Re-discovering the Vernacular Architecture through Post-Colonial Anthropology

Supawut Boonmahathanakorn
M. Arch. New Deli, India
Asian Coalition Housing Right

Introduction

My thesis studies a tribal settlements and its habitat; both the physical characteristics and the knowledge systems of that society which is under change from internal and external forces. The thesis explores ways to integrate the indigenous knowledge, which has shaped the character of place but retained the cultural traits of people within the mainstream development framework.

In order to achieve above aim, I need to have the theoretical foundation which can assist me to understand their society and the genesis of knowledge system through their habitat which is technically called *"Vernacular Architecture"*. However, in the course of time built forms of vernacular architecture have been transformed to meet the needs of society, which it creates a problem with the assumption that vernacular architecture is being container of knowledge systems or cultural aspects of people or not. Rise to this challenge which is commonly happening due to modernization, globalization and urbanization; as usually in developing countries. Conventionally, most of that vernacular architecture is considered as the vernacular architecture in *"impurity"* state which is not *"authentic"*. As a result, what the new methods that needed to understand the name and character of the vernacular architecture.

Interdisciplinary approach needs to be taken up to rediscover and reveal the built forms and associated knowledge system which is embedded into architecture forms and spaces. By the logic of Post-colonial anthropology and sociology, it is the social scientist, who make use of the built forms as the cultural and social-orientations to understand the cultural aspects and its transformation. Therefore it is essential to understand existing vernacular architecture and its traditions through these perspectives. Especially, it is important to comprehend it as the recent context which most of them are getting transformed from pristine level to contemporary level in both internal and external factors. The extent of change can be inferred from the evidences observed from adaptation, amalgamation and acculturation with the disappearance of some features or re-generates and develops into the new feature for surviving through its time along with traditional and cultural continuity which is ultimately based on the traditional knowledge.Those above leads to the following research questions

Research Questions

1. How was vernacular architecture been studied in the past?
2. What are the anomalies of vernacular architecture study which have been influenced by Colonial perspective?
3. How Post-Colonial anthropology can assist in study of vernacular architecture?

Methodology

This study contains several stages based on the secondary data to re-discover the essence and meaning of vernacular architecture through the perspective of the Post-Colonial anthropology and sociology. The methodology includes the examining definitions of vernacular architecture, and review of vernacular architecture studies was by architects and other disciplines. Subsequently the anomalies of vernacular study were addressed, in order to lead to the critical issues, in the disciplines arena. As a result, the Post-Colonial perspective of anthropology and sociology emerged with its new methods. Post Colonial-anthropology was examined in comparatively way through recent understands and re-discovers for today of vernacular architecture study. Finally, the lessons learnt were the conclusion that guide toward a better and inclusive understanding of vernacular architecture.

Overview of Vernacular Architecture and Vernacular Study
Examining of Definitions of Vernacular Architecture and Relevant Terms

By prevailing definition, here are results from various scholars giving meaning of Vernacular Architecture as the terms for their studies.

"Vernacular architecture" stands for art of buildings and shelters which are spontaneous, environment oriented, community-based and acknowledge no architects or treatise, and reflect technology and culture of indigenous society and environment. (Rudofsky as cited in Himanshu P.R., 2007, p.214)

Vernacular architecture comprises the dwellings and all other buildings of the people. Related to their environmental contexts and available resources, they are customarily owner- or community built, utilizing traditional technologies. All forms of vernacular architecture are built to meet specific needs, accommodating the values, economies and ways of living of the cultures that produce them. They may be adapted or developed over time as needs and circumstances change. (Oliver as cited in Vellinga, Oliver& Bridge, 2007, p.XIII)

Architecture involves not just the provision of shelter from the elements, but the creation of a social and symbolic space- a space which both mirrors and moulds the world view of its creators and inhabitants. (Waterson, 1990, p.XV)

High traditional architecture stands for art of buildings and shelters owing to certain rules or treatise, and require special skill and expertise, for that reason, architect has special position and knowledge. (Rapoport as cited in Himanshu P.R., 2007, p.214)

From the above definitions, the nature of vernacular architecture based on contemporary writings comprises two parts, namely the environmental and the cultural context. The environmental part presents of the environmental setting and conditions, material resources available, structural systems and technologies have bearing on architectural form. Similarly, many cultural aspects such as social structure, belief systems and behavioral patterns strongly influence the building forms, their functions and meanings with specific applications among people.

The paradox to be addressed based on Waterson's definition, critical question is what extent of inhabitant's world view can be accepted as the source for vernacular architecture's creation? Due to the fact that world view keeps on changing as Oliver mentioned that vernacular architecture is physically and culturally built to meet that need. This means change is the essence of vernacular architecture through time. Question to be asked is what extent of adaptation and development of vernacular architecture can be accepted as vernacular process, which still does not reach toward the state of non-vernacular architecture. To be more precise, ambivalence of vernacular architecture's definition is due to condition of dynamic change that is creating the paradox.

Here the crucial question that needs to be addressed is what is the critical threshold and parameters to clarify the difference. Because if one does not have the comprehensive concept to identify the boundary what is vernacular and non-vernacular architect with clear rationale, the vernacular architecture in the *"gray area"* will be lost and misunderstood in terms of understanding of physical built form and source of knowledge, which has been embedded in it. Rising from the challenge of vernacular architecture in the developing countries, traditional vernacular architectures are in the course of transformation between vernacular architecture and non-vernacular architecture. The remarkable bench mark of vernacular architecture need to be pin pointed.

Here, I have given other relevant terms which refer further clarify the definition of vernacular architecture as a term for study which referred from study of Paul Oliver in Encyclopedia of Vernacular Architecture of the World. These terms will lead us to understand the big picture of the variation in perspectives by different disciplines.

- **Primitive Architecture**

This term was used where a distinction was being made between the primal and the cultivated society, with no apparent awareness of its implication.

- **Indigenous Architecture**

This term often represents the non-formal architecture built by indigenes natives which are not colonist.

- **Anonymous Architecture**

This term reflects the observer's bias towards buildings by named architects.

- **Spontaneous Architecture**

This term always implies that buildings are constructed without self- consciousness.

- **Folk Architecture**

This term is popular in United States, has overtones of architecture of rural communities elsewhere, while adjectives such as "peasant" or "rural" are too narrowly applies.

- **Traditional Architecture**

Most widely used as the alternative term, but its arena is also broadly applicable to a variety of monumental and architect-designed constructions.

- **Neo-Vernacular Architecture**

This term is used in two difference conditions. The first is used to represent the unauthorized or squatter settlement around the cities in developing world. The second is the term to represent the architect-designed buildings influenced by, or in the forms of, a vernacular architecture.

After review of the above definitions, I tend to argue that all terms are valid. However limitation observed even though term called *"Vernacular Architecture"* is incomplete as a term by itself. In all definitions they lack the inside-out view, and

also are too static on the period of time that it was created. This is became the terms were objectively created by scholars, who are not the inhabitants of that architecture. All terms were explained and captured the entity of *"house"* or *"habitat"* on particular world view. The way that terms were shaped has been enforced by the various factors by means of its time. There is the problem of definition and category, which mean the principle of understanding architecture- as the built structure to meet specific needs of man as the autonomous creator- is missing by means of outsider view dominance. I will call it as colonizer's view point in the later paragraphs. Ultimately, these definitions wipe out the cultural pluralism ideal, vernacular as processes and the change.

Vernacular Architecture Study

Here, I have given the concise historic phases of vernacular study which illustrates scholar's perception through time. And by this concise term called vernacular architecture and all relevancies were merged and generally used by scholars which those terms have been accumulating some ambivalence to our premise that being asked about definition and territory of vernacular architecture[1].

- **Phase I: Traveler's Record**

Most of vernacular architecture, called *"primitive"*, embedded in the traveler record or expedition record. These are informative on "pre-contact" indigenous architectural traditions which are based on the recorder's knowledge and observation.

- **Phase II: Material Culture for Colonial Culture**

Before the 19th century due to the expansion of colonialism of the western countries, the subjects of ethnography, archaeology, anthropology or even evolutionary theory and others were employed to understand *"native culture"* for effective administration. Architecture and built environment were attained by anthropologists and ethnographers.

- **Phase III: Nostalgia of Rural Aesthetic**

Developed the history of architecture subject in Europe by art historians and movement of Art and Craft school of thought gave impetus to express the vernacular architecture as the national identity for reinforcing the political boundaries, but regardless of the cultural boundaries. For the 20th century, nostalgia mood for rural traditions, which were then in decline, was the social movement. Studying the history of architecture with such issues is the classification of aesthetic *"style"* Modernist architects turned to vernacular as the source of inspiration.

- **Phase IV: Recording & Documentation**

In the second half of 20th century, diversity approach, such as architect, anthropologist, geographer, development planner and international aid organization, have conducted the research into settlement and dwelling mostly in

the Third World countries where have much larger number of vernacular architecture. Though they differ in motivations and methods; common to many methods is the urgent drive to keeping records and documentation in the face of destruction and deterioration.

- **Phase V: Post-Industrial and Vernacularization**

Monumental architecture has become international concern after the modernization by industrial activities. Losing the countless vernacular architecture in the industrialized nations, has lead to the romanticized mood for the vernacular traditions. Tourism industry brought back that emotional mood by the replication of the romantic image of rural replacing the authentic. This phase of the vernacular building has become an object for displaying and collecting in the open air museum as the culture of *"the other"*.

- **Phase VI: Vernacular Architecture as the Heritage Resources**

1960s-1970s, increasingly concerning the importance of vernacular environments which later on in 1975, the European Architectural Heritage acknowledged that architectural heritage included *"the groups or lesser buildings in our old towns and characteristic villages in their natural and man made settings"*, was not solely monuments. In the 1999 *"Charter on the Built Vernacular Heritage"* was launched and concerning the continuity of vernacular built environment. Concern for this aspect needed the varied disciplines to network and understands and conserves it as the heritage.

- **Phase VII: Vernacular Tradition as Resource for Sustainable Development**

During the second half of 20th century, modernization, urbanization, and globalization have exerted increasing pressure on traditional cultures through the world, which lead the radical changes of social, economic and cultural as well as the environmental structure. The 21st century, vernacular architecture approach is that recognizes the dynamic and dialectic nature of building traditions and that explicitly attempts to understand how vernacular traditions change and adapt to the cultural and environmental challenges of the present and future. Indigenous people and vernacular architecture is seen as the source of knowledge to be employed into the future as the sustainable development.

If we carefully explore the term called *"Vernacular"*, it does exist by its own meaning, in sense of people who are living in it. Through the record of travel from Europeans by means of Anthropology and Ethnography term *"Vernacular"* was established. The two subjects represented the European world view toward tribes, indigenous as *"the other"* or we can say it is the representative between *"the colonizer"* and *"the colonized"*. And the land or place of indigenous has been considered as the *"cultural area"*[2] in the subject of anthropology. The habitat of the other people was called as *"Vernacular Architecture"*[3]. The term *"Vernacular"* has been gradually developed into another discipline, which now creates a lot of

fuzziness to understand the essence of the thing. With their own cultural baggage of viewer and misconception from colonialism point of view are still embedded in discipline especially to an architect. Above all who had ever been *"the other"* from colonizer, need to have the different process and method to disclose and understand their own habitat by their own view and own terminology which it much more contains cultural and social-orientation, rather than the material culture.

To be clear, what I am trying to say, a couple of paragraphs will be given to review how architects study the habitat and settlement so ambivalently, called *"Vernacular Architecture"*. By this review I hope one will better understand what the constraint of architectural discipline is in study of vernacular architecture. How further steps should be paced forward with the innovative method of today in post-colonialism.

Bernard Rudofsky (1964) has been foremost in promoting an aesthetic appreciation of the powerful, often *"organic"* qualities what he called *"Architecture without Architect"* (Rudofsky as cited in Waterson, 1990, p. XV)

Rapoport's observation: the meaning in built form resides not in things but in people, people want their environment to mean certain things.

Oliver (1997) in *"the Encyclopedia of Vernacular of the World"* gave an opinion that practicing architects have been influenced by Vernacular Architecture through direct sensory experience incorporated into their aesthetic sensibilities.

The influence of research on practice has taken many methods and forms. Types of architecture derived from vernacular architecture sources can be broadly characterized as follow:

- **Iconic evocation of symbolic identity**

"Regional archetypes" as the symbolic identity which considered as timeless and local root, based on this assumption architects who work on this thought need to express an authentic local identity and represents character and soul of the people who produced it. Hence this approach always focuses on the vernacular architecture which has *"pure forms"* without the *"impurities of the other influence"*. Several architects have tried to apply this idea as following reason impulse by social context. Such as;

  - Picturesque evocation to expresses the nostalgia and serves reactionary the political aspiration. Or even convey the impression of local character to the outsider for tourism.
  - Regionalism and national idiom are the search for national identity from the trends of "international style" along with urbanization and globalization.

- **Climatic, material and functional determinism**

As vernacular architecture provided examples of *"timeless"* architectural qualities and source of revivals of historical styles, architect considered this

aesthetic to have rational respond to locally available materials, climate and requirement of use.

• **Emotional, spiritual and sensory embodiment**

Marked by Rudofsky's idea, which sought to identify and present the qualities of regional vernacular architectures that conveyed a sense of well-being, included human scale, great view, visual richness and social interaction aspects.

"Architects looking at vernacular architecture for its experiential qualities wanted to redefine the modernist allegiance to a set of formal design principles." (Oliver, 1997, p.14)

Because architect's training and experience can bring the understanding of interrelationship of building's components through their drawings, this ability to evaluate the surface qualities of architecture in a complex way and to establish a fit between form and function is most invaluable contribution to the study of vernacular architecture.

Architectural practice has contribution to the study of vernacular architecture by their analytic methods which graphically presented the architectural quality which are not represented by verbal accounts.

Here, from stereotype of architect training and their approach to the way they understand vernacular architecture by objectification orientation. Such kind of vernacular architecture which has less elements of physical vernacular form as a sort of inspiration might be far from their interests, and going to be lost from architectural arena.

Post-Colonialism of Today in Vernacular Architecture and Anthropology

As I had mentioned that the discipline of architecture does need the innovative and flexible methods to reveal the hidden characteristic of vernacular architecture which AlSayyad[4] had mentioned that *"Vernacular Architecture"* is a nineteenth-century invention, and it has remained a considerably unknown subject in the arenas. The major challenge in the twenty-first century is regards the research and development of a theoretical basic, which can give insight. In this progress has been made and enumerated below in anthropological architecture field.

1. Critical Anthropology

Levinson and Ember (1996) criticized the methodology of Anthropology. According to them anthropologist needs to understand the thing through the source's point of view. Thus that understanding is supported to represent the culture area of

anthropologist per se as the basis to understand the thing that they examine, where the thing is out of their culture. Facts gained from the anthropologist's conclusion itself are ultimately dominated by his own context of the researcher. Contextually, fact does not exist by the nature, similarly as the division between "us" as the scholar arena and *"the other"* as the source of research.

From his critic, term called *"Vernacular"* itself does not exist on its own, but it is historically created by someone else who might identify themselves as they are non-vernacular or the colonizer. Another issue of critical anthropology is to understand how the local culture still exists from pressures and transformations by their own processes. This is the essence this approach where vernacular architecture as the process which beyond the myth that vernacular traditions are sensitive and fragile from the external pressure, as the product of colonial ideology. However anthropological approach is not to freeze the local culture and decide the thing that they need to particularly figure out and understand, but also give the voice to the local to speak out which they were and they are as well as what their vernacular traditions have been obstructed.

2. Territory of Vernacular Study

Edmund Leach (1954) and Frederick Barth (1969), are both anthropologists, had argued and presented their anthropological idea that the anthropological trait and character are not formed by the natural bloodline or genetic formation, hence anthropological trait and characteristic are cast by the way of living in the context then leading them and to the Cognition of Anthropological Trait and Characteristic which form the anthropological boundary. Thus language, costume, architecture and material culture as well as the built forms have been used as the means for distinction one to another; which all means can be changed according to the dynamic circumstances through a period of time. Cognition of anthropological character is the main key in transformation and transmission of knowledge through time which linking with society and culture at particular time frame. So, by mean of vernacular architecture study, one can not simply focus on the particular time frame and place so called *"culture site"* or *"culture area"*. But keep the cultural processes in mind, one should study the way that man adapted himself into the changeable context for surviving the cognition of anthropological trait is much more important. Consequently the study of vernacular architecture- physical, symbolic and spiritual as well as accumulated knowledge - will move forward and practically adapt into contemporary situation both applying for new design and conservation in term of keeping the continuity of the traditional knowledge system.

Similarly as Yos (2003) suggests, that sense of community is not necessary to be fixed at community in sense of physical boundary. Community is an abstract and imbedding in cognition of inhabitants which can be actively reproduced in any

place.

Insights from above scholars are leading us to question the word *"culture site"* or *"culture area"* as defining vernacular architecture only in the culture area as the pristine site by lacking of essence of genesis of vernacular as a process of change. Hence, architecture which is located out of this territory will be left out from study especially in architectural field. Consequently, understanding of vernacular architecture is static. Yos (2003) also suggested sense of community that even agricultural communities migrate to settle in city, but still there are systems of society, cultural systems and relationships through their kinship, socio-economic relation.

New territory of vernacular study is emerging to raise new challenge questions. For example, a squatter settlement is vernacular architecture or not. This premise is based on inhabitants of squatter settlements who have migrated from rural areas to new cultural area where they all have "cultural baggage" with them. By this *"cultural baggage"*, it is utilized to adapt themselves into new environment in the city. There are two case studies which had raised this question. The first is the case which studies squatter settlement in east Java, Indonesia by Srilestari (2005), and the second from Bharat studied slum or *"Basti"* in Hindi term in the Jharkhand, India. In Bharat's conclusion, he quoted Upton's interesting observation (1983) that *"vernacular architecture studies will be have reached maturity when we have defined an inclusive approach to the study of all architecture that will eliminate the need for an exclusive label such as vernacular architecture"*.

Agreeably AlSayyad had argued that out of the colonial view which vernacular as the sort of aesthetic, object-oriented, cultural- oriented, social- oriented, and indigenous knowledge of vernacular should be utilized in the field of housing, in relation to solving the problem of urban squatters.[5]

3. The perspective of Sociology and Anthropology toward vernacular architecture

Prior to the discussion of the two subjects mentioned above, we need to have basic concept of how both subject study, how both are different, and what the overlapping area of both is. Suggested by Inkeless (1965), anthropology and sociology differ in that the former takes prime responsibility for studying primitive or non-literate man, while the latter studies more advanced civilizations. This basic fact exerts a pervasive influence on the content and subject matter of the two disciplines. Anthropologists tend to study societies in all their aspects, as a whole. In so far as they specialize, it is usually in a given *"culture area"*. Sociologist more often study parts of a society, and generally specialize in some institutions such as the family, or a process, such as social mobility. The natural milieu for the anthropologist is the small self-contained group or community, whereas the sociologist is quite at ease in studying large-scale and impersonal organizations

and processes. In our day, the line between the disciplines has blurred. And the main difference seems to be only method between both; as sociologist employ a quantitative approach, while anthropologist prefers a qualitative approach.

Sociologist

Sociologist studies about social factors which is the one factor of arranging and managing physical space. By sociologist perspective *"house"* or *"habitat"* is a social concept which the nature of it varies with caste, class, religion and region (Oakley, Unni 1965, p.3). Social meaning according to the nature of individual and social need shapes a mental image of the part in mind of the inhabitants. With those meaning are to be particularly comprehended and interpreted within the context of society; not from outside it. Unni (1965) mentioned that changes in social and economic affairs can take place as modifications of the old; as drifts from older forms; or as transformations. Many changes of which we hear, must be seen as modifications rather than transformations because those changes served people is need by their choice. Through the study of changing socio-economic patterns and their impact on housing in India by Unni, changes in family and household structure might be affected into the built form, but so many cases, its social structure are still there and not transformed along with those houses. By perspective of pure architecture we might consider that if built forms are transformed social structure will be getting transformed also, but it is not. This is called "the fallacy of architectural determinism" in social aspects.

Alexander and Andrade[6] examined vernacular architecture of Maya in Southern Campeche located in Mexico's southern frontier. They found that historical formation processes of community have had a major impact on the built environment. More observation is given that the frontiers as the location of Maya vernacular are not peripheries that passively receive cultural innovations from the core of the world system. Rather the frontier as a zone of dynamic, overlapping social network and cultural interaction. These two scholars draw analytical framework for studying technological differentiation of house construction, they found a new technology is transferred from community to another, it is re-designed to be suitable for particular economic, social, political or symbolic function among different "user groups". Interaction both between global economic enterprises and agriculturalists are reflected in spatial pattern with the village and in the substitution of new materials and technology in housing over the past 100 years. Anthropologists, influenced from colonialism originally assumed that migrants replicate their cultural forms in the new community as expression of ethnicity and identity, so that idea according to Alexander and Andrade is too simplistic. This conventional view of colonialism ignore processes of technological innovation from inside which migrants adapt to new environment, exploit new material and adjust household strategies to cope with changing local, regional and macro-regional economic.

Both case studies give insight that the threshold between vernacular and non-vernacular is critical and sensitive to weight by physical appearances such as material or built form. Therefore those parameters are not complete to understand the essence and entity of vernacular architecture. According to both cases above, there are other parameters which actively reflect and draw the territory of vernacular architecture. Social structure is the crucial parameter from the study of Uni, and adaptation and innovation of technology from study of Maya vernacular architecture is also other crucial one.

It is important to note that, discourse about vernacular architecture that it is going to be deteriorated and transformed by the pressure of globalization, urbanization and modernization might not be perfectly true. Hence Uni suggested that instead of using word transformation to express the changing of vernacular architecture, modification is more comprehensive, because this term represents the vernacular culture having cultural baggage which is not too fragile to oppose the external force.

Anthropologist

Generally, anthropologists take architecture as the source of subject they are going to interpret which is usually considered as material culture. Cunningham (as cited in Waterson, 1990) said that *"house is one of the best modes available to preliterate society to store and encapsulate ideas"*.

Social organization, role and relationship of genders, kinship structure, political and cosmological aspect can be decoded from built form. As Waterson mentioned that Built form can never be free of symbolic meanings, whether in *"modern"* industrial societies or *"traditional"*, non-industrial ones. The house is in some sense the expression of an "ideal environment", reflecting social ideologies an ethos of living. House is a microcosm, reflecting in its layout, structure, and ornamentation the concept of an ideal natural and social order. Therefore house and settlement always offer themselves as means of encoding such information (Waterson, 1990, p.XVII).

Here is the case study done by Waterson to study inhabited space, construction and daily use of architecture of South-East Asia which provides a "way in" to whole culture and its idea of people.

"Tradition" by view of Waterson really describes a process of handing down, historical and social processes experience. The idea of tradition, however, is also a part of the total social dynamic and needs to be considered as such. Tradition, like history, is something continually being recreated and remodeled in the present, even as it is represented as fixed and unchangeable.

Waterson gives the case study of traditional architecture of Austronesian society to reflect the definition of traditional architecture which has truly active meaning as I had mentioned above. Tradition is not fixed and immutable, and the societies which

produce them are experiencing many forces of change, but they have an undeniable vitality. All such architecture keeps such a vital tradition with ritual importance of houses and tomb. Migration, a major factor affecting society, is one source of change and also is a new idea to give a new search for ethnic identity. Even its traditional functions change, the resulting architectures can apparently become more important than ever as a symbol of what it means to belong to that society. The change adds value to the people and also new innovative.

Waterson mentioned the many parameters which played crucial roles in Austronesian society while facilitating to keep the vital continuity of magnificent vernacular architecture. It depends on the continued self-confidence of the tradition, their ability to resist the homogenization of Western influences, the lures of modernized standards, certain intangible significances of house, continued importance of kinship and ritual system. All these parameters, tradition and traditional architectures rework themselves and adapt to the circumstances of the modern world.

From both cases above, I do need to borrow thorough idea of AlSayyad to figure an arena of vernacular study in today's Post-Colonialism. AlSayyad argued that the vernacular is not dead, and it has not ended. What has ended, or should end, is our conception of it as the only harbinger of authenticity, as the container of specific determined cultural meaning, as a static legacy of a past. What will emerge is the principal of the dynamic interpretation and re-interpretation of this past in light of an ever-changing present. This would be a vernacular architecture worthy of the twenty-first century[7].

4. Acculturation

To further discussion about the dynamic change of vernacular architecture, concept of acculturation should be further examined to some detail to understand the cultural change as represents a cultural template for vernacular design and built form. The character of acculturation is that when an alien culture trait diffuses into a society on a massive scale, acculturation frequently is the result. The culture of the receiving society is significantly changed. However, acculturation does not necessarily result in new, alien culture traits completely replacing old indigenous ones. There often is a syncretism, or an amalgamation of traditional and introduced traits[8]. According to Rudmin (2003), there is the theory of acculturation which the minority culture can choose to encounter with an alien culture; assimilation to majority culture, a defensive assertion of the minority culture, a bi-culture blending of the two cultures, alteration between a bi-culture which depending on contexts, or a diminishment of both cultures.[9]

As a result we are going to focus on vernacular tradition as the template for vernacular design that has capacity of acculturation. Through the study of vernacular architecture in New Zealand, I hope it give us insight of the process of borrowing and

appropriation. Moreover, the insight gained might give us the hint of the acceptable change in vernacular architecture from the inside-out perspective as considered as the Post-colonial's interpretation.

Refiti[10] found that the Western architecture such as Christian church, and accompanying as Christian ritual which practiced by another cultural group (Polynesian/ Samoa), were neither accomplished with a comprehensive understanding of the Christian culture nor an attempt to authentically create a facsimile Christian religion of the Polynesians. Only particular Christian ideas were selected and integrated with local ones as these churches became local idealized versions of Christian spirituality.

In other hand, the construction of contemporary urban context in New Zealand by a non-Indigenous New Zealand architect attempts to use the traditional motif to reflect a Pacific identity. And from the later phenomenon by view of colonist, the vernacular architecture in previous circumstance has been represented as a loss of indigenous identity and showing somehow of non-authentic.

From the above given case study, I would like to state the process of selection and representation in cultural change by the way of indigenous with their own perception is the process of bi-culture expression. It is a cross-cultural architectural exchange in terms of meaning and configuration, also it is the cultural process to survive the traditional cultural into the contemporary circumstance. Without doubt, this cultural process as acculturation is not assimilation. As the myth of acculturation in colonial purview, I do agree that some extent of vernacular is lost, but it is not all. Significantly, the survived part of vernacular is crucial part which showing it cultural capacity and essence of vernacular as the outcome of dynamic change in the vernacular process.

Conclusion: Lessons Learn

The word *"Vernacular Architecture"* is a product of Colonialism, which values the matter based on the myths as; the self vs. the other, the foreigner vs. native, the colonist vs. the colonized. The myths are still disguised in the term called vernacular architecture and have been confusing the essence of architecture of people, especially in the countries that had been influenced both directly and indirectly from colonialism.

Post-Colonial perspective is a way and reluctant way to study vernacular architecture is to understand vernacular architecture with out the colonialism's myth which static. It is dynamic rather than the recent which freezes the space and time of vernacular architecture. It means freezing the space by understanding that vernacular architecture is located in particular cultural area and built form, and fixing the time by the authenticity of the past. Demonstrated anthropological and sociological methods are the critical process to rediscover and understand the vernacular architecture from the view of inhabitant as an inside-out perspective.

Architect, who studies the vernacular architectures, need to have a interdisciplinary approach to explore the essences of contents which have included both tangible and intangible aspects. Change is the crucial characteristic of vernacular architecture, which is sensible to measure that how much change can be accepted.

From study of this paper, the change should be measured by the inner view of society who has the social and cultural capacity to deal with the processes of acculturation. The essence of change from that perspective is the vernacular process, as it is evidences reflecting in built form. Vernacular architecture is not only the built form which have been shaped by the limitation of environmental conditions, but also it contains the anthropological and sociological features as the human patterns which have been flexibly depicted in it. Consequently, the acceptable change; which is our interest, is the change which takes place within the society to survive the particular culture and tradition transcend to the contemporary circumstance. In addition, those changed built form and spaces can be sensitively accepted if they still contain the essence of society's culture.

Notes

[1] summarizing from Oliver Paul. **Encyclopedia of Vernacular Architecture of the World**, 1997, page no. xxiii – xxiv, and dividing into phases by author

[2] The concept of culture areas was originated by museum curators and ethnologists during the late 1800s as means of arranging exhibits. And also used in cultural anthropology where a geographic region and time sequence (age area) is characterized by substantially uniform environment and culture. Concise from www.http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Music_area

[3] vernacular roots from the Latin word vernaculus, or *"native"* which we are arguing that it is the colonial word. If we compare the vernacular architecture of the colonist country with the definitions as I mentioned, we will found that that architecture of colonist is also the vernacular architecture. But from the colonist's side they have called such kind architecture as *"Domestic Architecture"*

[4] Lindsay Asquith and Marcel Vellinga. **Vernacular Architecture in the Twenty-First Century: Theory, Education and Practice of by Nezar AlSayyad**. 2006,

[5] Lindsay Asquith and Marcel Vellinga. **Ibid.**

[6] Alexander, Rani T. and Sandra C. Andrade. (2007)

[7] Lindsay Asquith and Marcel Vellinga **Ibid.**

[8] concise from http://anthro.palomar.edu/change/change_3.htm

[9] as cited at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acculturation

[10] Paul Memmott. **Cutural change, transmission and acculturation in architectural traditions**

References

Himanshu Prabha Ray, **Sacred Landscape in Asia: shared traditions, multiple histories**, New Delhi: Manohar, 2007.

Inkeles, **what is sociology? An introduction to the discipline and profession**, New Delhi: Pretice-Hall of India 1965,

Asquith, Vellinga, **Vernacular Architecture in the Twenty-First Century: Theory, Education and Practice**, Oxon: Taylor & Francis 2006.

Paul, **Encyclopedia of Vernacular Architecture of the World**, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Vellinga, Oliver, and Bridge, **Atlas of vernacular Architecture of the World**, Oxon: Routledge, 2007.

Waterson, t**he Living House: An Anthropology of Architecture in South-East Asia**, Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press. 1990.

Yos Santasombat, **Dynamic and Flexibility of Agrarian Society: Economic of Community and Paradigm Shift dealing with Community in the 3th World Countries**, Chiang Mai: With-In Design. Ltd. 2003. (Thai Book)

Unpublished Texts

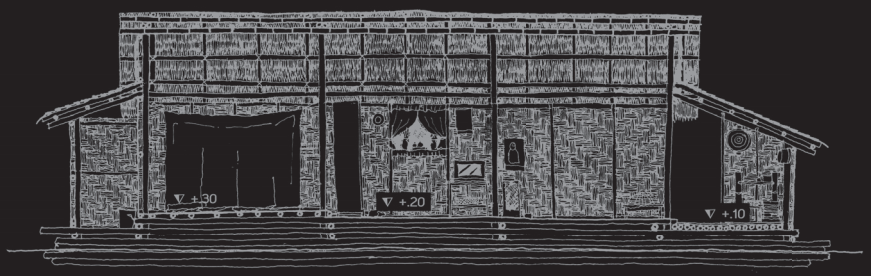
Alexander, Rani T. and Sandra E. Andrade. (2007), **Frontier Migration and the Built Environment in South-western Campeche**, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, New Mexico State University. *Source: http://132.248.101.214/html-docs/cult-maya/rani.pdf*

Bharat Gauri, **A discourse in Transition? Examining the idea of vernacular architecture through the case of slums as a vernacular form** *Source: http://203.77.197.231:81/isvs/isvs-4-1/paper-dump/full-papers/6.pdf*

Levinson, Ember (1996), **Encyclopedia of Cultural Anthropology**, Henry Holt and Company, New York, pp. 257-260 (translated into Thai by Naruephon Daungwisets) *Source: www.sac.or.th/web2007/article/culture/51-05-06-critical.pdf*

O'Neil Dennis, **Culture Change: an introduction to the processes and consequences of culture change** *Source: http://anthro.palomar.edu/change/change_3.htm*

Paul Memmott, **An Introduction to Architecture + Building Traditions: lessons from ethno-architects**, ADDITIONS to architectural history in XIXth conference of the Society of Architectural Historians, Australia and New Zealand, Brisbane: SAHANZ, 2002 *Source: http://espace.uq.edu.au/eserv/UQ:9528/ethno_architects.pdf*


+30
+20
+10