

Constancy and Change in the Built Environment: The Case of Kuwait
Mohammad Al-Jassar

International Association for the Study of Traditional Environments
CULTURAL CHANGE AND TRADITION IN THE INDIGENOUS ARCHITECTURE OF OCEANIA

Paul Memmott
CULTURAL CHANGE AND TRADITION
IN THE INDIGENOUS ARCHITECTURE OF OCEANIA

INTRODUCTION

Within the study of cultural change, anthropologists have identified a range of change processes, although this field of study is by no means coherent or unified, and much theory integration remains to be done. The current paper makes a theoretical contribution from within a sub-field which can be termed 'architectural anthropology'. Case study material is drawn from a corpus of research on indigenous architecture in the South Pacific or Oceania region contributed by the Society of Architectural Historians of Australia New Zealand (SAHANZ) over the last 25 years. From a recent review of some 80 theoretical contributions of SAHANZ papers on indigenous themes1, I have selected a set of analyses on (a) the transformations of traditions through deterritorialization, (b) several types of biculturalism that combine cross-cultural architectural attributes, and (c) the significance of the social engagement process in the reconstruction of architectural tradition.

This paper is also informed by selected presentations and the final debate from the 10th (2005) IASTE Conference in Bangkok, in which modern and global processes of cultural change were broadly addressed under the theme of 'hyper-tradition', with many rich ethnographies on cultural change and the transformation of traditions, but nevertheless put forward without any final clear consensus of the precise meaning of the term 'hypertradition'. Rather, multiple definitions and interpretations of the polysemous notion of 'hypertradition' were generated. Some of these are drawn upon in the ensuing analysis. Of particular interest are a number of IASTE 10 papers that dealt with aspects of deterritorialization and the interpretation of tradition.

In the current paper, I thus draw on material from my region (the South Pacific) as well as cross-referencing to selected papers presented at the 10th IASTE Conference, with a view to cross-cultural comparison and inclusion of like examples. In each step, I attempt to define the process of cultural change and name it as a contribution to theory building.
INTERPRETATION OF CHANGING ARCHITECTURAL TRADITIONS

In considering the nature of cultural change, a number of SAHANZ and IASTE scholars examine the construct of 'tradition'. An examination of the anthropological literature on tradition reveals two competing theoretical paradigms of what 'tradition' is as a scientific construct. In the first paradigm one sees a tradition naturalistically, as a bounded entity made up of constituent parts that themselves have defined properties. In this atomistic paradigm, culture and its constituents are regarded as entities having an essence apart from any interpretation of them, anthropologists may prescribe, for example, which traits are old, which are new innovations, and show how such traits fit together to make up the abstract concepts that we call a 'tradition' and a 'culture'.

However our increasingly more favored definition of tradition accepts that changes occur to traditions particularly within the processes of inter-generational transmission and enculturation; we note that a key reason for this is because "interpretations are made of the tradition presented". The alternate paradigm then, is that tradition is an interpretive process and that any tradition is continually re-interpreted. Unchanging traditional societies never existed. Since all cultures change regularly, there can only be what is new, although what is new can take on symbolic value as 'traditional' in reference to what is perceived as being 'old'. The author's view is that both of the above paradigms of 'tradition' can usefully co-exist and that our task in configuring a longitudinal theory of architectural stability and change is to explore both the attributes of cultural traits and to understand the interpretative styles and methods of cultural participants in their daily processes of creative cultural production, including architecture. Recurring comment on these issues is found in the SAHANZ scholarship. For example Andersen emphasizes that indigenous cultures are "dynamic societies, in a continual process of adaptation, choice, and constraint." Austin has commented on the dynamic nature of the construct of 'architectural tradition' both in New Zealand and universally:

"In Aotearoa/New Zealand tradition is continually being reinvented, and every denial of tradition is a restatement of it while every representation of tradition is a modification of it... Modernism in constructing itself in opposition to its own tradition referred to the primitive. However the primitive was the invoking of another tradition...."

THE DETERRITORIALIZATION OF TRADITION

The deterritorialization of tradition was presented by AlSayyad and others as a central meaning of 'hyper-tradition' at the 10th IASTE Conference.
"[Globalization] has intensified the process of de-linking identity and place, and, by extension, intensified the deterritorialization of tradition. This process has challenged the idea of tradition as an authentic expression of geographically specific, culturally homogeneous and coherent group of people. This process is not entirely new. Prior moments of globalization, such as colonialism, also brought about the deterritorialization of tradition, and they provide useful points of comparison to the present moment...""

A deterritorialization of a tradition can thus occur by de-linking the tradition from its customary place of occurrence and geographically ‘re-spatialising’ it into a new place which is normally articulated by different customary practices in contrast to its local stability as experienced in its original customary place context. I would agree with AlSayyad; this process is definitely not new and is commonly recognized in the cultural change literature as the ‘diffusion’ of cultural traits. Traditional elements and practices have always diffused across and between continents, carried by people. Buildings, artefacts, concepts and rituals have all travelled in this way. (For example spices with recipes began circulating around the world in the 1400s and 1500s.)

The deterritorialization of a tradition might occur in many ways, and a number of methods were clearly exemplified in case studies at the 10th IASTE Conference. One way is by the actual insertion of the tradition into a foreign exhibition, fair, museum, or similar venue which will transport it from its original site to a new site of public display. In the case of architecture, it may involve the transportation of artefacts, building materials, ethnobotanicals and other people to occupy the reconstructed setting as was the case at World Fairs during the late 19th and early 20th centuries when villages were reconstructed for exotic display, a practice that still occurs in some national displays of indigenous villages as a form of tourism.

An alternate method of deterritorialization is for the cultural players to migrate and reconstruct their tradition from local materials and artefacts. Such is evident in the many global diasporas that have occurred over millennia and which have brought about the deterritorialization and transfer of architectural traditions into new places. A most recent Australian (SAHANZ) paper by Lozanovska analyses the houses of mid-20th century Macedonian immigrants in Melbourne, and in so doing, goes beyond an account of what Macedonian elements were disconnected and transported to be re-spatialised, to provide an insightful understanding of the cultural process of environmental adaptation. These migrants came to occupy the vernacular houses of earlier Anglo-Australian stock, where they engaged in a constant and endless process of adapting, renovating and re-making of the house as they simultaneously re-found their ethnic selves and projected themselves onto a new cultural environment, making space for their immigrant subjectivity, and thereby generating new local ethnic aesthetics. The house became an embodied identity mediating between their homeland and family members left behind, and the newly found symbolic order of Australia to be inherited by their children and grandchildren. These migrants "move[d] beyond the trajectory of assimilation..."
and the stereotypical migrant story", taking affirmative action, a process of acting on and creating a new house-world by imaginatively drawing upon images from external and internal references, from motherland and new homeland, and "tailored by the habits of dwelling, recreated, remembered and amended." They simultaneously created a culturally referenced place for inward reflection of self in the privacy of interior or backyard and a projection of otherness via front facades as a statement to the wider dominant Anglo community by way of resisting assimilation and cultural dominance.11

A complementary paper by Lai from the 10th IASTE Conference, and titled "Sites of 'Chineseness': Reconstructing the Imagery of the Chinese Garden in Contemporary Chinese Art" examines deterritorialization predicated on the Chinese diaspora that transported the tradition of the Chinese garden over several centuries. Lai's analysis tells us much about the dynamic nature of tradition, seen as a re-interpretation of past tradition.

"In the past, the interpretation of Chinese garden has come through poetic analogies, landscape theory, and garden theory, in ways that were related to a literary sense of perceiving spaces. In works of contemporary Chinese garden design, these ideas are being borrowed, re-invented, or sometimes misread (or questioned). In the Chinese art world, imagery emerging from exhibitions and competitions continues to give new interpretations to the garden tradition. The meaning of the Chinese garden remains contested and continued to reaffirm its previous one. And the process goes on and on..."12

In IASTE 10, Lai argued that the Chinese garden had become a 'discursive object,' whose meaning not only "remains contested" but whose creation is a 'highly interpretative act' carried out by many members of the 'Chinese art world' both inside and outside China and one largely influenced by represented images. Such multiple readings, especially in international artistic and architectural circles, are in contrast to a different type of process that reduces a complex inheritance to a single stereotype.13 14 Here we could invoke the terms 'generative tradition-making' versus 'reductive tradition-making'. The examples by Lazanovska and Lai are seen to be generative in the sense of creating more interpretations of traditions. Examples of reductive tradition-making follow later in the paper.

Thus Lai argues that tradition is highly interpretative through forms, words, and especially images and that the new imagery is allowing reinterpretations of an older tradition, especially through artefacts presented by means of exhibitions and competitions. Is this a conventional form of transmitting tradition or does it deserve a special label of 'hyper-tradition' (as Lai states)? I would argue the former.

Another type of deterritorialization of tradition is via a simulated reality reproduced and transmitted in a
medium, which can effectively disperse it regionally, nationally and globally to multiple outlet sites. Such medium have been invented and elaborated through the ages of humankind and include simple icons, sculptures, paintings, books (e.g. the Bible and the Koran), photographs, movies and most recently electronic media which tend to be associated with the process of globalisation. The impact of a new medium is worthy of consideration as encapsulated by Marshall McCluhan’s phrase “the medium is the message”. A case study in point was Dietrich Neumann’s paper at the 10th IASTE Conference which spoke of ‘cinema-realities’ or the influence of cinematography on the sensory nature of the city agora, forum or square, as transferred through computerized media on to the advertising facades of large-scale billboards in metropolitan centres. Building facades are transformed into ‘media screens displaying globalised and/or fantasised messages.

In the closing session of IASTE 10, a definition of hyper-tradition was put forward; that of the new dimensions of transformation of tradition involving the social and cultural relevance’s of the technologies of communication, transportation and electronic media that transform our notions of time and space. However the current author and his colleagues had challenged this position in their IASTE 10 paper through an analysis of an Australian Aboriginal archipelago society in the Gulf of Carpentaria over 10,000 years, in which we examined:

“...the proposition that patterns of cultural change for these island populations have always involved complex processes of acceptance/non-acceptance, acculturation, adaptation of traits, systems of knowledge, and ways of doing things. These have always involved the mystique of an outer "global" culture engaging with an insular inner culture. Such an understanding requires a dynamic model of tradition that can accommodate significant transformations of the constraints of time, space and identity.”

Our point here was that the deterritorialization of tradition through processes of diffusion was as ancient as humankind. On the other hand it could be argued that there is something distinct about the more recent relation between globalisation and the new electronic technologies as signalled by AlSayed at the IASTE 10 Conference, that justifies the coinage of the term ‘hyper-tradition’. However to verify this, it would seem there is a need to carry out comparative study of the various media inventions throughout the ages and their respective global impacts to address this question, a task beyond the scope of this paper, although one that was started by McCluhan with his text ‘The Gutenberg Galaxy: the making of typographic man’.

REDUCTIVE TRANSFORMATION OF TRADITION THROUGH DE- TERRITORIALIZATION

Previously I distinguished generative tradition-making from reductive tradition-making. Let us consider an
example of the latter. The Samoan scholar Refiti\(^9\) wrote for SAHANZ on the appropriation of a Western architectural construct, the European Christian church, and its accompanying liturgy by Samoans in the 19th century. This was accomplished within a Polynesian worldview with neither a comprehensive understanding of the Christian culture nor an attempt to authentically create a facsimile Christian religion. Only particular Christian ideas were selected and integrated with local ones as these churches became local idealized versions of Christian spirituality.

Refiti\(^9\) then analyses the transposition of that construction form from Samoa to the contemporary urban context of New Zealand by a non-indigenous New Zealand architect who attempted to use it to reflect a Pacific Islander identity. What might be finally read as... “Pacific architecture, is a New Zealand European architect’s fantasy of what a Pacific heavenly paradise might be, based on a Pacific fantasy on what a European missionary paradise might be.” Refiti describes the overall process of transformation of architectural properties as “a double movement of cultural exchange”. In both steps we see a selective or reductive narrowing of architectural and conceptual elements that come to constitute the transformed tradition.

THE POLITICAL APPROPRIATION OF TRADITION

The notion of reducing a complex tradition to a simple stereotype occurs elsewhere in the New Zealand SAHANZ literature. McKay\(^9\) examines the stereotyping of Maori architecture by Anglo-New Zealanders through the media of politics, museums and texts into a single genotype, that of the Meeting House or wharenui. Any post-contact architectural acculturation in Maori architecture was seen by the colonists to represent a loss of Indigenous identity and to be somehow non-authentic.

“[McKay’s] paper discusses the perception of “Maori architecture” as it has been seen in the mainstream narrative of New Zealand architectural history... It is not so much about the buildings themselves, but rather the processes of selection and representation and how this has reflected the political and cultural concerns of the times.”\(^\text{29}\)

This process can be termed the ‘political appropriation’ of a cultural trait, element or complex of tradition, and once again the 10th IASTE gave us some excellent examples. Ichidioghi\(^9\) wrote of the emergence of a single identity for groups of Romanies and Gypsies in Turkey as a partly political process of imposing ethnicity from without; a process of ‘othering’ by the dominant culture. She also argued that this was a form of hyper-tradition.”
Thus political appropriation may not necessarily be confined to architecture or imported technologies, but a central theme is the imposition of generalizations about cultural identity. This was also highlighted with Nitzan-Shifman's IASTE 10 paper on archaeological museums at the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, which clearly demonstrated how nation states use tradition as a political tool of modernity, a mechanism of ideology and identity-making. Thus the State may choose to appropriate urban patterns and symbols in a process of politicisation and consumption of tradition.

Nitzan-Shifman argues that tradition has been widely suited to the task of articulating the State's narratives...

"...since the dawn of modern nationalism because, by invoking the forms seemingly most resistant to the modernity entailed in the foundation of a nation-state, it serves to legitimize the social change nationalists advance. Religious forms have been particularly vulnerable to such processes; divested of their original context they may be invested instead with secularized state narratives."

Nitzan-Shifman utilized the term ‘reflexive traditioning’ to explain how the State in the name of modernism, took history and public memory and narrated them in a new field of power that preferred one group over another.23 She saw ‘reflexive traditioning’ as a modernizing of the pre-modern society, but it could equally be termed a pre-mediated political appropriation of tradition.

As well as the juxtaposition of transported cultural traditions into new cultural settings, there is a need to examine more vigorously the nature of the fusions between cultural elements in those new environments as part of the cultural change process. Here the SAHANZ contribution is particularly helpful.

**TYPES OF BICULTURALISM**

A theoretical preoccupation of the SAHANZ authors writing on indigenous topics (particularly those from New Zealand) is biculturalism and bicultural architecture.24 Bicultural architecture might appear to make sense as a label in a relatively simple political context of two-way, non-directed change between two groups (i.e. not imposed) whereby both groups accept and acculturate something of the other's cultural tradition as products. However good-quality empirical studies can powerfully illustrate that such exchanges are often more complex processes that may challenge the theoretical usefulness of the term 'bicultural'. We shall return to this point in due course.

McKay25 through an analysis of two selected buildings from the 1960s designed by the Maori architect John
Scott, offers further consideration of the concept of architectural biculturalism, by describing several types of possible outcomes of such. He starts by defining ‘integration’ as the incorporation of one cultural group into the dominant monoculture with no reciprocal shift to recognize the former group’s cultural position. This process corresponds to the more commonly employed term ‘assimilation’. By contrast, he employs ‘bicultural’ as a sharing or blending of two cultures on more or less equal terms whereby two sets of elements are fused together, but both remain overtly recognizable. I shall term this outcome, ‘bicultural integration’.

**BICULTURAL INTEGRATION**

McKay comments on a famous exemplar of this blended balance of bicultural integration. The Fortuna Chapel in Wellington was completed in 1961 and designed by Maori architect John Scott, and is arguably the best and most successful example of bicultural New Zealand architecture. This Chapel is in a Retreat Centre for Catholic men and women, where there are facilities for worship, reflection, counselling, dining and sleeping. Scott drew on the analogy of the Maori marae or communal courtyard, designing the Chapel as the equivalent of the Maori Meeting House within the marae. Although antecedents and stylistic influences can be seen in European ecclesiological architecture, Scott drew on the New Zealand vernacular timber traditions of the barn and woolshed, as well as on his own Maori traditions. The Chapel deployed the Polynesian model of symbolizing the building as a person through at least three techniques: (a) the altar has an inset of a bone fragment of the first Maori Martyr of Oceania emphasizing its sacrificial nature; (b) the porch in Maori mythology “carries human dimensions of homage and reception”, signifying the human welcome, and marking the transition from the marae to the Meeting House, from body to soul; and (c) the central post represents the soul of the person, also symbolism drawn from Maori mythology.

**BICULTURAL TENSION**

McKay defines a second possible outcome which he labels ‘half-caste’ whereby there is an uncomfortable sharing of cultural elements with an architectural result that belongs to neither one nor the other, which lacks a coherence from either cultural perspective, and which may even undermine or debase the donor culture. To illustrate this outcome, McKay analyses a second building designed by John Scott, his Maori Battalion Memorial building at Palmerston North which doubled as a Maori urban community centre.

This building of the early 1960s, utilized concrete column and beam construction influenced architecturally by British Brutalism and Japanese Modernism combined with Maori carving traditions (wahakauahau ornamental panels and kowhaiwhai scroll painting on rafters) with a suggestion of the centre representing a new type of
Maori Meeting House. This building failed to attract the attention and praise imbued on the Fortuna Chapel by the New Zealand architectural profession. According to McKay it was something perceived by the Anglo-dominated profession to be far less comfortable than the balanced integration of Fortuna Chapel; the Memorial building was architectural biculturalism but one that commented on the 'asymmetry of colonization', a state of bicultural tension, even perceived ugliness via the mixing of incompatible values, or a debasement of modernism.

A similar outcome is revealed in Treadwell’s analysis of the mid 19th century Rangiatea building at Otaki, New Zealand, which has been subjected to two distinct cultural readings, either as a church adapted for Maori or a Maori Meeting House adapted as a church. Its construction was fraught with a struggle for control over design between the church officials and the Maori craftsmen-builders. For example, Maori carving style predominated during the Archdeacon’s absence, but upon his return to the building site the application of carving was restrained due to its un-Christian themes; and when the Maori workers shaped an 86 foot long symbolic ridge pole (tika) which they nevertheless considered too short, a missionary arose in the middle of the night to saw ten feet off it.

Treadwell’s analysis also makes it clear that the respective interpretations depend as much on contextualisation within the cultural landscape as they do on the highlighting of particular architectural elements or decorative features. Treadwell concludes that as a Meeting House Rangiatea lacks a porch, and as a church it lacks a chancel; it “lacks the forms considered to be essential to [either of] the [two] models”. The end result was that Maori architecture became concentrated within the building, whilst the architecture of the colonizers was imposed on the exterior, to make the building ‘safe and consumable’ in keeping with the early colonial policy of Maori containment and assimilation. The architectural result was bicultural ambiguity and tension rather than a harmonious integration. I describe this outcome using the term 'bicultural tension'.

RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURAL SYNCRETISM AND COUNTER-COLONIZATION

Many of the New Zealand SAHANZ scholars examine the architectural products resulting from the contact between indigenous groups and European missionaries in the mid to late 19th and early 20th centuries, both in relation to Maori and other Polynesian groups. For example, Andersen writes on the appropriation of Catholic concepts from French Marist missionaries into the Maori architecture at the settlement of Puketarau. She describes one Meeting House referred to as Hine Nui o Te Ao Katia was built in 1905. The name incorporates references to both...
Hine-nui-te-po, the first woman in Maori mythology, and Mary, mother of Jesus. Various meanings are given to the name of this whare [house]. The translation given by Archdiocese publication on the site is “Mary, Great Woman of the Whole World, Woman of Light.” They also state that the reason the whare is uncarved and undecorated is because it is dedicated to an ancestor common to both Maori and Pakeha [Anglo New Zealand]. Although uncarved on the exterior, Hine fits the general plan of a traditional whare, except it has a centrally placed door with windows on either side...Hine [is] described as the result of ‘partnership between the Maori and the European Peoples’.

Following the work of Diedre Brown, Andersen goes on to categorize her Maori examples as forms of counter-colonization.

“All of the forms of appropriation used by these [maori] leaders can be seen as movements towards meeting the new and changing needs of a people, and adapting new concepts to fit into an authentic Maori world. The strong adaptability shown through the appropriation of colonial architectural forms, and resistance to pure assimilation shows the Maori as highly progressive, which has until recently been taken for granted by scholars.”

DIRECTED CULTURAL CHANGE – MONOCULTURAL ASSIMILATION VERSUS BICULTURAL ACCOMMODATION

What might seem a fairly simple prosessual analysis of how missionaries imposed and adapted European church designs for Pacific Island communities in an assimilative approach may take on added bicultural complexity if sufficient contextual data can be collected and assembled for analysis. At the 1998 SAHANZ conference, Sarah Treadwell presented a paper on the architecture imposed by mid 19th century English missionaries in three of the southern Cook Islands. The buildings were constructed of timber with wattle and mud plastered walls and coated with whitewash (manufactured from coral lime) to symbolise a range of Christian attributes centreing on purity, charity, and virtuousness. Traditional woven architecture were displaced, as was carving, and symbols of perceived paganism such as the mane o poia. This colonial imposition could be interpreted as a form of directed cultural change with the adaptation of English chapel architecture using locally sourced materials. I shall term this outcome ‘mono-cultural assimilation’.

However, in 2005, Budgett presented another paper on church building in the southern Cook Islands with a focus on one of these three islands (Mangaia), which provided a more complex picture of cultural change processes and the transformation of architectural traditions. She commences with an investigation of the anthropological literature on Menganian social and territorial organization explaining a dual distribution of power with, on the one hand a relatively stable power base of spiritual rulers based on hereditary right succession, and on the other territorial chiefs whose estates were less stable, able to be transformed by
periodic warring followed by peace rituals. The initial accommodation of, or resistance to mission-promoted change was dictated by whether particular chiefs wanted to freeze their existing ample territorial domains under a new more stable governance system (in the case of the former), or whether those with insufficient land wanted to overturn any power structure that was threatening to stabilize the current status quo prior to any opportunity of regaining their lands (in the case of the latter). Budgett then goes on to argue that it was a particular segment of the Māori who incorporated the culture of the colonizers that represented a more bi-directional (or bicultural) and accommodating process of change. She shows that Māori social structure was incorporated into the church through the spatial allocation of sub-groups to internal sitting spaces and external yard areas. The church was “reinscribed to reconstruct Māori identity within the whole”. References to Māori sacred cosmogony (origin myths) were also incorporated in symbolic ways e.g. in the decorative scenit (cordage) binding with their lozenge design which seems to be derived from Māori carving and tapa cloth. We can term this process 'bicultural accommodation'.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT PROCESS IN THE RECONSTRUCTION OF TRADITION

A year later, in 2006, Budgett continued her research focus on Cook Island architecture with a critique of Western approaches to heritage conservation methods arising from the recent renovations of the Oneiroa Sunday School on Mangaia Island, one of the last remaining coral-stone, gabled, mission buildings dating from the pre-colonial era (1879) which incorporated both European and indigenous architectural detailing. Her paper transcends the New Zealand tendency to focus on bicultural architectural elements, by re-analysing the role of the architecture in the cultural landscape and the contemporary global society in order to explain why a Cook Islander Church Council chose to replace the 125 year-old, post-supported, carved, scenic-lashed, roof framing by a long-span steel frame with horizontal ceiling. Budget draws on a range of cultural change hypotheses to explain why the client group rejected an orthodox Western architectural conservation attempt to retain the indigenous decoration. She draws upon McKay’s understanding of the cultural significance of periodically re-building the Maori Meeting House, involving the activation of social roles and networks and the transmission of skills and knowledge as the key elements in this dynamic maintenance of tradition in which the building form invariably changes. In the case of the Sunday School, the social networks was activated globally as ex-patriots were recruited to donate the building funds, such “that building [became] a privileged activity acting to bind the wider community into social relations and hierarchies well beyond the geography of the islands” in an agenda to build ‘new’ and ‘modern’ in an ‘unfolding’ society (cyclical notions of history and time) but within a more stable and wider context of an island cultural landscape of ringed, cosmologically significant sites. Budgett goes on to review the challenging implications for cultural tourism
and architectural conservation policies when the active role of the subject (building user/creator) dominates the value of the object (heritage item) in the dynamic re-interpretation of the tradition.

This form of dominance by the active subject is also an attribute of the earlier case study of the Macedonian migrants in Melbourne, adapting and amending their Anglo-Australian homes reconciling mother country values and new homeworld values, in a process which continues incrementally through the decades.

THE REINVENTION OF TRADITION UNDER OPPOSITIONAL FORCES IN PERIODS OF POLITICO-CULTURAL DECLINE

In analysing the nature of tradition in Maori architecture, the New Zealand SAHANZ contributors make constant reference to three periods of architectural Renaissance in Maori recent history as part of a wider Maori cultural renaissance: the development of the Maori Meeting House in the period from 1850 to 1890; the Maori Arts and Crafts Movement of the 1920s and 1930s; and the work of a collective of Maori architects working in the 1970s and 1980s. All three of these periods yield comment on the dynamic nature of 'tradition' whereby it is renewed or even re-invented, however it is the first two periods that are best interrogated and debated in SAHANZ literature.

In discussing tradition, the architectural focus of the New Zealand SAHANZ scholars has been the marae and the 'Meeting House', two terms which are sometimes used synonymously but which in fact have distinctly different meanings although referring to elements of the same architectural complex. Whereas the marae is the 'courtyard in front of a house') and a recognised architectural tradition in many Polynesian societies, the Maori Meeting House is a post-colonial creation. It can be defined in relation to the marae, as:

"...a communal building set on the marae (gathering place) for a hapu (part of the tribe) or whanau (extended family group) to gather in. It is not a dwelling, but is used for meetings, discussions and sleeping in by both the people of the marae and visitors during events. The Meeting House has a long galved roof, and consists of one large space entered through a gabled porch. This internal space is often highly decorated with carvings, painting and weaving, that usually represent ancestors."

McKay puts the interesting case forward that the Maori Meeting House or whare (which is commonly sited adjacent to the communal court or marae) was largely a 19th century invention and a product of contact with colonial immigrant society, despite that it became reified in museums as a traditional building type. He argues that Meeting Houses were a form of Maori modernism, "that they eschewed customary practice, and evolved new techniques and forms to face the challenge of a radically changing world". Austin describes this
innovation, which occurred during a severe Maori population decline in the 1870s and 1880s following a crisis period known as the ‘New Zealand Wars’, as “a most extraordinary architectural response.” Brown grounds the ‘invention of the tradition’ of the Meeting House in more solid anthropological research with an assertion that it synthesised mission church, pioneer hall and chief’s house. However, the SAHANZ contributions lack a detailed analysis of this origin history despite it being the most written about architectural type.

The second period of analysis concerning the re-interpretation of tradition is best accessed through Brown’s analysis of the School of Maori Arts and Crafts at Rotorua. This was conceived and instigated as an architectural renaissance from 1926 to 1937 by the Maori M.P., Sir Apirana Ngata, reviving traditional carving, painting and woven paneling for commissioned public buildings, but within a complex set of conflicts and dilemmas concerning the maintenance of traditional Maori philosophy and politics versus the pressure for conformity with government policies, and the adaption of Maori technologies to Anglo-New Zealand architectural and building practices. Brown has outlined the underlying anthropological debate in New Zealand on the ‘invention of tradition’, concluding that this theoretical approach facilitates the capacity of architectural historians to examine how building types relate to strong nationalist or popular cultural movements, as well as providing opportunities to analyze the dynamic attributes of the maintenance of tradition as a process. She sees this as an important ongoing historiographical direction for architectural history research. This oppositional political usage of tradition can be seen to be complementary to the political appropriation of tradition by the nation state as described earlier.

Turning to the third Maori renaissance in her 2002 SAHANZ paper, Brown extends McKay’s earlier analysis by projecting forwards from the era of Western museum-controlled depictions and stereotypes of Maori Meeting Houses to contemporary depictions and constructions of the same building type completed by tertiary-trained Maori artists and curators in the late 20th century. The latter examples were for art gallery settings where the artists and curators were empowered to express Maori cultural values on their own terms, and thereby using their own forms of deterritorialization of the Meeting House. Here there is a reversal from reductive tradition-making by the colonizing culture to generative tradition-making by energetic artists who made oppositional statements to the colonizing culture. Brown also mentions the recent repatriation of a Meeting House back to the Maori group from whom it was originally commissioned, once again demonstrating a cycle of the transformation and dissemination of an architectural construct between two groups. The combination of the three 2002 SAHANZ papers by Reffin, Brown and McKay provides an insightful overview of the transformation of architectural constructs over several hundred years within a Polynesian context of colonial encounter.
CONCLUSION

Recent IASTE Conferences have assembled an impressive corpus of case studies from many cultural contexts around the world on the dynamics of architectural tradition, together with understandings of those traditions undergoing cultural changes. The current paper has aimed to inject a new set of case studies from the South Pacific generated from within SAHANZ (1984-2008). More importantly, in an attempt to redress the apparent lack of integration of these many findings, the current paper has attempted to begin a process of theory construction by setting out some working definitions of types of cultural change processes (albeit restricted by the short length of the paper). This typology is prefaced with a dynamic definition of 'tradition', one that recognizes and accepts re-interpretation and re-invention as legitimate aspects of the maintenance of tradition.

Exploration of the typology of cultural change processes started with concepts from IASTE 10: methods of denaturalization of architectural tradition (humanly transported or carried and reconstituted versus the transmission of facsimiles or simulations by media) and how such processes may result in generative versus reductive tradition-making at newly contextualized sites of architectural usage or display.

Outcomes of cultural fusions between two cultural groups were next explored, specifically colonizing Europeans and those Indigenous peoples under pressure to be colonized. Bi-cultural integration involving the fusion of cultural elements on equal terms is contrasted with, on the one hand, complete (or largely complete) mono-cultural assimilation, and on the other hand, bi-cultural tension which constitutes a combination of elements that through their bi-directional (or binary) opposition become mutually threatening or undermining in their ideological interpretation and understanding, and perhaps reflecting the social tensions of bi-cultural habitation in post-colonial contexts. A number of case studies reflected further on the conditions of social engagement under which traditions may be vigorously revised or reconstructed in the face of a radically transforming and identity-threatened world, as processes of counter-colonization or counter-globalization. This was seen to be in certain ways similar but in contrast to the political appropriation of cultural identity by the nation state.

As for the usefulness of the term 'hyper-tradition' to theory-building, its application is handicapped by its polysemous usage. In this paper I have suggested that a comparative study of the impacts of new media on the properties of traditions be carried out (e.g. print, cinematography, electronic media) to identify processual commonalities and whether such impacts could best be labeled as 'hyper-tradition'. For the time being, most types of cultural change processes seem adequately described using other classificatory labels, some of which have been put forward herein.
NOTES AND REFERENCES


30 McKay goes so far as to hint that Te Papa Museum of New Zealand in Wellington (designed by JASMAX architects) may fall into this category in its attempt to represent bicultural nationalism.


34 Andersen, “Pukekara – A Study in Architecture and Whakapapa”, 7

35 Andersen, “Pukekara – A Study in Architecture and Whakapapa”, 6,7.

36 Budget, Jeanette. “Congregating Practices: Church building in the Cook Islands”. In Celebration: XXII


38 Budgert, “Contested Terrain: Heritage conservation in the Cook Islands”, 49.


43 Also referred to at times as the ‘Maori Wars’ and the ‘Land Wars’. There was a substantial loss of life in some famous battles.


