

THE GIFT OF DESIGN: ARCHITECTURE-CULTURE IN POSTCOLONIAL
INDIA

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THE GIFT OF DESIGN: ARCHITECTURE-CULTURE IN POSTCOLONIAL
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This work enquires into the question of the meaning being of architects in postcolonial India. It asks those agents, who claim for themselves the title, “architect” what does it mean *to be* an architect in postcolonial India. It argues that the meaning of the being of architects emerges in the dialectical and transitory nature of the *to be* implied in the question. It presents by the way of its argument three “moments” in the question of the meaning of being of architects.

The first, the Moment of the Architect, focuses on the Architects Act of 1972, which the work argues is a project, projecting a particular domain in postcolonial India. The essence of this projection lies in the “imagined” figure of the architect, in which the meaning of the architect is, (in) being different from engineers and planners, (as) being rightful claimants of the “Architect” as articulated in Modernism’s discourses of architecture, and (as) being a figure always and already grounded in the postcolonial Indian State’s “project” of nation building.

The second, the Moment of Design, focuses on the design jury, and architectural drawings. It shows how drawings and juries produce the meaning of design and the architect in terms of a future that-will-be and as a subject-position endowed with a historical consciousness who projects and creates this future that-will-be. It also demonstrates how this meaning of design and the architect weaves itself with the domain “projected” by the Act whose essence, beforehand, is this figure of the architect.

The third, the Moment of *Jugar*, pursues (an)other sign to which architects in India lay a claim, and through which they articulate themselves, their expertise and their field: *jugar*. As this moment shows, the claims to *jugar* and being *jugaru* reveal completely different imaginations of selfhood and of expertise of those who also claim that they are architects. This moment, I argue presents, as it were, a limit to the meaning of “architecture and architects” that the two earlier moments attempt to continually (re)produce. Yet this limit is not an “outside” but rather a liminal “interiority.”

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Jaideep Chatterjee was born in New Delhi in 1974 and attended the Scindia School, Gwalior and The Delhi Public School, Mathura Road, New Delhi. He received a Diploma in Architecture (equivalent to a Bachelor of Architecture) from the D. C. Patel School of Architecture, Institute of Environmental Design (IED) Vallabh Vidya Nagar, Gujarat in 1998. Jaideep then worked as an architect at M/s Architects & Associates. In 1999 Jaideep continued to the School of Architecture and Interior Design (SAID) at the University of Cincinnati, earning a Master of Science in Architecture in 2001. He completed his graduate thesis entitled, *Purdahnashin: On the Interrelatedness between Space and Sexuality of Women With(in) the Havelis of 18th and 19th centuries in Lucknow, India*, under the supervision of Dr. Patrick Snadon.

In fall of 2001, Jaideep began his doctoral studies at the history of Architecture and Urbanism Program at the School of Architecture, Art and Planning, Cornell University, under Dr. Mary Woods. In 2003 Jaideep also enrolled into the Department of Anthropology, College of Arts and Sciences, Cornell University as a doctoral student under Dr. Dominic Boyer. From 2009 Jaideep has been teaching at the School of Architecture and Interior Design (SAID) at the University of Cincinnati as an adjunct faculty.

Jaideep has presented his research at numerous conferences and symposia in Istanbul, Ithaca, New York, Albuquerque, Washington, and New Delhi. His most recent article ““The Best Laid Plans of Mice and Men: Modernity and Architectural Design(s) in Postcolonial India,” is to be published in *Modern Makeovers: The Oxford Handbook of Modernity in South Asia*, edited by Saurabh Dube and Ishita Banerjee-Dube; Oxford University Press, New Delhi, as part of a collection of essays from emerging scholars of South Asia.

Ma aar baba'r jonne

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AICTE	All India Council for Technical Education
CAD	Computer-Aided Drawings
CAT	Contemporary Architectural Trust
CIAM	Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne
CoA	Council of Architecture
CPI (M)	Communist party of India (Marxists)
CPWD	Central Public Works Department
DDA	Delhi Development Authority
DUAC	Delhi Urban Arts Commission
GATS	General Agreement of Trade in Services
GSD	Graduate School of Design, Harvard.
HUDCO	Housing and Urban Development Corporation
IIA	Indian Institute of Architects
MCD	Municipal Corporation of Delhi
MHRD	Ministry of Human Resource and Development
NCR	National Capital Region
NDMC	New Delhi Municipal Corporation
RSP	Related Studies Program
RWA	Resident Welfare Association
SPA	School of Planning and Architecture
TVB	Tulsi Vidya Bharati School of Habitat Studies
UNDP	United Nations Development Program

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Let me begin with what this work is not. It is not, for reasons that will soon become clear, the, or even, a “history” of “architecture and architects in postcolonial India,” though it does have within it, to be sure, many “histories.” For the same reasons, this work is also not an “anthropological” investigation of architecture and architects in India today, even though it often brings into its own focus the vicissitudes and enunciations of “nationally coherent architectural culture” in India today and question of identity of those entities who claim for themselves the title “architect.” Indeed, if I were to characterize this work as anything, it would have to be that it poses to those who claim for themselves the title “architect” this question; what does it mean *to be* an architect in postcolonial India?

Framed in this manner, this the question has, as an architect remarked, “as many answers as there are architects in India” (at last “official” count 26000 approximately).¹ This is absolutely true. In fact, this number is considerably more than that, especially since, as we shall see, the meaning of the being of architects in India today cannot be restricted to such an internal-to-architects exposition. Also, the number of answers to this question is greater than the number of “architects” in India simply because assuming the number of answers to be equal to the number of architects assumes a unified architect-subject in India today (something this work also argues against). Given this, the study thus makes no claims to provide either a singular or even complete answer to its own question. What it does do, however, provisionally present some avenues that emerge when such a question is asked.

¹ The Council of Architecture, "The Architects Handbook of Professional Documents," ed. Ministry of Human Resource Development (New Delhi: Government of India, 2005),p. xx.

Over the next sections of this introduction, I sift through the existing historical, sociological and theoretical literature(s) on architecture and architects, both within India and elsewhere, to present reasons both for the need to ask this question and also why the question needs to be posed in this manner, that is, in a dialectical and transitive manner about the meaning of the being of architects. But here, I want to briefly outline the motivations for this study, which has much to do with my experience(s) of being trained as an “architect” in India as well as being a part of that “domain.”

The terms architect and architecture have a very ambivalent status in India. On the one hand, they are hardly known. Indeed, if one were to proclaim oneself an “architect,” this would usually elicit, barring a few urban centers and certain pockets of society, a rather quizzical expression as to what one is.² This illegibility is not surprising given that the terms are in a language, which, though one of the twenty six official languages of India, is one whose regular use is rather limited. Moreover, unlike other “professional names,” such as doctor, engineer, nurse, lawyer etc. the term architect has not been adopted into Hindi or other regional language lexicons and thus does not enjoy the kind of popularity, and indeed, the significance, that the latter do within the imaginary horizons of the nation as such.³ As we shall see, this lack of

² I would constantly hear architects all over the country make this claim. Once while visiting Kerala, the southernmost state in India, I got talking to some students of architecture from the college at Thrissur. Upon hearing about my work, the first comment made by one of the students was that such a work would have no “takers” here. When I asked him why, he replied that hardly anyone in his town even knew of the term. He then added, that every time he told his extended family or friends that he was training to become an architect, they would look at him and then say, “archi...akri.” Gokul’s (this student) story, is hardly unique. Indeed, for the most part, the word is pronounced in most parts northern India, especially, by native speakers of Hindi, as “ar-chee-tech.” Interestingly, and much to the chagrin of “architects” this semantic twist, the “tech” sound at the end, makes many believe it has something to do with technical, technology, and engineering, which we will see is an identification architects simultaneously have strategically co-opted yet constantly derided and berated.

³ If one takes mass media forms such as movies, novels as indicating the content of the imagined space of the Indian nation, then architects and architecture are conspicuous by their absence in such forms of representation, especially when compared to other professionals such as engineers, doctors, lawyers etc. whose representations are overwhelmingly present. For an argument regarding the imagined space of

recognition of an “architect’s due” is a major concern that “architects” continually evoke.

On the other hand, contrasting this “absence” from the everyday and the national imaginary, is the way I would hear “architects” talk about themselves and about architecture. What would always be stressed, in such conversations, is the indispensability of architects and their expertise design to the nation, to its history and to the everyday of its peoples. Take for example, the following discussion between two architectural educators and myself.

Ranjeet Mitra(associate professor, School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi):in our place [SPA]... same situation... ultimately when it comes to design...we [the examiners/jurors] were all looking and saying, it’s so bloody timid...everybody...you are in studio, you should be really flowing free...and..

Tapan Chakravorty (assistant professor Tulsi Vidya School of habitat Studies):
No one says anymore... we will take strong action...

Jaideep: well I wonder that perhaps this hesitation is perhaps due to a realization that the city is itself far more fragmented...

Tapan: *so our [architects] job is...has to be that the people who have the power of training to be able to involve themselves in the making of the city... they have to get over those petty problems and have to be able to see beyond and then say...ok this is what we will do...if we keep sitting...then what is the difference between us and the journalist, the municipality engineers, the politicians... they are all sitting...we are useless if we too keep sitting around...*

Ranjeet: see, we[architects]... are not thinking...most of our thinking is usually

the nation see, Benedict R. O'G Anderson, *Imagined Communities : Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Rev. and extended ed. (London ; New York: Verso, 1991).

problem solving...doing little bit here...doing little bit there...and the kind of putting it together. *I took a very...a very critical walk down Chandni Chowk⁴ ...it is bullshit...we all really talk big...there is nothing there...I mean you want to put back Chandni Chowk to whatever it was...forget it...you can only think of a new layer in front...if you look at the houses...critically...who is going to excavate what it was like...who is going to let you do it...if you walk down Chitpur Road in Kolkata...it is a much more richer [sic] experience than walking down Chandni Chowk...we do not talk about it because we are so used to Chitpur Road...over here things have really changed in here...*

Tapan: Everything has...

Ranjeet: *there are like three layers in front... you can't undo it... you cannot see it...why would you want to undo it? You build a new layer... let it become a very fancy street...let it become a good street...*

Tapan: only yesterday we were having a huge argument in the first year studio...we are trying to do one project...and we asked...*that can you [the students] walk on the footpaths [pavements] that are in front of your house? This put them in a bind...after much thinking...(laughs)...no Sir..we can't...there is a tree growing in the middle (laughs)...we asked, is that what should be there? Student: no sir, it should not...then we said, how many places have you seen that there is a huge lamp post right in front of the traffic signals, blocking our view to it...and you have to (leans over) and see it like that...*

Jaideep: that is true this is a ubiquitous phenomenon...

⁴ Chandni Chowk is the main commercial street of Old Delhi (Shahjahanabad), the city founded by the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan (reign 1628-58) in 1639. Chandni Chowk, like other prominent areas of Old Delhi, had recently been the focus of much discussion regarding their "heritage value" for the city, which was attempting to redefine its image as an icon for the emergent India of the 21st century. For an overview of the discussions regarding the restoration of Delhi's heritage areas see, for example, Pandit Ambika, "It's Back to the Future for Cp," *The Times of India* November 18 2006. See also, Pandey Maneesh, "Park and Walk Plan for Khan Market," *The Times of India*, April 28 2006.

Tapan: *then we asked the students...if you look at the street light in front of your house...more often than not you will realize that it does not illuminate the street at all...why because the light bulb is hidden by the leaves of the tree that is growing right next to it...so all the light falls on the tree and nothing on the road itself...so like this slowly slowly sensitizing them...we then said...alright take the 100 meter stretch in front of your house and now tell us...what all problematic things can you see..and how can you fix these...then the students suddenly got excited and started finding all kinds of things... 'people putting their dust bin outside' etc...so I ask...is this a design problem or a management problem?...then it comes out... 'this is a design problem' after all these discussion...they [students] are now trying..*

Jaideep: I have seen this too.

Tapan: so this time we are trying that they [students] should understand the city right around them and try to understand...*that where all designers can...that the designer is only useful to only make a building is not true...that to design is to be also able to design a railing....we can talk for hours about railings...*[Emphasis added]

What is noteworthy about the above conversation is the way Tapan and Ranjeet position architects and their expertise design in matters ranging from the “setting up lamp posts and trees along the streets of the city, the dumping of garbage,” and questions of a city’s (in this case both Kolkata and Delhi), and concomitantly India’s, heritage and identity (at least of its built environment). As we see this is a position in which architects and design is constructed being pivotal to the solutions that may and do crop up in such mundane as well as esoteric domains of the nation and its people. What is also important to note in the above conversation is how this claim then, in turn, (re)presents the all-encompassing scope of their expertise design

and architect as a designer a central figure. It is as Tapan statement implies at the end, that the work of a designer [architect] is not to only design buildings (but everything).

Indeed, such panegyric conversations are actually fairly staple amongst architects. And what grabbed my attention is the number of times and well as the intensity with which these would, a) claim the integral role” architects” play in not only the everyday, the habitual lives of people, society in general but also how they, and their expertise was crucial in sustaining , negotiating, and (re)producing ever widening circles of abstraction, such as design(ing) a city, its people, a nation, or even “stages” of history (for example, modernity), and b) speak of the significance of being an “architect.”

What is more, as I had myself experienced, such claims begin from the very first encounter of architectural “neophytes” with their professors/seniors at a school of architecture, continuing all the way through to their education, to their graduating speech, and finally into *their* “practice(s)” of architecture. but crucially, the central aspect of these claims is a constant reminder to architects is that they are “architects,” the select few, and though “architects were rarely appreciated or understood by the public at large” architects, are apart from the kind of “unthinking, uncritical” mentality that is at the root of individual, societal and ultimately national misery.

Bordering on a kind of Darwinian “natural selectivity” such pronouncements caused me, throughout my training as an architect and beyond, a great deal of anxiety. Yet at the same time, they also left in me a persistent feeling that architecture and architects make for a compelling case to understand the nexus of knowledge, expert subjectivity, national identity, and modernity. What I did not imagine however, is how “deep” this rabbit-hole goes. Indeed, as I show throughout this work, those who claim the title architect in India always do so within the ambit of the nation’s own articulations and enunciations of development, modernity and history. And not only

that, as I show in chapter on design, this claim is itself part of a greater worldview which brings in line not only the claims of the architect's but also those of the nation to modernity. But I am getting ahead of the story here, what one needs immediately is to return to why one needs to pose the question of meaning of being of architects in India today and why does it have to be posed in this particular manner.

1.1 The Debate Concerning the Meaning of Architecture and the Architect.

1.1.1 Architectural Scholars

For some time now, the study of architects and architecture has been characterized by a divide of sorts. On the one side of this fissure lie, as I shall call them, the “architectural scholars” for whom architecture is fundamentally about the built environment, the building industry, the making of buildings, which, “provide an image of self to peoples who inhabit, use, or observe them.”⁵ For them, it follows, that an “architect is someone who fulfills a vital function in society through his “skill” of making buildings. Given this, such studies have mainly been concerned with problems that plague architects and architecture with the aim to alleviate these. They have done so from two different angles. The first, by far the more prolific, has been through a “historical” analysis of architects and architecture.⁶ An prominent example of this genre would Spiro Kostof's edited volume on *The Architect: Chapters in the History of the Profession*, which charts through a collection of essays “the architect's

⁵ Jon T. Lang, Madhavi Desai, and Miki Desai, *Architecture and Independence : The Search for Identity--India 1880 to 1980* (Delhi ; New York: Oxford University Press, 1997)., p.xv. See also Spiro Kostof, *The Architect : Chapters in the History of the Profession* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977)., p. vi.

⁶ Barrington Kaye, *The Development of the Architectural Profession in Britain; a Sociological Study* (London,: G. Allen & Unwin, 1960); Mark Crinson and Jules Lubbock, *Architecture--Art or Profession? : Three Hundred Years of Architectural Education in Britain* (Manchester, UK ; New York: Manchester University Press : Distributed exclusively in the USA and Canada by St. Martin's Press, 1994); Sigfried Giedion, *Space, Time and Architecture: The Growth of a New Tradition* (Cambridge: Mass: The Harvard University Press, 1941); Bruno Zevi, *The Modern Language of Architecture* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1978); Nikolaus Pevsner, *Academies of Art: Past and Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940); Henry Russell Hitchcock, *Modern and American Architecture*, Rev. and exp. ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: University Prints, 1959). Walter Gropius, *Scope of Total Architecture*, 1st ed. (New York,: Harper, 1955).

progress through the centuries.”⁷ This is a progress, which as the reader of the book realizes, begins with, “The Practice of Architecture in the Ancient World: Egypt and Greece,” and ends with “Architectural Practice in America, 1865-1965-Ideal and Reality.”⁸

The second avenue taken by “architectural scholars” has been to study the current practice of architects and architecture.⁹ Of these, the most well known is, perhaps, Robert Gutman’s *Architectural Practice: A Critical View*.¹⁰ Gutman’s book describes in detail the organization pattern of architectural offices as it was in the United States in the 1980’s. The author’s main contention is that there is a “gap between the premises and expectations of the world that “architects” experience subjectively, and the ideas that “architects” carry around in their minds and espouse out of habit.”¹¹ Therefore, the necessary thing to do in order to overcome this “gap”, Gutman argues, is to make a critical appraisal of the present conditions of “architecture”. According to him, contemporary “architecture” in the US has been influenced by ten major trends. These are:

The expanding demand for architectural services, 2) changes in the structure of the demand for architectural services, 3) over supply of entrants into the field, 4) increased size and complexity of buildings, 5) consolidation and

⁷ Kostof, *The Architect : Chapters in the History of the Profession.*, p.viii. I could have of course picked the most influential of these “histories” which would be Giedion’s work, but my reasons for picking Kostof is that the latter makes “the architect” an expressed object of its analytical gaze.

⁸ Spiro Kostof, "The Practice of Architecture in the Ancient World: Egypt and Greece," in *The Architect: Chapters in the History of the Profession*, ed. Spiro Kostof (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977); Bernard M. Boyle, "Architectural Practice in American, 1865-1965-Ideal and Reality," in *The Architect: Chapters in the History of the Profession*, ed. Spiro Kostof (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977).

⁹ See for example, Dana Cuff, *Architecture : The Story of Practice* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1991); Robert Gutman, *Architectural Practice : A Critical View* (New York, N.Y.: Princeton Architectural Press, 1988); Richard Oliver and National Academy of Design (U.S.), *The Making of an Architect, 1881-1981 : Columbia University in the City of New York* (New York: Rizzoli, 1981); Judith R. Blau, *Architects and Firms : A Sociological Perspective on Architectural Practice* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1984).

¹⁰ Gutman, *Architectural Practice : A Critical View*.

¹¹ Ibid.p. 2.

professionalization of the construction industry, 6) greater rationality of client organizations, 7) more intense competition between architects and other professions, 8) greater competition within the profession, 9) continuing economic difficulties of practice, and 10) changing expectations of architecture among the public.¹²

Given these “newer” conditions, Gutman presents five challenges that “architecture” must address. Briefly paraphrased, they are:

Firstly, the need to match demand for practitioners to the supply of architects, and adjust the number of architects to the potential demand for their services. Secondly, the need to develop a philosophy of practice that is consistent but that also corresponds to the expectations, requirements and demands of the building industry. Thirdly, the need to maintain a secure hold on the market for services, in a period when the competition from other professions is increasing. Fourthly, the need to find ways to maintain profitability and solvency when the costs of running a design firm are steadily increasing. And finally, the need to have a competent organizational schema which would provide for high moral and the motivation to produce good work amongst the practitioners.¹³

The challenges that Gutman proposes are largely concerned with the organizational pattern of “architecture” in the US. That is, how “architecture” organizes itself to meet the demands of its traditional clientele; the private sector. Given this his book ends with the following suggestion,

The problems of managing an architectural practice run too deep to be influenced by minor events and simple adjustments in the conduct of a career or a firm...intensive research, though, and policy initiatives focusing on these

¹² Ibid. p. 4.

¹³ Ibid. pp. 97-111.

challenges are needed. To achieve these initiatives, the best minds and talents of the profession need to be mobilized...¹⁴

1.1.2 Scholars of Architecture.

Ideologues! Apologists! Their work is nothing but propaganda for architects and architecture. Though not quite formulated as such, but reading the work of someone like Magali Sarfatti Larson, one cannot help but feel that these are the kinds of epithets that she would hurl at works in the tradition of Kostof's or Gutman's. For Larson, and scholars in her wake, whom I shall call "scholars of architecture" studies such as Kostof's essentially "folkish."¹⁵ That is, their analysis mirrors the self-conception of architects and architecture.¹⁶ For these scholars the fundamental problem with such "folk" analysis of architects and architecture is that it completely neglects the central issue at stake in the analysis of architects and architecture; it being a discourse of power and hegemony. Accordingly, they see their task as demystifying architecture and architects by critically appraising its sociological, cultural, historical underpinnings.

Like the earlier cluster of scholars, this group too develops its arguments from two different angles. The first deals with historical-social roots of architecture and architects.¹⁷ Larson's own corpus, though slightly dated, is perhaps the best place to glean the gist of the arguments these studies make.

¹⁴ Ibid. p.111.

¹⁵ See Eliot Freidson, *Professional Dominance: The Social Structure of Medical Care*, [1st ed. (New York, Atherton Press, 1970).

¹⁶ Magali Sarfatti Larson, *The Rise of Professionalism : A Sociological Analysis* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977).

¹⁷ See for example, Mary N. Woods, *From Craft to Profession : The Practice of Architecture in Nineteenth-Century America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999). See also, Anthony Alofsin, *The Struggle for Modernism : Architecture, Landscape Architecture and City Planning at Harvard* (New York London: W. W. Norton, 2002); Magali Sarfatti Larson, "Emblem and Exception: The Historical Definition of the Architect's Professional Role," in *Professionals and Urban Form*, ed. Judith R Blau, Mark LaGlory and John S. Pipkin (Albany: State University of New York, 1983); —, *Behind the Postmodern Facade : Architectural Change in Late Twentieth-Century America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); Charles Jencks, *Modern Movements in Architecture* (Garden City, N.Y.,: Anchor Books, 1973); Eric Paul Mumford, *The C.I.A.M Discourse on Urbanism*,

For Larson, the occupational structure of architecture depends on two sets of social relations. The first is between those who conceive the building and those who execute this conception, or between *telos* and *techne*, as she calls them.¹⁸ The second social relationship exists between patrons who define the function of the building and those who mediate between patrons and executants (builders). Under these criteria, Larson, argues that architect's role has historically existed in two ways; a) whenever the execution of the building is separated from its commission, and b) when special groups of builders and or exceptional individuals appear and mediate between the elites who commission building and their stylistic conventions.¹⁹ In the Middle Ages, she notes, the architect was largely anonymous as patrons appropriated the *telos* of the building. However, in the Renaissance, architects were able to turn the tables, and insert themselves between the *telos* and the *techne* by shifting their emphasis from *techne* and drawing to an abstract and theoretical discourse about architecture in the guise of *style*. Thus, the importance of "the Italian Renaissance lies in the architect's resolute effort to appropriate the *telos* of architecture by intellectual and almost *purely stylistic* means [emphasis in original]."²⁰

If the Renaissance opens up the platform for the emergence of the architect, then the Industrial Revolution, Larson argues, brings newer contradictions and changes to the role of the architect. As specialists in aesthetics, both a self-definition

1928-1960 (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2000); Kenneth Frampton, *Modern Architecture : A Critical History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980); Ulrich Pfammatter, *The Making of the Modern Architect and Engineer : The Origins and Development of a Scientific and Industrially Oriented Education* (Basel ; Boston: Birkhauser-Publishers for Architecture, 2000); Manfredo Tafuri, *Architecture and Utopia : Design and Capitalist Development* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1976); Joseph Rykwert, *The First Moderns : The Architects of the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1980); Klaus Herdeg, *Decorated Diagram: Harvard Architecture and the Failure of the Bauhaus Legacy* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1983); Pevsner, *Academies of Art: Past and Present*.

¹⁸ Magali Sarfatti Larson, "Emblem and Exception: The Historical Definition of the Architects Professional Role," in *Professionals and Urban Form*, ed. Judith R. Blau (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983), p. 53

¹⁹ Ibid. pp. 53-57

²⁰ Ibid. p. 54

and a social one since the Renaissance, architects were faced with the increasingly difficult problems of giving adequate expression to the novel and different types of building that industrialization demanded. While architects attempted to resolve these problems in eminently symbolic and theoretical terms, engineers were inserting themselves more and more into building construction. According to Larson, the architects' attempts to theorize their way into relevance began to seem trifling when compared with the undoubted competence of engineers in building execution. Additionally, architectural theorization essentially drew upon historical language, which was confounded not only by the rise of positivism and science but also that history had no precedence for the new range of building types that the industrial revolution brought into being.

Faced with this dilemma, Larson notes, that in the nineteenth century architects embarked on a two-point professionalization program²¹. The first line of attack involved defining and controlling a protected market for architectural services that was to be distinct from services offered by rival disciplines such as builder or engineers. Secondly, they started attaching special status and concrete socioeconomic privileges to membership in the professional category. According to Larson, this necessitated institutional means for self-definition and the need to find adequate ideological justification for corporate defense. It also implied the need for the creation of standardized competencies amongst its practitioners to distinguish their services from alternatives. Here enters, she argues, the role of the state, formal education, credentialing and registration processes.

However, for Larson, the recurrent problem in this entire trajectory is the fundamental contradiction that structures architecture in general, an opposition that

²¹ Ibid. p. 67-70

exists between its discourse and practice.²² Thus on the one hand, Larson argues, is the autonomy of architectural discourse. That is, experts who are only accountable to other experts autonomously construct architectural discourse. In this sense, Larson argues, architecture is like any other profession. However, on the other hand, to sustain this discourse, architects continually needs canonized exemplars in the form of real buildings. These, Larson claims, are, however, more than mere examples of an architects' knowledge. They perform a double function. At one level, they draw, attention to the architect's dependence on other forces, (patrons, clients, building contractors, land values, technological innovation etc). and at another level, they underscore the heteronomy that is characteristic of architectural practice. The only fix to this contradiction is in the form of architectural discourse, which for Larson is essentially, "an ideological position and a functioning principle of exclusion."²³

Larson's work, as I had mentioned earlier, represents but the first avenue that this group of scholars pursue. The second, exemplified by Garry Stevens' seminal work, *The Favored Circle: the Social Foundations of Architectural Distinction*, takes a somewhat different standpoint to analyze architecture and architects.²⁴ According to Stevens, a severe shortcoming of studies such as Larson's is that they continue to predicate their analysis of architects and architecture as professionals and as a profession. Consequently, such studies end up taking, he notes, "the deployment of specialized knowledges as central to its [architecture's] definition."²⁵ Stevens argues that this is not the case in reality. Architecture and architects, he argues, are in fact predicated on being something, or rather on being someone (different) rather than

²² Larson, *Behind the Postmodern Facade : Architectural Change in Late Twentieth-Century America*. pp. 4-5

²³ Ibid. p. 5

²⁴ Garry Stevens, *The Favored Circle : The Social Foundations of Architectural Distinction* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1998).

²⁵ Ibid. p. 34.

knowing something (being knowledgeable). If we accept this premise, Stevens argues, the production of architects and architecture is then, in reality, a production of this “difference”. The question that Stevens then sets for his work is to show how this difference is socially produced.

Using Bourdieu’s *Homo Academicus* and *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, to answer this question, Stevens argues that the built environment, like the field of culture, is divided into field of restricted and mass production. Within the field of mass production, the ruling logic is one of competing for professional and economic success. The form of capital accrued here is primarily economic and the defining feature of this field is its heteronomous condition; its direct dependence on the demands of the market.²⁶ In contrast to this lies the field of restricted production, which for Stevens is field of “architecture.” Here, he argues, completely different rules apply. Within this field, the basic dynamics, are driven by (a) symbolic concerns, (b) the quest to achieve reputation through the production of great architecture, (c) the right to evaluate everyone’s cultural capital in terms of one’s own, and (d) the quest for ever greater autonomy.²⁷

Due to these varied forces, the field of architecture, Stevens argues, can be divided into two classes. First, the “priestly” class, those who form the dominant half of the field and who are in charge of (re)producing and maintaining the “values” of the discipline.²⁸ Second, the “prophets,” they are the newcomers who have two optional roles available to them. They can either follow the lead of the dominant. Or these “prophets” can challenge the dominant class. Though this is a far riskier operation, the

²⁶ Ibid. p. 88.

²⁷ Ibid. pp. 88-97.

²⁸ Ibid. p. 98.

rewards are also far greater as it can propel them to the pinnacle of architectural reputation.²⁹

For Stevens, a great example of how the field is structured through the interaction of these multiple forces is the emergence of Deconstructivism as a style within architecture in the last two decades of the twentieth century. By the 1980's, Stevens notes, the proponents of modernism and their successors had either died out or had assumed their "priestly" robes in the high temple of architectural discourse. However, this period was also the time that saw unprecedented growth in the number of graduating architectural students, which created a pressure for new niches in the field. What ideological weapon could these newcomers use against the dominant factions of their field? According to Stevens, Derridean deconstruction proved to be the logical choice for a variety of reasons: (1), the theory has already proven effective in overthrowing an established group in another field; that of literary production, (2) there was an established market of cultural consumers, (3) it had the potential to enhance the autonomy of the field, (4) deconstruction has originated in a field with a social structure homologous to architecture, and (5) deconstruction requires a substantial amount of symbolic capital to implement.³⁰ Thus, he continues, we find in the 1980's a host of "prophets" like Charles Jencks, Andreas Papadakis, Bernard Tschumi, Peter Eisenman denouncing older theories of architecture as well as pushing for ideas like "a language of Postmodern Architecture." Of note, Stevens argues, is that "deconstruction did not succeed because of some essential aesthetic superiority, but because certain important individual and institutions in the field were mobilized to support it."³¹

²⁹ Ibid. pp. 99-100.

³⁰ Ibid. pp. 113-114.

³¹ Ibid. pp. 119.

Now if this is an example of the synchronic structure of the field, what about its diachronic structure? According to Stevens, here too something similar is at work, both in the sense of conflict and competition between individuals to appropriate intellectual capital, and in the transmission of symbolic capital to each other through networks of personal relations. An analysis of the entries in the *Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects*(MEA), Stevens argues, confirms this. Thus, if one looks, at every 10 major architects listed in the MEA, we can find that firstly had a larger network than the minor architect listed in the MEA (45 as opposed to 12). Also, apart from the size of the network; what is very interesting is qualitative difference between the networks of major and minor architects listed in the MEA. Thus, for every 10 major architects, 10 other major architects were colleagues, 5 major architects were their masters, and 5 major architects were their pupils. For minor architects however, only 2 major architects were colleagues, 2 major architects were masters, and only .5 major architects were pupils. The obvious inference Stevens argues, is that even when seen over a period of history, “architectural genius” seems to be less a function of the “aesthetic” superiority of one’s work, it is rather a result of institutional and personal networks. As he notes,

Major architects are not only linked to many more fellow architects, but also to more eminent ones. The more eminent one is and the more eminent people one has studied under, then the more eminent one’s colleagues are and the more eminent one’s pupils become.³²

The final aspect of the field of architecture Stevens’ book analyzes is the system of reproduction, that is, its educational structure. Again drawing upon Bourdieu, he notes, that architectural education even though it may impart some skill

³² Ibid. p.156.

to students is actually a “social process of selection that favors the privileged.”³³ Assisting this process of selection are the various ideologies that circulate within architectural education. The first is that the disadvantaged eliminate themselves from architectural education. According to Stevens, if one looks at the student entering a college of architecture there is a disproportionately high number of student who have had private school training and thus connote much more privileged backgrounds.³⁴ Second, is the way schools consecrate privilege by ignoring it. Thus what institutions regularly assume, Stevens argues, is that students form a homogenous body, and by referring to students generically, institutions forget that the experience of university education is highly individualized.³⁵ The third way that assists in this process of social selection in architectural schools is the tacit acceptance of the ideology of giftedness. According to this ideology, Stevens notes, one is born with natural talents “which are completely independent of the privilege of being privileged by one’s social class.”³⁶ Thus, through this notion the “social foundations” of the “talents” of one student vis-à-vis another are totally masked. The fourth way schools reproduce the dominant ideas of the dominant fraction of the field is by ignoring their inculcation function. Thus when educators talk about “architects being socialized” as a mere epiphenomenon, Stevens argues, they are actually missing the point entirely, as the production of “cultivated” individuals is central to architectural (re)production.³⁷ A final way in which schools assist this process of selection is by favoring those who favor them. Within this framework, architecture schools perform a dual function; a) successfully enculturate and b) remove those who resist enculturation. These two functions,

³³ Ibid. p. 188. See also, Pierre Bourdieu and Jean Claude Passeron, *Reproduction in Education, Society, and Culture*, 1990 / ed. (London ; Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage in association with Theory Culture & Society Dept. of Administrative and Social Studies Teesside Polytechnic, 1990).

³⁴ Stevens, *The Favored Circle : The Social Foundations of Architectural Distinction*. pp. 190-191.

³⁵ Ibid. pp. 192-193.

³⁶ Ibid. p. 194.

³⁷ Ibid. p. 196.

according to Stevens, are ensured through a combination of various facets of architectural education such as; the jury system, which often is often nothing less than public humiliation of a student's work, or deliberately abstract and vague comments in design studio which perpetuates a student's sense of insecurity or finally in very system of studio instruction that generates intense competition by atomizing the student and rendering him/her vulnerable.

1.2 History and Identity within the Debate:

Stevens' is a scathing critique of architecture and architects. Yet, what Stevens does not see, and his opponents, the "architectural scholars" do not recognize, are the far reaching implications of the argument that one needs to shift the study of architecture and architect(s) from the purview of skills and knowledge to questions of identity and cultural praxis. He (much like Larson) is content to use it as a platform from which to launch attack after attacks at his adversaries, the "architectural scholars" by showing them that architecture and being an architect is, at a very fundamental level, an inauthentic practice, which has nothing to do with buildings, or skills, knowledge, creativity what have you. That it is merely something that serves to mask what are, in effect, the attempts of particular class, architects, to garner as much symbolic, cultural capital from the built environment in order to further their own position. Take for example, the following point he makes,

If one were writing a purely internalist history of architectural theory, it would be difficult to explain how what is essentially a theory of literature came to have anything to do with architecture...But other theories of architecture have sprung from flimsier premises, and if sociology teaches us anything, it is that the *content* of such theories plays only a modest part...More important is the

extent to which they can be used as instruments in the struggles that preoccupy the elite members of the field.³⁸ (Italics in original)

To this kind of attack, the “architectural scholar” can justifiably object saying that this is a rather impoverished way to look at the profession and architects.³⁹ That it reduces the meaning of architecture and the architect to the activities of small group of people who have consciously involved themselves in a struggle for hegemony. He can then point out that neither is all architecture like this nor are all architects by showing how architecture is the material which reflects the image of many a peoples, and that architects have also been consistently been concerned with questions of mass housing, public welfare and so on and so forth. He can also then claim that what the “scholars of architecture” claim is actually a “particularistic” phenomenon.⁴⁰ That is, it represents particular groups who have given in to their personal aims and ambitions but architecture remains crucial to society and architects actually represent a noble and vital service to mankind. The battle lines, as I mentioned earlier, remain drawn.

Yet what is interesting is that why has it has never occurred, to either side, to pose the following questions: firstly, that why do “architects” themselves continually claim a multiplicity of meanings for the term, “architect;” meanings that are often contradictory, fragmented, contested. Why do they claim with such regularity that the term architect indexes someone who gives idea for a building, someone who supervises the construction, someone who makes something, someone who coordinates activities, someone who builds, someone who creates, even someone who may not have anything to do with buildings at all, or even a force that is, so to speak,

³⁸ Stevens 1998, 113

³⁹ See for example, Andy Pressman, "The Favored Circle: The Social Foundations of Architectural Distinction by Garry Stevens Mit Press,," *arq: Architectural Research Quarterly* 3, no. 03 (1999).p. 287.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* p. 287.

extra-human.⁴¹ Secondly, why is it that architects also constantly claim a similar multiple indexicality for the term architecture, that it can signify buildings, a discipline, a business, a form of art, a form of science, a profession, form, content, or even a non verbal medium?

I would like to submit that posing such questions is not possible within the ambit of the literature(s) outlined above, as both sides share the idea that architecture and the architect has a singular trajectory of meaning. But starting from this premise the “scholars of architecture” argue that architecture is a somewhat inauthentic discourse and that the architect is a mystifier par excellence whereas the “architectural scholars” claim that the inauthenticity and mystification is not the norm but rather the aberrant case.

Indeed, to pose these questions is to investigate the very taken-for-grantedness of singular trajectory of meaning of the terms architect and architecture that is built into in these works. It means going to roots and questioning the givenness of (the meaning of) the architect and architecture, which these works actually pre-suppose rather than enquire. It means questioning the particular code of history that is invoked by both sides of the debate; a code, which, in effect, buttresses the very self-evidence of the meaning of the terms architecture and architect. To see what this code is, let me present a composite narrative that, I believe, both undergirds and threads through these studies. According to this narrative:

The meaning of “architecture” and “the architect” have existed since prehistoric times, Yet they were, at the time, in potentia, as not-yet fully formed. As History unfolds and progresses from prehistoric times towards its later stage(s), the meaning of “architecture” and “the architect” too begins to

⁴¹ As one architect friend of mine mentioned, “Brahma [one of the Hindu trinity] is the ultimate architect.”

germinate from their potential stage towards their actualization. And each stage of History, classical antiquity (for some), Renaissance (for others), the quarrel between the Ancients and the Moderns (for yet others), and the Industrial Revolution (for even others) actualizes, this not-quite-yet meaning of “architecture” and “architect” bit by bit, till we arrive in the Present (Modernity), when we have the fully formed meaning of architecture and the architect.⁴²

I shall have more to say about this not-yet “formed” stage(s) of the meaning later on. For now, however, let us look at the particular code of history that is embedded in this narrative. The first thing to note is that though this narrative acts as a descriptor of the history of meaning of architecture and architects, it seems to have no history of its own. That is, it is itself not historically situated but rather seems to unfold with the flow of time which is itself assumed as homogenous, secular, unidirectional natural (belonging to nature). And given this “naturalness” of its “temporal” flow it further assumes, firstly, a separation/ detachment of time from events, persons and things, and secondly, a specific spatial assignment of events, persons, and things within that time.

As the postcolonial historian Dipesh Chakrabarty has argued, among others, this tripartite movement, the invocation of “empty homogenous natural time, the separation of time from events, and the specific assigning of places within this time of events, which comprise the historicist logic, has profound implications for our relations and presentations of our “selves” and of the world around us.⁴³ Take for

⁴² I call this a composite narrative because some version of this narrative undergirds almost all works about architecture and the architect. Indeed, often I have come across this “narrative” verbatim. See for example the opening statements of Jon Lang in his work, entitled, *A Concise History of Modern Architecture in India*. Jon T. Lang, *A Concise History of Modern Architecture in India* (Delhi Bangalore [India]: Permanent Black ; Distributed by Orient Longman Ltd., 2002). p.1.

⁴³ Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe : Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, Princeton Studies in Culture/Power/History (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000)., pp. 237-243. See also, Timothy Mitchell, *Questions of Modernity*, Contradictions of Modernity ; V. 11 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000). Gyan Prakash, "Writing Post-Orientalist Histories of the Third World: Perspectives from Indian Historiography," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 34, no.

example, he notes, a person standing in front of the Red Fort in Agra, India today.⁴⁴ For this person, gifted with a consciousness of empty homogenous time, the fort, even though contemporaneously present, always appears as something built in 1573AD by the Mughal Emperor Akbar. In other words, the fort appears as something that is out of step with the observer's time; something anachronistic. What this appearance of anachronism does, he argues, are two things. Firstly, it continually extricates this person from her lived relation(s) with the Red Fort thus framing the time of fort as the time-that-is-past and time-that-is-separate from the time of the observer. At the same time, anachronism, in turn, frames the time of the observer as a discrete unit that is completely bounded and separate from what came before (the only relation between these two times is, ironically, now restructured by the continuous unidirectional flow of calendrical time).⁴⁵ In this second sense, Chakrabarty claims, anachronism further denies the heterotemporality, that is, the fragmentary and pluralistic nature of the observer's present.⁴⁶ It denies, so to speak, the simple observation that our present always and already comprises of things that simultaneously "belong" other and our times. All together, what we have here, Chakrabarty argues, is self-referential and powerful structure. The institution of the "empty time" of history makes anachronism possible, anachronism in turn works to reinstate the "empty time" of history, through which a singular history (of professions, of nations, of anything) can be told. The circle goes on.

1, January (1990); Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World : A Derivative Discourse?*, Third World Books. (London, U.K. Totowa, N.J.: Zed Books for the United Nations University ;US distributor Biblio Distribution Center, 1986); William Mazzarella, *Shoveling Smoke : Advertising and Globalization in Contemporary India* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003); Sudipta Kaviraj, *Politics in India*, Oxford in India Readings in Sociology and Social Anthropology (Delhi ; New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

⁴⁴ Personal communication with Dipesh Chakrabarty.

⁴⁵ Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe : Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*.pp. 237-243

⁴⁶ Ibid. p. 243.

If we revisit our composite narrative, we can now see it as replete with this particular mechanism. To begin with this narrative, as we saw, assumes the “empty time” of history. Consequently, there is (a meaning of) architecture and the architect in classical Greece. Recall here Kostof’s essay. There is (a meaning of) architecture and the architect in medieval times.⁴⁷ There is (a meaning of) architecture and the architect in Renaissance. Recall here Larson’s essay. So on and so forth. For the observer of today [read: historian enabled with the linear historical consciousness] these “things”, due to the principle of anachronism, appear as things that once belonged to their historical context and now exist in the observer’s time as a ‘bit’ of that past. This objectification---their extrication from the shared and lived relation(s) with the observer--- through the principle of anachronism not only turns the eye of the observer-as-participant in to the eye of the witness-as-historian but also turns the meaning(s) of “architecture” and “ the architect” into evidence, affirming the ‘rule of evidence’ of historiography. This mechanism, in turn, reinstates the “empty time” of history through which a singular, universal narrative of the meaning of architecture and the architect can be told.

This universal singular narrative of meaning undergirds and affects the “particular” narrative(s) of meaning of architecture and the architect in many ways. Right at the outset, the invocation of the empty time of history, as we saw, assigns specific times to meaning(s) of architecture and the architect. Now since all architectures belong to some time, it follows that there is an architecture that belongs to “our” time. And since these meanings of architecture(s) and the architect “belong”

⁴⁷ Janet Marquardt and Alyce A. Jordan, *Medieval Art and Architecture after the Middle Ages* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2009); Anthony Gerbino, Johnston, Stephen, University of Oxford. Museum of the History of Science., Yale Center for British Art., *Compass and Rule : Architecture as Mathematical Practice in England, 1500-1750* (New Haven [Conn.] ; London Oxford New Haven [Conn.]: Yale University Press ; In association with Museum of the History of Science ; In association with the Yale Center for British Art, 2009); Spiro Kostof, "The Architect in Middle Ages, East and West," in *The Architect: Chapters in the History of the Profession*, ed. Spiro Kostof (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977).

to *different* times from what has been deemed (by historicist logic) to be the (meaning of) architecture assigned to “our” time,” historicist consciousness (both history and historians) following the flow of time judge the former meaning(s) as anachronistic and accords them a “fixed” status, calling them by hyphenated (clarified) names, “Gothic Architecture,” “Romanesque architecture,” “Medieval architecture,” “Neoclassical architecture,” and so on.⁴⁸ As the descriptors, “gothic,” “medieval” indicate, these “architectures” are something that is seemingly added on to “architecture” proper.

In other cases, even this respect is not accorded, and these different (meanings of) architecture and the architect are placed completely outside the field of architecture and architects, thus we have a whole new nomenclature for “lesser” architecture and the architect: “low-cost architecture,” “vernacular architecture,” “architecture by non-architects,” and craftspeople, builders, developers, master-masons etc. Historicism, thus works to turn difference into a structure of value. Ultimately, it allows the singular unfolding of the meaning of architecture and the architect, deemed most valuable, to proceed unscathed while all “different” and “anachronistic” meanings that do not add to the singular unfolding fall off the pages of history.

Indeed this is precisely the reason, Barrington Kaye, Magali Sarfatti Larson Stevens can safely assume that “architecture” began with Egypt⁴⁹ and Greece, was elaborated by Vitruvius, was given its somewhat “modern” form by Michelangelo, and then got taken up by the French Ecole des Beaux-Arts, which got refuted by the

⁴⁸ Indeed, the entire mechanism of “styles” of architecture is nothing other than “fixing” a particular architecture to a particular time-period, that is, assigning it a “space” within the empty time of “history.” Of course the question to ask here is, how does one decide what architecture belongs to that particular “space” within the empty time of “history.” If one does not already implicitly assume a commonality between buildings in the first place, which ironically has been put in place by the empty time of history itself.

⁴⁹ Egypt occupies a quixotic space within this narrative, it figures only at the beginning of it, thereby fixing Egypt to the time of the Pharaoh’s and classical antiquity. Of course there is no mention of architecture and architect in Egypt after that.

German Bauhaus only to be deconstructed by Eisenman. This is also why the majority of studies of architecture still continue to fight over Le Corbusier, Mies van Der Rohe, (or more recently Peter Eisenman, Peter Zumthor), the Bauhaus or Greek Architecture.⁵⁰ Some fall on one side and others on the other. What they do not realize (or perhaps they do) is that whether they debunk these or praise them, they are always and still talking only about them.⁵¹ This is also the reason why whether it is a student of “architecture” from the China, Surinam, or India, all *have* to learn about the Greek order of columns, have to remember what Corbusier did at Villa Savoy.⁵² For if they do not, their very selfhood as “the architect” is questioned.⁵³

But this is not all the invocation of the “empty time of history” does. As Timothy Mitchell notes, a powerful effect of the force of historicist thought is how it configures “geography.

“Historical time...the time of the West, is what gives modern geography its order, an order centered on Europe. Accounts of the modern world that introduce a topsy-turvy view of this geography, by locating important

⁵⁰ A quick look at the list of “latest scholarship” in architecture featured in the brochure for the Annual meeting of the Society of Architectural Historians seems to confirm this. Out of the seventeen books featured on that list, fifteen still are on Rome, Greece, Bauhaus. See, http://sah.org/clientuploads/TextFiles/AnnMtg2010_program.pdf.

⁵¹ A similar point is also made by Mary McLeod in her article “Other Spaces, and Others.” See, Mary McLeod, ““Other” Spaces and “Others”,” in *The Sex of Architecture*, ed. Diana Conway Agrest, Patricia Weisman, Leslie (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1996). An important attempt at questioning this “hegemony” of the singular trajectory of the meaning of the term has come from the feminist scholarship on architecture. See for example, Diana Agrest, Patricia Conway, and Leslie Weisman, *The Sex of Architecture* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1996). Yet barring a few, such as McLeod, even these have tended to remain within the confines of studying the stalwarts.

⁵² Sushuma Joglekar, “A Sociological Study of Schools of Architecture in Mumbai, India” (University of Mumbai, 2000); Li et al Xiaodong, “Implications of Chinese Architectural Education in Contemporary Chinese Architecture,” *Journal of architecture* 8, no. 3 (2003); G. and Alan Lipman. Mills, “Society and Architectural Education in South Africa - Are Universities Appropriate Venues for Schools of Architecture?,” *Environment and planning B, planning & design* 21, no. 2 (1994).

⁵³ Needless to say, such knowledge about “other” architecture and architect(s) is not something that students of architecture in the “west” which is after all the “subject” of this meaning, repay. For example, it would be a rare occasion if a student of architecture, indeed, even a historian, of architecture from (of) the west knew about the order of columns present in the Gupta dynasty of India, or knew what the word *sthapati* means. Lest this be understood as a diatribe against the west, the same is actually true for students in India too, which of course merely strengthens my argument.

developments outside the West, typically reestablish the order of modernity by removing these irregularities from any determining local context, or any non-European regional or global context, and repositioning them within the West's uniform and singular history. *The discipline of historical time reorganizes discordant geographies into a universal modernity.* [Emphasis added]⁵⁴

Such (re)organization of an “architectural-geography” centered on the West is also undertaken by the invocation of the “empty time of history” in the singular narrative of the meaning of architecture and the architect. Thus where else can Larson locate the (modern, present, actualized), meaning of architecture and the architect, if not in Europe, which is also the “birth place” of “Modernity.” Of course, such a claim is especially ironic, since the same essay also notes,

...Monumental architecture presupposes the development of a productive agriculture that is associated with the beginnings of urban life: *in Mesopotamia, large elaborate temples date from the fifth millennium B.C., some two thousand years before the age of the Egyptian pyramid building, and some three thousand years before Stonehenge...*the origins of architecture are sacred---religious or funerary; only much later, in the third millennium, did the royal palace appear beside the temple in the Sumerian city-states...*Because monumental construction was a function of power, a few Egyptian architects attained the highest ranks in the Pharaoh's service...*[emphasis added].⁵⁵

The question here to ask is that if, as Larson notes, that Egypt had “architects” and Sumer had, “architecture” forty-five hundred years prior to fifteenth century Italy, then how come does “the architect” and the “professions” only appear as she claims in the

⁵⁴ Mitchell, *Questions of Modernity*.p.7. See also, Robert S. Nelson, "The Map of Art History," *The Art Bulletin* 79, no. 1 (March 1997).

⁵⁵ Larson, "Emblem and Exception: The Historical Definition of the Architects Professional Role.", p. 51.

Renaissance, when the tables between *telos* and *techne* were turned. Of course, the answer to this question lies in the invocation of the singular narrative of the meaning of architecture and the architecture. Recall that according to this narrative, of course Sumer had architecture, but it was “architecture-in-potentia,” or “architecture-not-yet.”

Indeed, this geography created by the historically singular narrative performs a double bind. It shores up its own boundaries, its interior, as the normative while relegating those meanings which do not fit into its neat geography as the “outside” in two different yet, related senses. There is, firstly, an outside which does not even merit mention. One can easily think of many countries in Asia, Africa, even Eastern Europe which, if this “history” is to be believed, has not produced a single “architect” or “architecture” which deserves mention. Secondly, there is an “outside” which, although mentioned, is still prefigured by a “lack”, that is, this is an outside that is not-yet. Take, for example, this excerpt from an interview with a sociologist of architecture from India.

They [the West] follow this culture of modernity... after all modernity is something that happened in the west in the 16th century. Modernity is indigenous to the West. For us, it is either an imposition or a gift. Take it as you please. When you think of colonialism you think of imposition. When you think of cultural contact you think of it as a gift...but either way it is a graft... for them it is natural...they are thinking...look at the CIAM resolution...it is a tribute to western analytical culture, to self reflexivity (sic)...There is no such culture here. Nothing. They have repeatedly reflected...we have not. In this sense there isn't much to talk about in Indian architecture or its growth in the larger historic sense of ...as contributors to a culture... culture of architecture. Here we talk about culture creating architects...not about architecture itself creating culture...

My intention in forwarding this extract is not to claim that the interviewee is wrong and that India was “Modern” *before* the “west.” That would, ironically, be a historicist move par excellence on my part. It is to claim that such is the force of this interiority and pedagogy of this interiority that many architects from the “outside,” too believe the clear cut geography of architecture. Indeed, as this dissertation shows later (chapter 2 and chapter 3) an integral moment in the production of the meaning of architecture and the architect in postcolonial India involves a fashioning of the architect-self “within” this “geo-temporality” of the singular narrative and thus being able to lay a claim on the singular meaning of architecture and the architect.

A further effect that the invocation of the empty time of history within the singular universal narrative of the meaning of “architecture” and “the architect is the secularization of this narrative. That is, what the “empty time of history” does, is to claim, on the one hand, that the meaning of architecture and the architect lies not, in the last analysis, in the workings of a divine will nor the self-regulating balance of a natural system, but in the unfolding of a universal secular logic that essentially exists within the architect.⁵⁶ On the other hand, and in the same breath it thus designates everything else in this world, indeed, the world itself as dead, since the only active agent in this otherwise dead world is the architect. Recall here Stevens’ division of the “built environment” into two separate domains of mass and restricted production. By claiming that the latter is the field of “architecture proper” (yet another hyphenation) and that what governs this field are the competition between “architects”

⁵⁶ Perhaps the most famous pronouncement of this kind was made by Walter Gropius who argued that “[E]very healthy human being is capable of conceiving form. The problem seems to me not at all one of existence of creative ability but more of finding the key to release it” (p.44) and that “[W]e have begun to understand that designing our physical environment does not mean to apply a fixed set of esthetics, but embodies rather a continuous inner growth, a conviction which recreates truth in the service of mankind. See, Gropius, *Scope of Total Architecture*. p.153

for the expropriation of symbolic capital of buildings, is he not manifestly claiming that the “meaning” of architect and the architect, lies only within architects.

As this work argues (chapter 3) that while it is true that one can see the ontological singularity of architecture and architects, it is not because this ontological singularity is a “fact” but because its production is central to the production of the meaning of architecture and architects. It is because this too, like the production of the singular geo-temporality of architecture and the architect, is an integral moment of the production of the meaning of architecture and the architect in postcolonial India in so far as it allows certain social agents to claim that they are architects and that what they do is architecture. .

Yet at the same time, as this work will also show (chapter 4) that the production of identity of architects while constructing the ontological singularity of the architect and architecture also contain within it the trace of in-secularity, of the inseparability of things and human beings, of reality and imagination, and therefore the undoing or the unmaking of the production of architecture and architects as ontologically singular.

But perhaps the most important effect of the invocation of empty historical time within the singular narrative of the meaning of architecture and the architect is how it already assumes an identity rather than inquiring it. To see how let us return, very briefly, to our “purely” historicist observer, whom we left standing in front of the Red Fort at Agra.

As mentioned earlier, a fundamental claim of this historical time is that everything can be assigned a place within its continuous unidirectional flow. Thus for our observer, the extrication of the fort and the observer from their lived relation(s)--- predicated on anachronism--- and its subsequent assignment to the continuous flow of time renders the fort as the past in terms of identity as well. That is to say, on the one

hand, the fort appears as the past that has gone by, that is dead and lifeless. Its assignment in historical time ensures that *it is* fixed and bounded as that which *it was* in, say, 1573 AD. This delimitation also ensures that its identity is no longer seen as fluid, changing, dynamic and plural. Thus all subsequent “histories,” memories, events, actions etc are merely understood as “additions,” to an “original” and not as the thing itself. On the other hand, placing the fort in 1573 also makes it the past as precedent. That is, when writing a history of say, “Forts of India,”⁵⁷ it serves as instance of a fort that, when seen from the time of the observer, came *before* the Red Fort in Delhi or the Kumbalgarh Fort near Jodhpur, each of which has been assigned, in turn, its own place in history. In both senses of the word, as the past that has truly gone by and as the past that is an example, the identity of fort at Agra is something that is already occluded from the observer and fixed through the invocation of empty historical time, which appears in the guise of a “type” now: forts-in-general. In both cases the observer is therefore dealing with a structure that occludes her access to the particular identity(s) of the fort in front of her. In other words, her investigation of the “identity(s) is presupposes the identity instead of enquiring it.

A quick look at the literature on architecture and the architect confirms that the same predicament exists there. Take the claim made by Barrington Kaye’s in his study of *The Development of Architectural Profession in Great Britain* as an example. Kaye’s work, as he notes, is a “sociological analysis of the development of professionalism amongst British architects.”⁵⁸ The problem with this formulation is that if professionalism is what is central to professional identity then how one can call someone an architect (admittedly a professional identity) before the development of professionalism. This can only be done if Kaye has already formulated a “general”

⁵⁷ Fortunately, and perhaps not coincidentally, there happens to be a book by the very same name.

⁵⁸ Kaye, *The Development of the Architectural Profession in Britain; a Sociological Study*.p.7.

idea of what the identity of an architect is, and then his study is a checklist of whether architects in Great Britain have been able to “develop” the characteristics which Kaye has deemed architects ought to have. A further implication of Kaye’s formulation is that his account turns some of the initial practitioners of “architecture” into charlatans or manages to marginalize them as not-yet-architects by the latter stages of the narrative. In both cases we see it is the invocation of the discipline of historical time in the guise of the “type” architect actually prevents Kaye from investigating the question of the identity(s) of British Architects the task that Kaye purportedly set for himself.

Published in the 1960’s Kaye’s work can perhaps be dismissed as naïve and reductive since he accepts the self-conception of architect, as holders of specialized knowledge, as the premise for his own work without really investigating it. But this problem persists even amongst those studies that dismiss the possession of specialized knowledge as central to professional identity. Garry Stevens’ work, which we briefly outlined earlier, comes to mind.

As noted earlier, Stevens’ main contention with the professions literature is that they tend to focus on the possession of expert knowledge as being the hallmark of a professional identity. The problem with this formulation, as he sees it, is that it misses the central issue that professional identity is often predicated on not knowing something but on *what one is*. So far so good, Stevens, it would seem, has at last come to grips with the problematic facing the entire professions literature. But instead of *asking what are the different ways one is an architect*, Stevens shifts the terrain of his investigation to *ask how the distinction of an architect is produced*, thus implicitly *assuming* (and *claiming*) that *one already knows what it means to be an architect*. And insofar as this happens, what we see is a sort of return of the same problematic albeit in a new guise. That is, not only is the question of the meaning of the identity of the

architect sidestepped but with this move he brings back the “general” idea of the architect and the singular history of the professions back into his narrative. Ergo, we see in Stevens work, published in the 21st century, still no mention of different “practices” of architecture within the scope of his study; which, I might add, is the whole world. It is worth mentioning that for Stevens, the whole world seems to still be Europe, North America and Australia (his native country). Presumably other “different” practices and practitioners are not-yet-architects and therefore “deservedly” fall of the pages of his analysis of the profession.

1.3 The Question of “History and Identity”: the Argument of this Work.

All through the last section I have attempted to show how the idea of a singular trajectory of the meaning of the term architect and architecture undergirds and affects the literature on architecture and architects. I have especially underscored how the continued usage of this temporality, its implicit anachrony, geographical mappings, and secular imaginings marginalizes and devalues the vast array of different meanings of architecture and the architect from the world over.⁵⁹ From this standpoint I will argue that the singular trajectory of the meaning of architecture and the architect is an inadequate intellectual resource address the central question that this dissertation seeks to unpack; what does it mean to be an architect in postcolonial India? For to ask this question within the ambit of the singular history of the meaning of the term architect and architecture is to condemn architects and architecture in India, always and already,

⁵⁹ A growing body of scholars has only recently begun to address this question of the marginalization of “non-western” architecture. Helpful as these criticisms have been in shaping my own work, what is problematic about these works is that they too continue to accept some version of the singular history of the meaning of the architect. see, for example, Sibel Bozdogan, "Architectural History in Professional Education: Reflections on Postcolonial Challenges to the Modern Survey," *Journal of Architectural Education* 52, no. 4 (1999); ———, *Modernism and Nation Building : Turkish Architectural Culture in the Early Republic*, Studies in Modernity and National Identity (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2001); Zeynep Clancy-Smith öCelik, Julia Ann Terpak, Frances Getty Research Institute., *Walls of Algiers : Narratives of the City through Text and Image* (Los Angeles Seattle: Getty Research Institute ; In association with University of Washington Press, 2009). Abidin Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial : Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, The Architext Series (London ; New York: Routledge, 2000).

“outside” the taxonomy this trajectory has and seeks to create. It would be to relegate architects and architecture in India as “consumers” of this history of meaning as it makes its way from a “putative” West to a “putative” East (both creations, in the first place, of this empty historical time). It would also mean that architecture and architects in India are forever fated to be, in the words of the political scientist Partha Chatterjee, derivative; un-original and ab-original.⁶⁰ That is they are either too late or too early (thus not only not-yet but perhaps never-yet) within the singular temporality the meaning of architecture and the architect.⁶¹

Take for example the following remarks made about architecture and architects in India recently,

Modern means simply up-to-date. The term also attributes certain characteristics to a person or society. One of the hallmarks of a modern society is division of labor. The very existence of a profession in which the design of a product is separated from its making is one such division. In architecture there have been people who have specialized in designing buildings since the beginning of recorded history. Until recently, however, they also played an integrated role in the construction of a project. In India the bulk of building design and construction is still in the hands of the *mistri* or contractor who both

⁶⁰ Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World : A Derivative Discourse* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993).

⁶¹ There is nevertheless a small sliver of scholarship about architecture and architects in India that has attempted to question such “vulgarization” and caricaturing of architects and architecture in India. See for example, Peter Scriver and Vikramaditya Prakash, *Colonial Modernities : Building, Dwelling and Architecture in British India and Ceylon*, The Architect Series (London ; New York: Routledge, 2007)., Arindam Dutta, *The Bureaucracy of Beauty : Design in the Age of Its Global Reproducibility* (New York: Routledge, 2007); A. G. K Menon, "The Contemporary Architecture of Delhi: The Role of the State as Middleman," in *Indo-French Seminar On Delhi* (New Delhi 1998); Jyoti Hosagrahar, *Indigenous Modernities : Negotiating Architecture and Urbanism*, The Architect Series (London ; New York: Routledge, 2005); Swati Chattopadhyay, *Representing Calcutta : Modernity, Nationalism, and the Colonial Uncanny*, Asia's Great Cities (London ; New York: Routledge, 2005). Woods, Mary, women architects in India (forthcoming) Yet leaving Menon's article, and Woods' study of women architects in India these have usually limited their analyses to 19th century and pre-independent India. My own arguments have benefited immensely from these works, especially Woods and Menon with both of whom I have had the benefit of many direct discussions about such issues.

designs and builds. Architects have however played an increasingly significant role in society, in particular, developing conceptions and reflections of modern life in built forms.⁶²

The above argument put forward by Jon Lang is neither rigorously argued, nor particularly profound. Indeed, a quick look at it shows us the kind of contradictory and problematic contentions it makes. For example, if modern means, as he claims, up to date, and if a “characteristic” of modern societies is, as he also claims, division of labor, then it would necessarily mean the modern extends to the whole of the human history! But of course this is not surprising, simply because Lang’s comments are actually replete with the mechanism of the singular trajectory of all meaning. That is precisely why he can implicitly claim that the modernity too has always existed, of course in-potentia only to be actualized in “modernity.” And indeed, if we look at the paragraph that is precisely what he also claims for architecture, “[I]n architecture there have been people who have specialized in designing buildings since the beginning of recorded history.” Now with this singular trajectory of meaning of architecture in place let us see what happens to architects and architecture India, indeed, to India even.

Well to begin with architects and architecture in India are characterized by a lack, since it is not they but “*mistris*” and “contractors” who still design and build buildings. Of since *mistris* and contractors are not architects, and since architects should be the one who should be doing designing and building India, is itself, perhaps not so modern after all! But thankfully, architects are beginning to play an increasingly significant role, thus there is hope for them and India yet, especially since they are (finally) developing conceptions and reflections of modern life. Of course contradicting all of the above is the statement that, “In India the bulk of building

⁶² Lang, *A Concise History of Modern Architecture in India*. p.1.

design and construction is still in the hands of the *mistri* or contractor who both designs and builds.” For if in India *mistris* have, since times immemorial, designed and built buildings, why does Lang insist on calling them “*mistris*” and not architects, who as we are told in the beginning of the paragraph are people who design and build buildings!

Now to be sure a more rigorous and critical application of the singular trajectory of the meaning of architecture and architects would suffice to show that the comments made by Lang are, “pure fiction.”⁶³ Indeed, even within the ambit of this singular temporality one can see that the British Arts and Crafts Movement, often seen as a precursor to Modernism in architecture, could not have happened without the ruminations of someone like John Ruskin who was deeply influenced by the craftsmanship of “objects” from the “Orient.”⁶⁴ One can also see, thanks to calendrical time, that architectural training in a country like India was “ahead” of the West, insofar as women were admitted to schools of architecture far earlier than they were in almost all of “Europe” and the Americas.⁶⁵ The supposed “objectivity” of calendrical time can actually allow us to see these and much much more.

However, clearly it does not. But then calendrical time, as many scholars have noted, is far from objective. Institutionalized within relations of colonial domination, the discipline of historical time and the history of architecture and the architect, still contains vestiges of that unequal relationship. In this sense it is perhaps also inadequate as a resource for coping with the politics that are due to its evocation.

⁶³ Lang, for example, pays no attention to the category of *Sthapatis* in India, who as the V. Ganapati Sthapati has argued, acted as “architects” to buildings dating back millennia. See, for example, V. Ganapati Sthapati, *Indian Sculpture and Iconography* (Middletown, NJ: Grantha Corporation, 80 Cliffedgeway, Middletown, NJ 07701 USA, 2001).

⁶⁴ Jeanne Patricia Moynihan, “The Influence of the Bauhaus on Art and Art Education in the United States” (Ph.D., Northwestern University, 1980).

⁶⁵ Personal conversation with Mary Woods.

But most importantly the singular trajectory of meaning of architecture and architect is an inadequate way to investigate the central question of this work simply because it obscures the very “thing” that allows me to ask the question in the first place. It denies the issue that even before I can produce any knowledge that claim that “history” of the meaning of architecture and architect in India belongs to modernity (or not), even before I can ascribe the “particular” meanings of architecture and architect to this “singular” universal history of meaning of architecture and architects, I can only do so, by not denying the coevalness, the simultaneity of time and space I share with architects and architecture whether this be in imagination, in representation or physically.⁶⁶ It is as the anthropologist Johannes Fabian notes,

Consciousness realized by the [producing] meaningful sounds, is self consciousness. The Self, however, is constituted fully as a speaking and hearing Self. Awareness, if we may thus designate the first stirring of knowledge beyond registering tactile impression, is fundamentally based on hearing meaningful sounds produced by self *and* others [emphasis in original].⁶⁷

Seen from this perspective, the production of knowledge of what the terms architecture and architect mean in postcolonial India does not begin by viewing architects and architecture in India as yet another instance of the onward march of the universal singular trajectory of the meaning of these two terms. It begins then not with a meaning which is already assumed, fixed and lying in some past but rather in the *meanings* as they is being made, in their making. It begins then with dialectical and transitive meaning of the *to be* implied in the question what does it mean to be an

⁶⁶ According to Fabian, the central implication of the singular horizon of temporality is allochronism, that is the denial of coevalness between those who study and those/that which is studied. Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other : How Anthropology Makes Its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983). pp. 33-35

⁶⁷ Ibid. p. 162.

architect in postcolonial India.⁶⁸ It also begins in this sense with the infinite moments of intersubjective time shared by “architects”, “architects” and myself.⁶⁹ In what follows then I present but three of these moments of my time with architects in the hope that they (re)present some of the complexity, the fragmentary, and the dynamic meanings of architecture and architects in India today.

1.4 The Method of this Work: the Archive and the Field

In arguing that the question about the knowledge of what it means to be an architect in India today begins a) with a rejection of the historicist attitude that has characterized scholarly work on architects, generally, and in India particularly, and b) with meanings of expert-subjectivity as they are being made, in their making, I have also indicated, in a manner, the method that is to be employed, which is to be one of hermeneutic interpretation. Here the question of what comprises the “archive” and “field” becomes extremely important, both of which presented challenges immense challenges to this study.⁷⁰

There are many reasons for this. Firstly, there is an acute lack of secondary literature available on architects.⁷¹ This is not only due to, as I have mentioned, the

⁶⁸ For an argument regarding why this “dialectic” of the dialectic is something that has to be studied ethnographically see, Dominic Boyer, *Spirit and System : Media, Intellectuals, and the Dialectic in Modern German Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

⁶⁹ According to the social theorist Alfred Schutz the only way we can make meanings of others actions is when our respective streams of consciousness are simultaneous, that is when we coexist, share an “intersubjective” time, Alfred Schutz, *The Phenomenology of the Social World* ([Evanston, Ill.]: Northwestern University Press, 1967).pp. 102-103

⁷⁰ Indeed, even before my fieldwork began I was warned of such challenges by a particular reviewer of my proposal for funding my dissertation. As part of the comments, the reviewer had noted that though the project presents extremely novel research, the committee could not grant me the funding as they were not sure how I would conduct my research given the paucity of documentation and materials available on the topic.

⁷¹ Much of the existing literature on architects and architecture in India is in the form of historical survey, biographical pieces on architects, and position pieces penned by architects. As example of the former see, Lang, Desai, and Desai, *Architecture and Independence : The Search for Identity--India 1880 to 1980*. See also, Lang, *A Concise History of Modern Architecture in India*. Examples of biography are, Kazi Khaleed Ashraf, James Belluardo, and Architectural League of New York., *An Architecture of Independence : The Making of Modern South Asia : Charles Correa, Balkrishna Doshi, Muzharul Islam, Achyut Kanvinde* (New York, N.Y.: Architectural League of New York, 1998). For

illegibility of architects themselves, which has resulted in their not being scrutinized by academic scholars of other disciplines, but also, and importantly, most architecture programs in India are undergraduate programs geared towards producing “professional” architects.⁷² Consequently, the “disciplinary culture of architecture in India,” as one of my informants noted, is at a very nascent level.”⁷³

Given these structural conditions my work had to proceed rather innovatively. I thus found myself working at several levels simultaneously. On the one hand, I was working at many concrete places and with different types of data. A substantial portion of this involved interviewing architects, architectural educators and students from November of 2005 to Jan 2007. An extended period of my time was also spent at the Tulsi Vidya Bharati School of Habitat Studies at New Delhi, where I had multiple roles. While I was primarily there as participant-observer, my background in architecture also saw me being roped in as a visiting faculty and offering various courses in architectural research and methods. Also while at the school I became a part of the design cell there. These multiple roles led to quite a few unique situations. I sometimes found myself in a place where my informants were also my students. And other times, I found myself working as an architect while I was busy documenting the various projects, student and client reactions. On the other hand, given the paucity of documented work, I found myself following and interviewing architects, their

position papers see, Shireesh Deshpande, "Architectural Education: The Asian Syndrome," *Journal of the Indian Institute of Architects*, no. 2 (1991); Akhtar Chauhan, 2003.

⁷² As far as graduate programs are concerned again these are also geared towards professional architectural practice. There is not a single program which deals with what can be called the “historical and theoretical” aspects of architecture. There are, to the best of my knowledge, only two institutes which offer doctoral degree in architecture. The first is the JJ College of Architecture, Mumbai, the second, is in the School of Planning and Architecture at New Delhi. However, both do not have a formalized doctoral program, their affiliations with universities allow them to admit students who are interested in pursuing a doctorate in architectural studies. In such cases the college works with the respective universities to frame an individualized course of study for the student. Such arrangement are, however, extremely rare, and there are about only ten doctorates of architecture in the whole country.

⁷³ I should clarify here that such a “lack” in a disciplinary culture” no way implies that “architects in India are not “thinking about their discipline. Such a claim would be quite contrary to the grain of this work itself. The “lack” is primarily in terms of structural disciplinary organizations.

organizations, and architectural students across the country. In these I would collect oral narrative and follow discourses and discussions as they happened across the country.

Such variegated roles, multiple sites and oral narratives also presented a formidable problem. Though I enjoyed much transparency and intimacy from my informants as a fellow “architect,” it also resulted in opacity of sorts, especially since it was assumed that I talk the same language. Initially, this along with the opacity, made much of my “findings,” that is my archive and the “field” seem rather depthless and disjointed.

Yet as time passed by I slowly began to realize that this opacity held much of the clue insofar as it formed “knots” or a nodes which were always an already “in relation” with other such knots or nodes, whether this be the everyday of the architects, that of architectural discourse, their every practice as architects, the politics of the nation, or even our informal conversation. It is this metaphor of a knot, which allowed me to see this work as a being a hermeneutic in the fundamental sense of being something whose meaning itself emerges by mediating between different nodes, and trying to elucidate the structure of each but as always and already in relation to and with the other.

1.5 The Outline of the Work.

The three chapters of this work make up precisely such moments through which I attempt to interpret the question of what it means to be an architect in India today. The first is moment is what I call the moment of the Architect. This moment begins from a specific moment, a two-day conference on formulating the “Minimum Standards for Architectural Education in India” held at Ahmedabad, which led me to question what the Architects Act of 1972 means to those agents who call themselves architects. In asking the question in this manner then, this moment tries to (re)capture

some of the investment and meanings that emerge if one does not treat the Act as a dead object whose meaning emerges only from the vantage point of what it has become. In doing so, the chapter argues, that a meaning of the Act that emerges is that of it as a project, which “projects” a particular domain in postcolonial India. The essence of this projection, the chapter argues, lies in the “imagined” figure of the architect. As the chapter shows this is an imagination in which the meaning of the architect is, (in) being different from engineers and planners, (as) being rightful claimants to the meaning of the term architect as it gets articulated in modernist discourses of architecture, and (as) being a figure who is always imbricated in the postcolonial Indian State’s “project” of nation building.

Yet as the chapter also shows such projections are never without unintended and unforeseen consequences. That this domain is never really autonomous. That, the figure of the architect, in spite of the best efforts of this domain, finds itself continually affected by the very projections that seek to create its autonomy. Consequently there is a great deal of ambivalence that the social agents who populate this domain, and whose activities project this domain, have towards this domain.

The second moment is the Moment of Design, the self proclaimed “expertise” of those agents who claim for themselves the title architect. In this moment I analyze two central aspects of the training of architects, the design jury, and architectural drawings. I show how the particular undecidability to drawings and the “talking” in juries produces the meaning of design in terms of a future that will be and the architect as a subject endowed with a historical consciousness who projects and creates this future that will be. I also show how such a meaning of design and the architect ultimately feeds back into that domain called architecture in postcolonial India whose essence is the figure of this architect.

The third moment I (re)present is the Moment of *jugar*. If the two earlier moments trace what can be called the space of a putatively coherent national architectural culture in India today through the agency of certain social agents who claim and produce for themselves the title architect and the expertise, design, in this moment then, I pursue (an)other sign on which these agents lay a claim, and through which they articulate themselves, their expertise and their field. This is the Hindi-Urdu word *jugar*, which roughly speaking, translates as, a way (out), a device, to assess, and to maneuver. Being from Delhi myself, I was very much aware that *jugar* and its synonyms, *tarkeeb*, *upay* (strategy, strategic), *thor* (to break), are words that have much currency in Delhi, and the northern parts of India. Yet what grabbed my attention is the special affinity many “architects” claim they have for this word, so much so, that they would constantly assert that *jugar* is what architects are experts at and that architects are the greatest *jugarus* (those who do *jugar*).⁷⁴ It is this claim(s) that I pursue in this moment.

As I show in this moment the claims to *jugar* and being *jugaru* reveal, as it were, completely different imaginations of the selfhood, of expertise and the world of those agents who claim that they are architects. Through this I argue, that this moment presents, as it were, a limit to this “nationally coherent culture of architecture and architects” that the two earlier moments attempt to continually produce. Yet as I also argue this limit, is not an “outside” but rather an inside, as it is fundamentally the same agents who claim that they are architects also claim that they are *jugarus* and that what they are “experts” at is *jugar*.

⁷⁴ More recently *jugar* has emerged as buzzword amongst management professionals in India where it is pitched as an “Indian ingenuity. See for example, Krishnan T. R., *From Jugaad to Systematic Innovation: The Challenge for India* (The Utpreraka Foundation 2010). There are also numerous web-blogs available on *jugar* now.

2.0 MOMENT OF THE ARCHITECT

On the 13th and 14th of February 2006, the Council of Architecture (henceforth Council), the statutory body responsible for registering architects and regulating architectural education in India, organized a workshop in Ahmedabad. Held at the Millowner's Association building, one of the few buildings in India designed by the master of modern architecture Le Corbusier, the professed aim of this workshop was to elicit feedback from the heads and/or representatives of the architectural schools of the nation on the new "Minimum Standards for Architectural Education." Yet as the event progressed what was to be a simple dialogue over the specifics of the draft proposal soon turned in to a full blown altercation between two opposing factions.

On one side of the divide were the incumbents, that is, the President of Council and the members of the committees for undergraduate and graduate education. For them, the day began with an air of confidence and "professional" sobriety. Vijay Sohoni, the recently elected President noted the historic nature of the workshop; "This is the first time since its inception that the Council has involved Principals of *all* colleges in preparing the "Minimum Standards...we want to make this process as open and participatory as possible." Akhtar Chauhan, the Chairperson of the Committee for Graduate Education and the principal of the Rizvi College of Architecture, Mumbai presented the audience with a moving story about how in the early months of 2005 Sohoni had personally requested him to undertake this massive responsibility; how he had then left the bedside of his ailing father to answer this call to duty; and how he (along with his member colleagues) had spent the entire year formulating a radically new curricula with feedback from all colleges (here he presented the reams of paperwork that the Committee had collected). Their underlying message was not only the novelty of the new syllabus but also the labor, dedication, and transparency that

accompanied its making. And, that the mere presence of “new” minimum standards for architectural education was proof enough that the Council, much like the resurgent India of the 21st century, had finally shaken off its bureaucratic lethargy.

Buying none of this self-congratulatory rhetoric however, was the audience who formed the other side of the divide. Comprising heads of the architectural institutes and a few invited dignitaries, such as B. V. Doshi and Ram Sharma (two very prominent architects in India today), J. R. Bhalla (the founding President of the Council) and G. Dalvi (the President of the Indian Institute of Architecture); this group consistently challenged the Council and its committees from two different ends. On the one hand, there were the “seniors” who spoke about architectural education and architecture philosophically, even lovingly. In his opening remarks, Doshi spoke of his educational and work experience in the atelier of le Corbusier. He likened it to having wings that allowed him to fly; to soar to lofty heights; to explore the creative potential of architecture. Ram Sharma reminisced about his experiences of feeling “free” to explore any facet of architecture at the Graduate School of Design at Harvard. Finally, Bhalla spoke of the Architects Act of 1972 (henceforth Act), reminding all of the incredible energy and time he had invested to get this most precious legislation enacted. How he would personally push the files from the desk of one bureaucrat to another, spending countless hours in the mazelike corridors of the Indian parliament; how he would meet with ministers who did not know the meaning of architecture; how he defended the position of the architects against the onslaught of the engineers who had “made up their mind to oppose the architects” at all and any costs. And finally, he spoke of how in spite of all these odds, he had managed, in a somewhat promethean fashion, to bring this Act to the architects. The point, it seemed, the seniors wanted to drive home was that a) their “beloved” architecture (the discipline, the profession, its education) in India had fallen prey to unimaginative and derivative tendencies that had

stunted its creative potentials, and b) that the Council could not, in fact should not, be myopic in its outlook about architecture and its education. They felt that the Council should, instead, use this opportunity to renew and further the dreams and aspirations for the discipline and profession that they had when it all began.

The second line of attack emanating from this group came from the “juniors.”¹ For them the sentimentality of the “older” vanguard was fine in principle but lacking any teeth. And as the first day wore on their initial reticence was soon replaced with a tactic that was to leap at any and every chance to strike a blow at the Council. Thus when the committee for graduate education presented their proposals to “rename” disparate degrees such as M. Plan, M. Arch or M. Urban Design under the umbrella term M. Arch, representatives from the “juniors” asked what right did the Council have to undertake such a move. Planning, and urban design, they argued, are separate professions in their own right and not sub-disciplines of architecture as the move implied. Others chimed in claiming that the Council’s actions were illegal as planning, urban design, interior design were not under the jurisdiction of the Council of Architecture. For yet others, the whole nomenclature was itself problematic. For if the graduate degree in planning was to be renamed M. Arch (planning), what would happen in the case of the M. Arch degree. “What will you put in the brackets then?” chided one member of the audience.

As the second day of the conference proceeded, the antagonism between the “juniors” and the Council became even more pronounced. Part of this had to do with a plan formulated by the “juniors,” at the end of the previous day to openly confront the president and get some “real” answers. But things really got out of hand when the president launched a counter attack of sorts. His rebuttal seemed to follow a simple strategy: each time a member of the audience questioned the policies or the actions of

¹ I use the terms juniors and seniors to essentially capture the difference in the ages of the two groups.

the Council, he would claim that he too would have liked to do things differently but, as president, his hands were tied by the rules and regulations as per the Act. Take for example his reaction when someone announced that the Indian Institute of Planners was threatening legal action against the Council in lieu of the latter's predatory tendencies.

“I would like to draw your attention to what is in-ter-nationall-y accepted [emphasis in original]. Under the General Agreement of Trade in Service (GATS), we have a letter from the Ministry²... categorically stating that under GATS planning, interior architecture are all included along with architecture and architecture is the body-the statutory body of the architects is the one which will regulate...so whether we like it or not we will have to do it... and the Council is a statutory body established by an Act of the Parliament of India...so I have told them the Council will only do what is provided in the Architects Act and we will not go beyond it.”

Or when someone suggested that the Council should limit itself to broad and generic guidelines only and not present such detailed and restrictive recommendations in the minimum standards for architectural education, the president replied,

“I would love to do something like that provided I had the flexibility in the Act ...but unfortunately I have to respond to what is there in my Act. My Act says talk about accommodation...I have to talk about it...*you see I am a creature of my Act... I can't go beyond it.*” [Emphasis added]

Finally, when another member of the audience enquired whether the Council was contemplating different kinds of registration for planners, interior architects and

² The Ministry in question is the Ministry of Human Resources and Development. The ministry is divided into two departments: the Department of School Education and Literacy, which deals with primary education and literacy, and the Department of Higher Education, which deals with secondary and post-secondary education. Erstwhile Ministry of Education now functions under these two departments, as of September 26, 1985

architects as these were, according to the General Agreement of Trade in Services (GATS), under the purview of the statutory body of architects. The president again turned to the Act,

“There are many things we can do but my problem is simply this that after pioneering efforts of many people, including one gentleman, sitting here we have been able to get the Act. If we try to tinker with that Act and go to the Parliament...I am quite scared that there are sufficiently powerful interests who would want to do away with the Act itself... do we want that risk? *It will be like opening Pandora’s Box...* [Emphasis added]”

To me, sitting there and watching these rather impassionate exchanges and the president’s incessant invocation of the Act to deflect a growing mutiny within his ranks was not altogether surprising. It seemed like a case of textbook politics; a bureaucratic stonewalling. Yet what did surprise me at the time was the reaction of the crowd, when the president raised the specter of “doing away” with the Act. No sooner did he do this, the growing resistance instantly crumbled only to be replaced with a silence that pervaded the entire room. And as I glanced towards the “group” that had decided to openly confront the President, I could not help but wonder that why was it that the mere mention of the possibility of “absence” of Act was enough to completely take the wind out of the sails of the resistance.

2.1 Taking the Lid off Pandora’s Box

In this chapter then I try to investigate what this Architects Act means to architects in India. At one level, the query seems rather strange. Its answer appears quite self-evident. For what else can the Act mean, other than how the president used it in his answer to the questions about the General Agreement of Trade in Service (GATS). That is, as a public legal document, which serves to protect the architect’s

control over a particular area of work?³ Also, what else can the Act mean other than being a stick which is used to maintain authority, as we saw the President also do, when the architects at the workshop seemed to question said authority.⁴

Yet, however plausible such interpretations of the Act may be, seeing it in this manner is also to miss great many things. For one it would be miss the silence that pervaded the hall when the President briefly brought up the possibility that tinkering with the Act may actually lead to its undoing; a silence that spoke volumes about how deep are the imbrications of the Architects Act and the very sense of selfhood of architects in India.⁵ It would also be to miss the kind of mood, the affective charge

³ Indeed, I can think of countless examples from my fieldwork when I saw the Act being used in such a manner. Take for example, the recently concluded battle between the Council and the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) over who had the right to regulate the education of architects in the country. Since the nullification of the Memorandum of Understanding between the two in Dec. of 2003 each had claimed that the regulation of schools of architecture and architectural curricula was their prerogative. Battle lines had been drawn and architects had rallied to the cause. The matter had finally gone to the Mumbai High Court, where Acts battled with each other. In the end, the Architects Act of 1972 had prevailed over the AICTE Act of 1987. The court had held that “as far as Architectural Education is concerned, the Architects Act, 1972 is a special legislation and the AICTE Act is a general legislation and therefore the provisions of the AICTE Act to lay down functions for technical education generally cannot be construed to displace the authority of the Council of Architecture constituted under the Architects Act, 1972.” To a large extent the Courts decision had quelled the fears of the architectural community. Yet at the same time there was also a widespread opinion that the crisis had actually “jerked” the council into finally thinking about its role in (re)defining the boundaries of the profession and discipline through education. “Why do you think we are finally having this “new” Minimum Standard after twenty years,” one participant at the workshop had replied when I asked him what the he felt was the motive for the Council’s sudden pro-activity.

⁴ These are the two ways in which traditional analyses of professions and “expert labor” has interpreted “things” like the Act. See for example, Andrew Delano Abbott, *The System of Professions : An Essay on the Division of Expert Labor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988); Magali Sarfatti Larson, *The Rise of Professionalism : A Sociological Analysis* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977).

⁵ A particularly telling example of the way the Act and architects are enmeshed within the everyday of each other is an incident that occurred during the final days of my fieldwork at the Tulsi Vidya Bharati School of Habitat Studies (henceforth TVB). As a part of my effort to gather some basic information about the students at the college, I had distributed a survey that included, at the end, a space for students to identify themselves if they so chose. As I sat one afternoon in the college canteen sipping tea, Jensil John, a final year student stormed into the canteen jocularly screaming, “[W]here is that Jaideep Chatterjee, he keeps giving us all these things to fill. As soon as he spotted me, JJ (that’s how he was known and who had by now become a dear friend) rushed up to me, pulled out a chair and slammed the questionnaire down in front of me. He then proceeded to carefully write the following thing down: Ar. Jensil John—ARCHITECT and underline his name and the title architect many times. At one level, I knew that JJ’s euphoria was due to the fact that he had successfully defended his undergraduate thesis. But what I also knew by then was that according to rules of the Architects Act of 1972, defending your undergraduate thesis meant an automatic eligibility to register yourself into the Register of Architects maintained by the Council and the right to *call* yourself an architect. For me it was hard not to see the

that permeated Bhalla's speech when he talked of bringing this "precious object" to architects, or even Doshi's hopes and dreams for the field of architecture in India.

Furthermore, and not unimportantly, to see the Act like so would also be to assume that the governing idiom between architects and the Act is one of utility. That is, it would be to assume that the Act *is* a "thing" that lies dormant only to be summoned when architects need to "use" it as a "legal document" or a "stick." Indeed, it would be to thus imply that the Act is a dead object, one whose meaning has thus been fixed and lying in the past. It would mean that the Act has no other possibilities other than say, for example, the two outlined above. It would also mean to turn the Act into an object of contemplation, that is, as basically something that is at a remove from architects themselves. However, as evidence from my fieldwork shows, this is definitely not the case. Indeed, as the vignette from the education workshop, as well as my countless interactions with architects, shows the Act, for architects in India, is something they live with daily; it figures in their day to day existence as architects, it figures in how they educate themselves, in how they fundamentally imagine what they are.

In asking the question in this manner then, this chapter tries to (re)capture some of the meanings that emerge if one does not undertake such methodological inversion. That is, if one does not treat the Act as a dead object whose meaning emerges only from the vantage point of it lying "behind" architects but rather as something that already is "ahead" of all architects in India. In doing so, the chapter argues, that a meaning of the Act that emerges is that of it as a project, which "projects" a particular domain in postcolonial India. The essence of this projection, the chapter argues, lies in the "imagined" figure of the architect. As the chapter shows this

pride and confidence in JJ's voice and the strut in his walk that was enabled, in no small measure, by the Act.

is an imagination in which the meaning of the architect is, (in) being different from engineers and planners, (as) being rightful claimants to the meaning of the term architect as it gets articulated in modernist discourses of architecture, and (as) being a figure who is always implicated in the postcolonial Indian State's "project" of nation building.

Yet as the chapter also shows such projections are never without unintended and unforeseen consequences. That this domain is never really autonomous. That, the figure of the architect, in spite of the best efforts of this domain, finds itself continually affected by the very projections that seek to create its autonomy. Consequently there is a great deal of ambivalence that the social agents who populate this domain, and whose activities project this domain, have towards this domain.

Given this task, the chapter first begins with the "immediate history" that leads up to the event of the Act. It then proceeds to elaborate the larger contexts of the global discourses of architecture and the parallel elaborations of, what many scholars have called the logic of postcolonial governance.⁶ In each of these sections the effort is to delineate the particular meanings about the figure of the architect in postcolonial India that are projected. The chapter then moves on to a consideration of the Act as a project. It finally ends with an event of far more recent vintage to show how the project of the figure of the architect finds itself always and already affected by concerns "other" than the very projections it makes.

2.2 Event: The Architects Act of 1972

On the 25th of May 1972, tucked away in a little corner of third page of the *Times of India*, was the following news report.

⁶ See for example, T. J. Byres, ed. *The State and Development Planning in India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994)., see also, Partha Chatterjee, "Development Planning and Indian State," in *The State and Development Planning in India*, ed. T. J. Byres (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994).pp. 51-72.

“Parliament has approved a bill making it unlawful for any persons to designate himself as “architect” unless he has the requisite qualifications and experience and is registered with a new “Council of Architecture”

Already adopted by the Rajya Sabha, the “Architects bill” was passed by the Lok Sabha today, meeting a long standing demand by professional organizations for statutory regulation to protect the general public from unqualified persons working as architects.

Though the bill received wide support, members felt that the object behind the new law would be better served if civil engineers were also brought within its purview to ensure that the buildings they constructed were safe and economical.

Mr. D. P. Yadav, deputy minister for education assured members that engineers would come within the purview of the act if they have practiced for five years as architects.”⁷

The brevity of the news report was in one way not unsurprising. Given that this was just six months after the end of the Indo-Pak war in the December of 1971, the fact that a small community (roughly two thousand in number at the time)⁸ had managed to secure their own bill and Council was hardly “big” news. Yet, at the same time, what the brevity of the news report did mask was the extremely rocky road that this seemingly “innocuous” bill had to traverse in order to get passed. For example, it did not report that this bill was first introduced in the Indian Parliament four years ago in the 66th session of the Rajya Sabha, and that it had taken it four years and the formation of a Joint Select Committee comprising fifty two members from the two houses of the Indian Parliament to get legislated.

⁷ "Parliament Approves Architects bill," *The Times of India*, 25th of May 1972.

⁸ "The Architects Bill, 1968: Report of the Joint Committee," ed. Rajya Sabha Parliament of India (Government of India, 1969).p.5.

In fact, as I realized, the bill had had an even longer life. When I spoke with J. R. Bhalla, the founding president of the Council, and the man unanimously accepted as the “architect” of the Architects bill,⁹ he noted that the idea for such a bill had been “in the works” for almost two decades

“In 1951, there was one Mr. Bhabha from Bombay who was a minister, and I raised it with him... but nobody took any heed of that...it only became popular in '65.”

Bhalla attributed the bill’s later popularity to two reasons. Firstly, there were his personal efforts in the subsequent years to get members of the Indian Parliament, indeed the Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, interested in the bill for architects. Nehru However did not initially see any particular reason for a law regarding architects.¹⁰ Yet given his later associations with Le Corbusier and the Chandigarh Project he did become far more sympathetic to the cause of the profession and of architecture.¹¹ The second reason Bhalla gave for the later popularity of the idea was a particular conference that he, along with prominent “architects” from New Delhi, organized in February of 1965. This conference was regarding the role of the architect in emerging nations. Its aim was guided by three questions:

- 1) Is it feasible, and how to reconcile rapid growth and rapidly changing social conditions in developing countries with a) fine architecture, and b) adequate environment, including consideration for health, safety, communication, recreation and education?
- 2) This pressure of sudden urban growth results in haphazard housing development creating slums and undesirable human living conditions. As a

⁹ "The Architect of the Architects bill," *Hindustan Times*, 26th may 1972.

¹⁰ Personal Communication with J. R. Bhalla.

¹¹ *Ibid.* For a discussion of the relationship between Nehru and Corbusier see Ravi Kalia, *Chandigarh : In Search of an Identity* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1987).

consequence these slums account for a very small city, but cost the community a disproportionate amount through juvenile delinquency, crime, disease, accidents, and consequently add to existing poverty.

What is the form and what are the tasks of physical planning in the face of such conditions, and how can the architectural profession and the educational system be organized and oriented to adequately cope with these tasks?

3) What are the ethics and tasks of an architect in emerging nations?¹²

I shall have more to say about these questions in the subsequent sections of the chapter, especially the relations between the economy, planning, architecture, the architect and the nation-states that it simultaneously assumes and propagates. This relation, as we shall see, was crucial component of the demand made by certain expert social agents that they be entitled, “architect.” But for now however, what is important is to note that this conference produced two desirable results for them. Firstly, unlike earlier and personal efforts by Bhalla, this conference managed at last to make a dent, within the Indian government, about what architects were claiming was the universal validity of the relationship between architects, architecture and the development of nations. Mehr Chand Khanna,¹³ the newly appointed Minister for Public Works Department, one of the main guests of honor at the conference, noted,

“You [architects] have given me a certain inkling of the way your mind is working and you have made specific recommendations. Whether one of you should be a member of the Planning Commission is beyond me. But I do certainly agree that in the Planning Commission there should be a little better appreciation of the role of the architect in the life of the country. That point I

¹² "Seminar on the Architect and the Community," (New Delhi: India International Center, 1965). p.10.

¹³ Khanna had played a pivotal role in the development of New Delhi in the post partition era. He was personally responsible for mobilizing the massive rehabilitation schemes for the refugees from Pakistan who had come into New Delhi. See, Suparna Chatterjee, "Creating a Capital: The Ninth Delhi Plan and Decolonization " *Historical Geography* 27(1999). pp. 73-98

can assure you, I am certainly going to bring to the notice of the Planning Commission, that where you allocate resources, 2000 crores or 3000 crores both in public and private sector under housing, there should be an architect or a special wing should be established in the Planning Commission. To what extent they will react to my suggestion I cannot say, but as far as I can see the suggestion is a good one.”¹⁴

Secondly, and not unrelated to the first issue, the conference also underscored the seeming lack of appreciation that the newly independent Indian nation-state had for architects vis-à-vis the engineer. Again Mehr Chand Khanna’s closing remarks are instructive about the position formulated by the architects.

“Now some of you have talked to me and some of you have talked to my secretary, but I have a feeling, rightly or wrongly that I have failed up till now to bring about a marriage between an architect and engineer in my ministry. Though they are working under the same Chief Engineer, but somehow or the other the architect has a feeling that he is not having [sic] his due. I was told in the beginning his plans were being mutilated. Even a small executive engineer can go and change his plans. I have set matters right to a certain extent. I have not succeeded fully. But today I am not a position to say that I can do without Rana or I can do without Patel. I need both of them. Now what place should Rana have in the CPWD [Central Public Works Department] and what place Patel should have?”¹⁵

¹⁴ "Seminar on the Architect and the Community," (New Delhi: India International Center, 1965).p. 17

¹⁵ Ibid. p. 17, The Rana referred to in this abstract is Mansingh Rana, who was the Chief Architect of the CPWD at the time. I assume that Patel refers to Rana’s counterpart in the engineering department. Although this is something I have not been able to confirm. Rana was himself a graduate of the Frank Lloyd School of Architecture at Taliesin West, Scottsdale Arizona. Upon the completion of his degree he had returned to India and joined the CPWD as an architect. See short biographies of architects in Association Francaise d'Action Artistique, *Architecture in India* (Paris: Electra, 1985).

Much of the debate concerning the Act, prior to its enactment in the Indian parliament, as we shall see momentarily, was centered on these two themes. But before that, it is important to note one other critical event that Bhalla did not mention, which nevertheless, propped up the platform of the architects in an unprecedented way. This was the election of a certain Mr. Piloo Mody to the Lok Sabha (the lower house of the Indian parliament) in 1967.¹⁶

Born on November 14th 1926, Mody came from a family of prominent politicians and personalities. His father, Homi Mody had been well-known in pre-independence politics, his brother Russi Mody would later become the renowned chairperson of Tata Steel. Yet, Mody's career did not start in politics. After graduating from the Doon School, he joined the J. J. College of Architecture in Mumbai, and then moved to the US to pursue his graduate education at College of architecture at University of California at Berkeley.¹⁷ It was at Berkeley where he met his lifelong friend Zulfikar Ali Bhutto,¹⁸ through whom Mody first became interested in the politics of South Asia.¹⁹

Mody received his master's degree in architecture in 1951 and soon returned to India. Yet upon his return, he did not join politics immediately. For a young architect, something far more interesting was taking place in India at the time; Le Corbusier, the "prophet" of modern architecture had also arrived at the same time to fulfill his

¹⁶ There was and never has been anyone with a background in the discipline of architecture elected to the Indian Parliament since Piloo Mody. The same is not true for the engineers as people with a background in the engineering discipline were and continue to be regularly elected to the Indian parliament. Piloo Mody, *Critique: Selected Works of Piloo Mody* (New Delhi: Newsindia Publications, 1983). p.2

¹⁷ Ibid. p.5.

¹⁸ Zulfikar Ali Bhutto would later go on to become President of Pakistan from 1971 to 1973. After the adoption of the new constitution of Pakistan in 1973, Bhutto as the head of the Pakistan Peoples party was sworn in as Prime Minister on 14th August 1973. Bhutto remained in power till 1977 when he was executed on charges of "conspiring to murder" a political opponent by the order of the military dictator General Zia-ul-Haq who had deposed Bhutto. See, Sugata Bose, Ayesha Jalal, and NetLibrary Inc., *Modern South Asia History, Culture, Political Economy* (New York: Routledge, 1998).

¹⁹ Piloo Mody, *Zulfi My Friend* (Delhi,: Thomson Press (India), 1973. p.2.

obligations to the Punjab Government to build Chandigarh. Mody quickly joined the team of Indian architects, U. E. Chowdhury, B. P. Mathur, M. N. Sharma and Jeet Malhotra who were to work under the architect team of Corbusier, his cousin Pierre Jeanneret and the British architects Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew.²⁰

Mody's career as a practicing "architect" was however short-lived. By the late 1950's, the political climate in India had changed quite perceptibly. Many politicians, chief amongst them Chakravathy Rajagopalachari and Acharya Kriplani felt that the Congress Party after the death of Mahatma Gandhi was increasingly toeing the line of Nehru and his "socialist" goals. In 1959, Rajaji (as Rajagopalachari was known) who had previously retired from active political life came back into the political fray and formed a new party known as the *Swatantrata* (Freedom) *Party*. The guiding ideals of the new party were fairly simple. On the one hand it opposed the heavy-handed statism of the Nehruvian governance. On the other hand, it believed in the right of every individual to pursue life, liberty, and happiness.²¹ Mody, who had by then moved to Delhi and become active in local politics, joined the party the day it was formed and began working actively to promote its somewhat libertarian philosophy. He became "committed to limited government and wanted to liberate all productive and creative forces from the jungle of laws and regulations that inhibited the creative instincts of the people."²²

Mody's belief in the ideology that it was the duty of the government to stand back and allow the creative instincts of people to flourish uninhibitedly is extremely crucial. Indeed, in many ways, it informed many of the arguments that he put forward in front of the Indian Parliament in support of the bill for architects. Yet at the same

²⁰ Ravi Kalia, *Chandigarh: In Search of an Identity* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1987). p.35.

²¹ Mody, *Critique: Selected Works of Pilo Mody*. p. 2

²² *Ibid.* p. 7

time, this belief also presented a hitch of sorts. If, as Mody believed, governments should and must reduce its role in framing rules and regulations that would inhibit the free associations of men exchanging idea and working towards the universal goals of mankind, then how could Mody frame an argument that would, in all fairness, ask the government for rules and regulations regarding the architect? To get the answer to this question we shall have to revert back to the conference on the architect and the community, specifically to one session entitled, “Ethics and Tasks of an Architect in Emerging Nations,” that Mody chaired.

This particular session had two speakers. Each of the papers handled two halves of the question that were required to complete the argument. The first paper entitled, “The Architect and the Use of Resources” was delivered by a young and emerging architect known as Charles Correa who had just returned after completing his graduate education in architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.²³ Correa argued that unlike developed nations of the West, emergent nations such as India did not have the luxury of wasting its already stretched resources. Given this parametric condition, he had four suggestions to make.

- 1) The underdeveloped countries of the world *must* use their resources as efficiently as possible
- 2) The architect has a pivotal role to play in this, because of his structural and other technical disciplines [sic], and, most important of all: because of his visual faculty as well.
- 3) Design must be taught as quietly as biology. No false theatrics, no overstimulation [sic], no *prima donnas*. We cannot afford them.

²³ See short biographies of architects in India, in Artistique, *Architecture in India*. See also "Correa Comes Back: World-Renowned Alumnus Returns to Join the M.I.T. Faculty," *Plan : review of the M.I.T. School of Architecture and Planning*, no. 53 (2001).pp.2-6.

4) We must strive to find the fundamental human truth which make the houses livable and cities workable and express these in our teaching and in our work [Emphasis in Original].²⁴

Apart from a kind of Malthusianism which undergirds Correa's argument, what we have here, underlined, are two important ideas.²⁵ Firstly, for all its "subjective" or even visuality, architecture must be taught, even understood as a science, that is, "objectively". And like science and scientists, architecture and architects must abhor any kind of false pretenses and proceed firmly on its path. Additionally, more importantly for our purposes, we also come across the notion that the architect has a pivotal role to play in the development of "underdeveloped nations." Mody, for his part, agreed with Correa wholeheartedly. In fact, having worked on the Chandigarh project he had come to somewhat similar conclusions himself.²⁶ But still the question of asking government to interfere in matters of civil society remained a problem. The answer to this conundrum came in form of the next paper delivered by Mr. Peter Bynoe, who was a research fellow of the Commonwealth Association of Architect to India. Like Correa, Bynoe too compared the work of an architect to that of a scientist,

The modern scientist does not rely on guesswork or on someone else's thoughts, but on past achievements, analysis, tests and proof; and similarly, the

²⁴ Charles Correa, "The Architect and the Use of Resources," in *Seminar on the Architect and the Community* (New Delhi: India International Center, 1965), p. 50

²⁵ According to Malthusian theory of population, population increases in a geometrical ratio, whereas food supply increases in an arithmetic ratio. This disharmony would lead to widespread poverty and starvation, which would only be checked by natural occurrences such as disease, high infant mortality, famine, war or moral restraint. His main contribution is in the agricultural sector. According to this theory there are two steps to control the population: preventative and positive checks. Preventative means control in birth rate, and uses of different methods to control birth; and positive checks means natural calamities, war, etc.

²⁶ Personal Communication with Bhalla.

modern architect in the developing country must study his problem, in an analytic spirit...²⁷

But where Correa had stopped short of elucidating the relation between the modern state and the architect, Bynoe who was also the Chief Architect of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago had no such qualms. For him it was the issue of ethics that forged this link. His argument deserves quoting in full.

“Because of the complexity of the task of the architect in the developing emerging nation, he must be, as mentioned before, “a man of integrity”, and because of the many types of space requirements, user activity, and construction techniques, he must be a man of many parts, capable of analyzing proposed projects and supplying adequate solutions by quickly producing sketch proposals and reports.

He will then be expected to pursue with vigour the working documents, play his part with immaculate impartiality in respect to the legal and contractual aspects while carefully supervising the works at all stages to ensure a complete and honest service to his client and community.

The practice of the Profession of Architecture must surely be guided by suitable Codes and Regulations for its members who must be expected to attain a set of standard proficiency. It is therefore, *the responsibility of governments of the emerging nations to “Legalize the practice of the Profession of Architecture”* to provide for the protection of its citizens in the best interest of the developing community.

²⁷ Peter Bynoe, "The Ethics and Tasks of an Architect in Emerging Nations," in *Seminar on the Architect and the Community* (India International Center, 1965).pp.20-25.

The law must be firm and precise, and should aim at the high professional standards recognized in the developed advanced countries, if the aim is to equate the world standard of citizenship. [Emphasis added]”²⁸

Bynoe’s speech was important in several aspects. But most of all, it anticipated, along with Correa’s paper, critical arguments that supplied Mody and Bhalla with a way out of the conundrum they faced. As Bynoe argued, and Mody would later claim, the matter of legalizing the architectural profession was not so much about asking the government to step in and interfere in the functioning of the civil society but rather a question of national interest. The logic was simple yet potent: although the state should not interfere in the free flowering of the creative instincts of its citizens (read: architects), being the elected representatives of the people they had a duty to ensure that the citizens were not duped by charlatans posing as expert. Given this, it naturally followed the government had to set in place a mechanism through which the public recognize who the “real experts” were. Though not new, this argument was a tour de force of sorts and it soon became the official position of the architects.

Indeed, this was precisely what Bhalla argued time and again in front of each dignitary he met.

“I raised [sic] to the prime minister. . .that a bill should be introduced towards this [the legalization of the profession]... but it was out of question... they said the entire country has only 2300 architects...How could the welfare and the built environment of the entire country be left in their hands. So the question of the protecting the practice was totally out... you know. *I got a brilliant idea that when we talk of the protection of the title... if I go to the government and say this is for the protection of the profession they will not agree. So I said my*

²⁸ Ibid. p. 25

act is for the protection of the public... now public... when they wanted to go to an architect do not know who an architect is... it's like a doctor you know.... unless he is registered ... He can't be called a doctor. I said we have civil engineers thousand of who are practicing....but a client does not know who the real architect is. He doesn't know... so then we started working on the issues. So this was the basis..." [Emphasis added]

The two strands, a) that the legalization of the architect is not for the protection of the architect but for the citizenry of a nation and that b) such protection is thereby not only desirable but also necessary and indeed a responsibility of the government, found its fullest expression in the draft bill that Mody and Bhalla started working on immediately after the conference in 1965. It was this draft that was subsequently sent to all state and central ministries. It was this draft that was sent to the engineers and architects of Public Works Department, the All India Council for Technical Education, to other technical organizations, to various institutes of engineering and architecture. It was this draft that was finally introduced to the Indian Parliament in September of 1968, the first session of Parliament that was held after Pilloo Mody was elected to the Lok Sabha in 1967. And it was this draft that architects hoped would result in the bill for them.²⁹

Yet, passing the bill was easier said than done. In the next session of the Parliament, the matter had become infinitely more complicated. Instead of the deputy minister introducing it in the Lok Sabha, it was the Minister for Education and Youth Services Professor V. K. R. V. Rao who introduced it in the Rajya Sabha (the upper house or the House of States).³⁰ Additionally, the request this time from the Minister

²⁹ Aga Jamshed Burjor, "Presidential Address of the Indian Institute of Architects," (Bombay: The Indian Institute of Architects, 1971).

³⁰ "Rajya Sabha Debates," ed. Department of Information and Broadcasting (Government of India, 1969),. pg. 3226

was to form a joint committee of ministers from both houses of the Parliament that would deliberate on the bill. The reason for this request as the Minister noted was,

“[N]ormally Sir, one would have thought a bill of this kind would be innocuous and would need no reference to the Joint Committee because whatever it seeks to do is to try and create a professional body for registering and looking after the standards of architects and prescribing the qualifications and other conditions for those who will be registered as architects. But, as the House is aware, just after I took charge of the new ministry, a large number of representations had been received in the Ministry largely, if I may say so, from engineers and from organizations of engineers. It is understandable that in this country it is not only the architects who design and supervise the construction of buildings but as a matter of fact, a large number of engineers have also been undertaking the same kind of work. Therefore, the Government felt that it would be better to take this bill to a Joint Select Committee where some of these difficulties can be thrashed out.”³¹

The subsequently formed Joint Select Committee held nine meetings, the first on the 17th of May 1969 and the final one on November 21st, 1969. At its first meeting, the committee decided that a press communiqué be issued inviting opinions from various individuals, associations and other bodies interested in the subject matter of the bill. The committee received twenty seven such memoranda. Out of these, oral evidence was gathered from six representatives of various associations.

The format of these meetings was much like a trial. There were three parties involved. Representing the architects were J. R. Bhalla, president of the Indian Institute of Architects, T. J. Manikam, Director, School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi, and. Mhd. Fayazuddin, Architect and Town Planner, Hyderabad. On the

³¹ Ibid, pg. 3229

side of the engineers were representatives from the Indian Institution of Engineers,³² the All Indian Association of Consulting Engineers and Architects,³³ and Mr. S. R. Kar Roy, a Consulting Chartered Engineer, Architect and Valuer from Ranchi. In the middle of these two parties and arbitrating between them were fifty two members of the Indian Parliament who formed the Joint Select Committee, which included, Pилоo Mody who “unofficially” represented the architects, and U. N. Mahida, the Chairman of the Indian Institute of Engineers Statutory Committee, who was taking up the cause of the engineers.³⁴

The main criticism that the engineers leveled at the bill originating was that it would create a monopoly for the architect’s services. “In the wide field of building activity,” Mr. T. R. Gupta, one of the three representatives from the Indian Institute of Engineers noted, “...the role of the architect is that of a specialist. The passing of the bill in its present form may create an unparalleled, uncalled for, and unprecedented situation in that the entire profession of engineers may unwittingly be excluded from practicing their profession as far as buildings are concerned. This will be to the detriment of public interest.”³⁵

The criticism made by Gupta and his colleagues that the bill if passed would exclude many engineers from practicing their profession as far as buildings were concerned was not totally unfounded. It had sprung from a particular clause within the bill, which stated that an architect “means a person qualified to design and supervise

³² The Institution of Engineers India was formed in 1920 under the Indian Companies Act of 1913. It was awarded the Royal Charter by His George Vth, the King and Emperor of the Great Britain in 1930. Functioning as the premier association for engineers in India, it presently has about five hundred thousand registered members.

³³ The All India Association of Consulting Architects and Engineers was a private organization registered under the Societies Registration Act of 1860. At the time of these debates it had a total of 15 members all engineers. However, I was not able to locate any such functioning body in India today.

³⁴ In fact there were more engineers within the Joint Select Committee however only one architect Mr. Pилоo Mody

³⁵ “The Architects Bill, 1968: Report of the Joint Committee,” ed. Rajya Sabha Parliament of India (Government of India, 1969). p. 17

the erection of any building.”³⁶ The engineers felt that this definition of an architect based on what s/he does was fundamentally exclusionary. For them, it specified in a legal manner the jurisdiction of architects. Given such a strict definition, R. A. Loomba from the Indian Institute of Engineers argued, that the bill once made into a law would effectively debar engineers from carrying out their duties as far as buildings were concerned.³⁷

Indeed, as the meetings progressed much of the engineers challenge to the bill hinged on dislocating this definition of an architect. Thus, for example, when Mody argued that the definition did not exclude engineers, U. N. Mahida, his counterpart in the Lok Sabha replied,

“If a thing is specified to be done by somebody in a legal document and if anybody else also could also do it, then that definition loses all its meanings. Suppose you define a surgeon as a person who can undertake operations, could you say that anybody else can also undertake it because the definition does not exclude others? It is a common-sense meaning that others cannot do it. Otherwise, the whole meaning of the definition disappears if a whole range of outsiders [sic] are also allowed to do the same thing.”³⁸

The architects responded to this challenge of the engineers in two ways. Firstly, they replied that the engineers, Mr. Mahida included, were missing the point of bill, which was to protect the title and the style of an architect and not to define the meaning of an architect. In fact Bhalla had already anticipated this objection from the engineers and undertaken behind-the scene measures to assuage their fears. In a letter dated 27th of February 1969 to *The Times of India* and in a later correspondence with

³⁶ Ibid. p. 18

³⁷ Ibid. p. 20

³⁸ Ibid. p. 19

Mr. Mahida, dated 10th May, nine days before the first meeting of the Joint Committee, Bhalla had written that,

“The bill is not for the protection of the interests of practicing architects, and is not intended to do any harm to qualified engineers. The primary object of the bill is to protect the title “architect.” If the bill becomes law, it would be unlawful for any person to designate himself as an architect unless he is registered under the Act... Anybody can continue to practice, prepare designs for buildings and supervise the construction provided he does not call himself an architect... It is clear therefore that the bill does not discriminate against anyone. It only protects the title “architect” and does not debar anyone from designing and supervising building.”³⁹

Leapfrogging off of the kind of arguments made in the conference on architecture and community, this declaration by Bhalla became the official reply of the architects during the meetings. When questioned time and again that why should the Government of India ratify the bill and grant “legal status” to architects, they replied that it was not about defining an architect but rather about recognizing the profession and putting in place measures that would ensure that the public when deciding to hire an architect could know where to look for the “genuine” article. Take for example, the evidence given by T. J. Manickam when the Chairperson of the Committee noted that the “engineers seem quite justified in feeling that they have no work to do after this bill,” Manickam replied,

“...I have not come here to decry the engineers. But what we are trying to do is this: having established a profession of architecture in this country, it would be unfair that later on you club anybody with an architect and call him either as an

³⁹ Ibid. p. 16

architect or practicing architect or ask him to supervise building construction for which he is solely responsible and design the buildings.”⁴⁰

The other way architects responded to the engineers was to criticize their characterization as “specialists” within the wide field of building activity. Bhalla, in his evidence to the Joint Select Committee argued that

“[A]rchitecture is a profession which is different from the profession of a civil engineers. A civil engineer is primarily concerned with objects, which directly deal with civil engineering---it may be roads, bridges, it may be any heavy engineering work, but as far as the building is concerned it is the prime responsibility of the architect. I would like to make a statement here that the profession of engineering is a very respectable profession. It is a profession, which has a specific role to play even in buildings, *but it is a specific role.*”⁴¹

[Emphasis added]

Having preempted this position that what architects were concerned with was not the whole host of things that engineers did but with just buildings, Bhalla then proceeded to clarify that when it came to buildings, architects were not mere specialists but rather a generalist par excellence.

“To give you an example since you have raised this question, take an ordinary movie which is being made. A [sic] movie-making involves many components. It involves the work of a recordist, music director, a person who makes the set, a script writer, a story writer; there are so many elements which go to make a movie. But there is a person who is called a director who coordinates the work of all the elements. This is the person who becomes the leader, who

⁴⁰ Ibid. p. 29

⁴¹ Ibid. p. 4

coordinates the work of many specialists, and that person as far as the building is concerned is the architect who would look at the problem in totality.”⁴²

For the third party, that is members of the Joint Select Committee, the affair became a bit more complicated than anticipated. They soon felt that both engineers and architects had a valid argument.⁴³ And that retaining the meaning of the architect as defined in the bill would prove to be extremely difficult. Matters were also not made easier by the presence of the two Lok Sabha members; U. N. Mahida who had taken up the cause of engineers and Pilo Mody who was supporting architects. Thus when the engineers were asked to provide testimony, Mody would lead the charge against them and when the architects gave evidence, Mahida would “grill” them. The task of the third party, as it emerged, became one of trying to effectively mediate the positions of the architects and the engineers and find a solution that pleased them both.

In the end, this happened through a deletion of the clause that defined the architect. Yet what is noteworthy is that this compromise was not really brought about by the committee itself. In his letter to Mahida, dated 10th May 1969, Bhalla had himself suggested such a compromise,

“After a detailed discussion in order to allay the fears of the engineers, I on behalf of the Indian Institute of Architects agree to delete from the proposed bill the following:

“Clause 2 (a), Clause 35(2).”

Consequential to the above, the statement of objects may be drafted or clarified so as to remove any misunderstandings if any.”⁴⁴

This concession by Bhalla and the IIA became the pivot for further negotiations over the bill. The offending clause was subsequently deleted. And in its

⁴² Ibid. p. 4

⁴³ Ibid. p. 2

⁴⁴ Ibid. p. 17

stead, the following clause was added, “architect means any person whose name is for the time being entered in the register.”⁴⁵ The suggestion to add the aforementioned clause came from the representatives of the Indian Institute of Engineers, whose chairman was Mr. U. N. Mahida. The rationale given for the defining the architect in this manner was provided by Lieutenant. General Loomba, who noted,

“In a bill meant for the registration of architects a definition like the present one is not necessary. May I give two instances in support of my contention? One is the Architects Registration Act of 1931, a British enactment, where there is no definition of architect. Then there is the Advocates Act, 1961, which is an Indian Act, where the advocate has been defined as follows: an advocate means an advocate entered in any roll under the provisions of this Act...”⁴⁶

Leaving aside for the moment, the “postcolonial misery”⁴⁷ of using the British Architects Registration Act as precedent to frame the language of the Indian Act, this definition finally allowed for the Committee to come to a resolution of sorts and present its recommendations to the Rajya Sabha in the May Session of 1970. Though not completely satisfied with results of the Joint Committee, the Rajya Sabha passed the bill during this session. The bill then proceeded to the Lok Sabha where it was presented on the 25th of November 1970. The deliberations in Lok Sabha lasted all through its winter session and the decision on the bill remained pending till its spring session in 1971.

⁴⁵ Government of India, "Architects Act, 1972," Parliament of India (1972). p. 2.

⁴⁶ "The Architects bill, 1968: Report of the Joint Committee." p. 20

⁴⁷ I borrow the phrase “postcolonial misery” from Partha Chatterjee, Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments : Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*, Princeton Studies in Culture/Power/History (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993). Pg.11. According to Chatterjee, India’s postcolonial misery can be characterized as the continual surrender of autonomous forms of imagination of the community to history and structures of the modern colonial state.

Yet, before the bill could be taken up for final deliberation in the Parliament's Spring Session, the Indo-Pak war of 1971 broke out, and normal functioning of the Parliament ceased. It was only after the war ended and parliamentary function resumed that the bill appeared in the summer session of 1972. It was finally passed on the 25th of May.⁴⁸

The enactment of the Architects Registration bill, now renamed as the Architects Act of 1972 drew different responses from the various parties involved in its production. Amongst the Indian Parliamentarians, the passage bill provoked two kinds of responses. The members of the Joint Select Committee were naturally pleased with their successful mediation of the demands of two professions. M. H. Samuel, the Chairperson of the Joint Select Committee in his address to the Rajya Sabha in 1970, noted

“The new bill, therefore, in my opinion, Sir is a reconciliation of the viewpoints of both engineers and architects and a synthesis of the consensus expressed in the Committee. We had in our Committee two very highly qualified respected members of the two professions...May I say that the Chairman had to be very tactful in dealing with Mr. Mahida and Mr. Pilo Mody. But it was all a happy ending. And the Members of the Committee met many witnesses, examined them, read a lot of memoranda submitted, and ultimately brought forward this bill, and recommended this bill. And in our opinion, it was found that it was a balanced measure in the interests of our engineers and architects...”⁴⁹

⁴⁸ India. Ministry of Works and Housing., "Bharat Ka Rajapatra (the Gazette of India)," ed. Department of Publications (New Delhi: Government of India, Ministry of Works and Housing, 1972).

⁴⁹ "Rajya Sabha Debates," ed. Department of Information and Broadcasting (Government of India, 1970). p.162

However, for those Members of the Parliament who were not a part of the Joint Select Committee, the emphasis of the bill was, and continued to be essentially misdirected. Time and again during the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha debates, members, especially those representing the left parties and rural constituencies, rose and criticized the bill for not addressing the “real” issues of India. Raghubir Singh, representing the rural constituency of Rohtak, asked,

Kya yeh sab kuchh sirf do char karor admiyo ke liye hai ya is desh ke 58 karor admiyo ke liye bhi isme koi naksha hai? Isme dehat ke liye koi baat hi nahin hai jisse main iski tareef kar saku...

(Is all this being done for a few millions who live in the city or is there any plan in this bill for the 600 million who inhabit this country? There is nothing in this bill about the villages of India, so how can I praise it)⁵⁰

Somnath Chatterjee, member of the Communist Party of India noted that by not bringing the engineers under the purview of this bill, the government had actually left out the majority of the construction activity that occurred in the country, especially in smaller *mofussil* (provincial) towns where municipality engineers actually undertook much of the construction.⁵¹ Yet others complained that the bill gave much privileges to the architects without really exacting from them equal commitment towards the state and the nation.⁵²

For the engineers, the entire episode represented a victory on most counts. They had, by and large, succeeded in their efforts to limit the influence of the bill. A major part of this agenda hinged on the deletion of the clause that defined an architect. Its removal from the final version of the Act ensured that as far as work place environment was concerned, architects could not have any degree of monopoly for

⁵⁰ Ibid. p. 200

⁵¹ Ibid. p. 202

⁵² "Rajya Sabha Debates.", p. 163

their services. In addition to this, the engineers also managed to add more of their members to the composition of the Executive Committee of the newly formed Council of Architecture. The initial draft had limited their representation to a single member. The new bill increased this to two members from the Institute of Engineers as well as one additional member from the Indian Institute of Surveyors,⁵³ a close ally of the Indian Institute of Engineers.

An additional triumph the engineers scored was an amendment to the 25th clause of the bill. As originally drafted, the clause required that to be eligible for entry into the first register of architects, a person had to be a) a member of the Indian Institute of Architects, and b) that his/her practice as an architect should have *been his/her principal means of livelihood*. The engineers had argued that this clause, if allowed to remain, would sideline almost all civil engineers who also practiced architecture, but not as their “principal” means of livelihood.⁵⁴ The final bill changed this particular clause to read, “does not hold a qualification but being a citizen of India, has been engaged in practice as an architect for a period of no less than five years prior to the date appointed under sub-section (2) of section 24.”⁵⁵ In other words, five years prior to 1972. The requirement of being a member of the IIA was totally scrapped.

This had dire consequences for the IIA as such. If the bill had passed as intended, the procedure for gaining entry into the CoA would have been through the

⁵³ The Survey of India, the National Survey Organization of Government of India was established in 1767. In Post-independence India, the developmental activities and need for defense preparedness brought urgent need to impart training to officers and staff in various aspects of surveying and mapping with state-of-the-art technologies. With this objective, the Centre for Survey Training and Map Production was established at Hyderabad in 1967 with a Human Resource Development Institute within Survey of India under technical assistance from United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The Indian Institute of Surveying & Mapping (erstwhile Survey Training Institute) thus raised on 6th May, 1967 is now recognized as the prestigious training establishment in the field of Surveying and Cartography to impart training to the Officers and Staff of Survey of India and other Government Organisations, Private Individuals, and Scholars from other Afro-Asian countries.

⁵⁴ "The Architects bill, 1968: Report of the Joint Committee." p. 11

⁵⁵ India, "Architects Act, 1972." p.5.

IIA. Ostensibly, this would have provided a much needed fillip to the professional body (IIA) to also regulate the statutory body (CoA) to the certain degree as well as maintain control over the number of engineers who would ultimately end up registering themselves through this Act. However, its removal totally bypassed the function of the IIA, and its already fledgling status took another great blow. Looking at the present state of this organization, one can argue, it never recovered. Indeed, its visibility, as the premier professional organization of architects, got greatly reduced. So much so, 30 years down the line, most graduating students do not even register themselves with their own professional institution. Its impression amongst the current generation of architects is at best marginal. As one architect remarked, “it is basically a toothless organization, its only significance is to host the Architect of the Year Awards ceremony.”

A final victory the engineers achieved was something intangible but quite significant. They managed to render architects, perhaps not entirely without good reason, as a band of elite practitioners whose loyalties lay not with India but with the Royal Institute of British Architects. Perhaps the best example of such an indictment of architects is the comment made by Mr. R. K. Varma, a member of the All India Association of Consulting Engineers and Architects.

“Sir, this teenager The Indian Institute of Architects, which can be better described as a British Association of Indian Architects , with an emblem in a foreign language hardly understood by its members, depicting a Hindu Samadhi covered by a Muslim dome reached by a flight of steps resting on a British Star and constantly being smashed by a white elephant on either side, is aspiring to dictate and control, through monopoly, the entire architectural household of this country in spite of its loyalty to a foreigner, R.I. B. A., to which it is officially allied.

It is time that somebody should tell *her* that she is too young for it but that she should transfer her loyalties to this country.

*“Abhi nadan ho kamsin ho, kahin khodogi dil mera,
tumhare hi liye rakha hai, le lena jawan hokar*

(You [feminine] are young, innocent, you will easily misplace/misuse my feelings, My love is for you only, why not come back when you are older and wiser).”⁵⁶

For the architects, the passing of the bill was a mixed bag of sorts. On the one hand, there were those who felt that the Act had really not achieved much. Ironically, chief amongst them was Pilo Mody. For him, the passage of the bill represented, at one level, a personal defeat; U. N. Mahida, the representatives of the engineers had had the better of him. So complete was Mahida’s victory as a parliamentarian that during the deliberations on the bill in summer session of the Parliament in 1970, Mahida did not fail to rub it in.

“I must own it today, that I was principally responsible for the working up of a huge opposition to this bill...however, the scope of the bill as emerging now is restricted to purely Architect’s registration. The engineers support this bill whole-heartedly, as registration is the right of every profession.”⁵⁷

But Mahida’s victory was not the only reason for Mody’s personal disappointment with the bill. There was also Bhalla’s “indiscretion,” the letter, which he had sent to Mahida, without Mody’s support, that architects were willing to delete clause (2) that defined the meaning of an architect. For Mody, this was the greatest travesty of them all as it rendered the entire point of the bill, that he had worked so hard for, completely meaningless. As a result, he slowly withdrew from being the

⁵⁶ "The Architects bill, 1968: Report of the Joint Committee." p. 51

⁵⁷ "Rajya Sabha Debates." p. 163

public face of the profession. Indeed, so great was his disappointment that when the Council of Architecture's first register was compiled in 1975, he did not register himself as an architect.⁵⁸

For the majority of the architects however, the Act represented a significant breakthrough. "It was victory enough at the time Jaideep" A. G. K. Menon, now a well-known architect, educator and architectural conservationist remarked to me,

"[y]ou must remember the Architects Act was itself a very difficult proposition ...not many people were for it. Why? *Because most of the architects were engineers.* So when you say that the architects set themselves as a distinct profession...there was a lot of objection" [Emphasis added].

For the older generation who were heavily invested in the fight for the bill it represented a fruition of their efforts. For Bhalla it was a both a personal as well as professional triumph,

"I think lot of work was done... it took me 25 years running through the government corridors in order to bring the bill up... it [the Act] has given a boost to the profession of architecture. *People have started recognizing that there is something called architecture in the country*" [Emphasis added]

Bhalla's remark that the signature achievement of the Act is that it brought recognition to "something" called architecture is extremely significant. It directly addresses the central concern that I heard him and other "architects" repeat *ad infinitum*. This was that

"...the profession of architecture is[sic] not being...was not recognized at all...nobody bothered about the profession of architecture... if you go[sic] around the country, you could find, even in small areas people writing on their

⁵⁸ Personal Communication with H. D. Chhaya, ex-Director of School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi

billboards, or panel...architects, auctioneers, engineer and whatever. The name was so badly used...”

Later on I theorize how the Act made such recognition of architects and a domain called architecture in India feasible. But before that it is, perhaps, important to ask, why was it significant for architects that architects (they) be recognized as distinct from engineers, planners or as Bhalla put it, from all those who would use the title architect casually and thereby demean it. That is, to ask what, in effect, was the value of the term architect for Bhalla, Mody *et al*” when they demanded that title architect be protected so that one could separate “real” architects from charlatans. We have already seen some contours of this meaning emerge at the conference on “The Architect and the Community” held in 1965 at New Delhi. As I had briefly suggested earlier, this was particular formulation of the meaning of the term architect that evokes as its basis a precise relation between the economy, architecture, the architect and the nation-state. What then was this relation? And how were architects (in general) and the Indian architect (in particular) framed within this relation?

The next two sections of this chapter attempt to elaborate these questions. The first section elaborates a political reformulation of the meaning of the term “architect” that occurred in the first half of the twentieth century. It lays out a “globalized history” of the term architect which was, for “architects” in India, something that was already “ahead” of them, into which they had proximally understood themselves.⁵⁹ I develop

⁵⁹ As the philosopher Martin Heidegger has argued “history” is not something that any particular subject encounters as a property that is, as it were, “pushing itself along behind it.” As he notes, Dasein “is” its past in the way of *its* own being, which, to put it roughly, “historizes” out of it future on each occasion. Whatever the way of being it may have at the time, and thus with whatever understanding of Being it may possess, Dasein has grown up both into and in a traditional way of interpreting itself: in terms of this it understands itself proximally and, within, a certain range, constantly. By this understanding the possibilities of its Being are disclosed and regulated. Its own past---and this always means the past of its generation---is not something which *follows along after* Dasein, but something which already goes ahead of it [Emphasis in original].

Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (New York,: Harper, 1962).p.41

my arguments through a critical reading of two documents, the first is the famous, “La Sarraz Declaration,” formulated at the first meeting of the *Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne* (henceforth CIAM), and the second is a short but highly influential book *The Total Scope of Architecture* written by Walter Gropius one of the foremost ideologue of the “Modern Movement” in architecture, in 1955.

The effects of the design principles of CIAM on the built environment of the “Third World” are a well documented fact.⁶⁰ This is especially true for India as many of its foremost theorists and practitioners, especially Le Corbusier, Maxwell Fry, Jane Drew and Siegfried Giedion were, and continue to be major influences on architects in India.⁶¹ Gropius’ influence on India though not as well known, was equally prominent and was chiefly through two channels.

On the one hand there were the architects that Gropius trained either directly (at the GSD) or indirectly through his protégés at other schools of architecture who enforced his Bauhaus inspired curricula⁶² and to where many “architects” from India were sent by the government for their graduate education. Take for example Achyut P. Kanvinde considered by many as one of progenitors of architectural Modernism in India. As an “expert” sent to the United States by the Indian government for further

⁶⁰ See for example, James Holston, *The Modernist City : An Anthropological Critique of Brasilia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989). See also, James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State : How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*, Yale Agrarian Studies (New Haven [Conn.]: Yale University Press, 1998).

⁶¹ See Kalia, *Chandigarh : In Search of an Identity*. See also Madhu Sarin, *Urban Planning in the Third World : The Chandigarh Experience* (London Bronx, N.Y.: Mansell Pub.; Distributed in the U.S. and Canada by H.W. Wilson Co., 1982); Vikramaditya Prakash, *Chandigarh's Le Corbusier: The Struggle for Modernity in Postcolonial India*, Studies in Modernity and National Identity (Seattle, Ahmedabad, India: University of Washington Press; Mapin Pub., 2002); Balkrishna Doshi, "Legacies of Le Corbusier and Louis I. Kahn in Ahmedabad," *A + U: architecture and urbanism*, no. 5(368) (2001). Though Giedion did not practice like the others his opus , *Time Space and Architecture*, was the standard textbook for architectural history in schools of architecture in India right up until the end of the 1990's. Indeed, during my own undergraduate architectural training from 1993 to '98, this was the premier textbook used by my institute.

⁶² See Klaus Herdeg, *Decorated Diagram: Harvard Architecture and the Failure of the Bauhaus Legacy* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1983). See also, Jeffrey W. Cody, *Exporting American Architecture, 1870-2000*, Planning, History and the Environment Series (London ; New York: Routledge, 2003).

studies, Kanvinde was trained under Gropius at GSD. Upon completing the graduate degree in 1947 he returned to India in 1948 where he was intimately involved with Nehru and the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research of India (CSIR).⁶³

Kanvinde went on to have a prolific career in which he designed significant buildings that were sponsored by the Indian State all over the country. Later, he also became the “unofficial” advisor to the Prime Minister on matters of urban development and architecture. In fact Kanvinde was not a singular case. This was true for someone like Pilo Mody and Charles Correa, whom we have already met, and who were trained at the University of California at Berkeley and at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, respectively.

On the other hand, Gropius, and many of his students from the GSD also extended their influence through people like Kanvinde, and Patwant Singh, who we shall meet later on, by involving themselves as editors at large (see figure 1.00) of what was perhaps a singular journal on design in the world. As we shall see in the subsequent section, this journal, not coincidentally entitled *Design* (see figure 1.01) became the major forum in which architects in India learnt about the political reformulation of the meaning of the term “architect” that occurred in the discourse surrounding La Sarraz. Indeed, as we shall also see, it was also a venue in which the “globalized history” of the term architect was negotiated, sustained, and propagated by those who claimed for themselves the title “architect” in India.

2.3 *Chalo La Sarraz* (Onwards La Sarraz!): Architecture as a Modern Discourse

In June of 1928 in a castle in the town of La Sarraz, Switzerland, a group of twenty four architects met under the stewardship of the French-Swiss architect Le

⁶³ Personal communication with Sunita Kanvinde and Czaee Malpani, daughter and grand-daughter respectively of Achyut Kanvinde.

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In this issue . . .

A friend dropped in at our office the other day and on seeing proofs of LIC's New Office Building in Bombay asked us if we approved of its architecture. That is a question which requires—as an answer—a clarification of our basic position. All buildings published in *Design* are not necessarily those whose architecture we approve of. Many times a building is published because of its importance in terms of size, scale and function. For these reasons we consider it news-worthy enough for inclusion in *Design* so that other architects and potential clients are able to judge for themselves the nature of a particular problem and the validity of the solution provided for it.

Richard Berteaux, a young American architect whose design for a school for the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation appears in this issue, arrived in India in January 1962 to teach a six months course in Basic Design at the National Design Institute in Ahmedabad. His school design was prepared on behalf of the NDI who had been entrusted the job by the Municipal Corporation. Berteaux and his wife Betty, at present "doing India", will be in this country till March or April this year.

Jeet Malhotra is a senior architect of the Government of Punjab with his office at Chandigarh. His work has appeared in *Design* in the past.

For **Bernard Rudofsky's** article on *Stairs*, our thanks go to New York's Museum of Modern Art for supplying us the entire feature. Rudofsky is a well known architect, industrial designer, lecturer and author.

Dr. Allen S. Weller, whose article on contemporary art trends in the USA appears in this issue, is an authority on art and writer of numerous critical essays, as also a recent book on contemporary art. He has been Dean of the College of Fine and Applied Arts at the University of Illinois since 1954.

Cover Design by Richard Berteaux

Figure 1.00: Editorial information and Contents page from *Design Magazine* cover, January 1964, Vol. 8, no. 1.

Source: From author's collection.

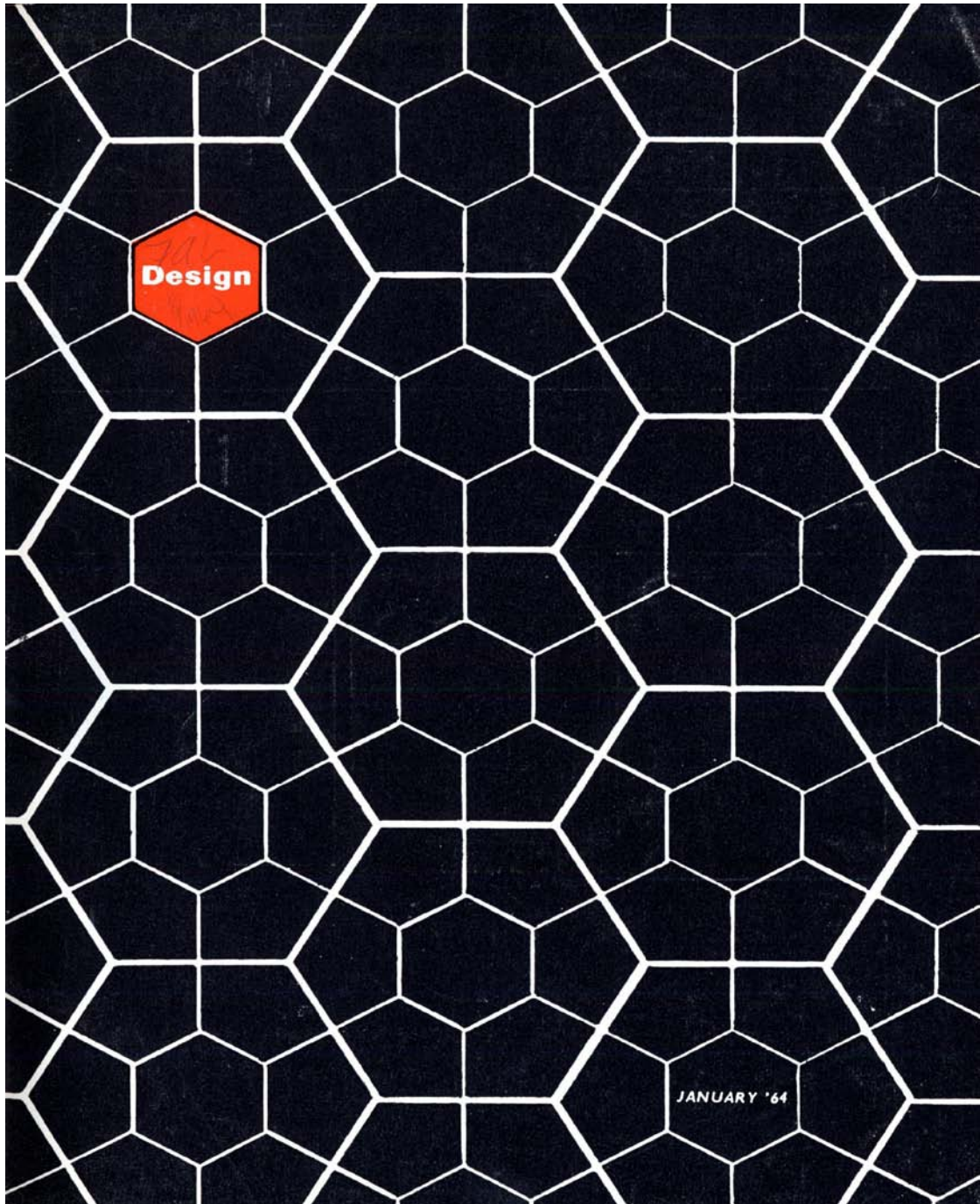


Figure 1.01: *Design Magazine* cover page, January 1964, Vol.8, no. 1. Cover design by Richard Berteaux.
Source: From author's collection

Corbusier and the art historian Siegfried Giedion. Though the immediate cause for this meeting was to rally against the vice-like grip of “academic” principles within architectural circles in Europe, the meeting at La Sarraz quickly grew into something much more. As Eric Mumford has noted in his recent work on CIAM, “[A]fter La Sarraz, the tireless publicizing of modern architecture and the name of CIAM by Le Corbusier, Giedion, and other members gave the event a mythic quality, often remembered as the point where various avant-garde movements coalesced into what came to be known as the “Modern Movement.”⁶⁴ A major element of this publicity centered on the initial tenets of the so-called modern movement that were outlined within the particular document that emerged out of this first CIAM meeting. Famously known as the La Sarraz Declaration, this document not only expressed the aspirations but also recommended a course of action for founding members of CIAM.

The La Sarraz Declaration, at first glance, is an extremely short and terse document. Set up as a series of bulletin points that are divided into four sections, the format of the document bespeaks an assumed self-evidence. The first section, entitled “The General Economic System” notes that “[M]odern Architecture includes the link between the phenomenon of architecture and that of the general economic system.”⁶⁵ Yet, this, the document cautions, does not mean that the production of architecture should furnish maximum commercial profit; for to understand economic system as simply maximizing profit is to fundamentally misunderstand the spirit of new economics. In fact, it goes on to note, the task of the architect and architecture is to realize that underpinning both the new economic system and architecture are the

⁶⁴ Eric Paul Mumford, *The Ciam Discourse on Urbanism, 1928-1960* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2000).

⁶⁵ CIAM, "The La Sarraz Declaration," in *Programs and Manifestoes on 20th-Century Architecture*, ed. Ulrich Conrads (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1928), p.109.

processes of rationalization and standardization which arise from the present reality of an industrial and technological civilization.

The second section, entitled, “Town Planning”⁶⁶ professes that the scope of modern architecture is essentially that of town planning which subsumes “the organization of life in all regions.”⁶⁷ Given this massive undertaking, the document notes, that the essential object of town Planning is a) division of soil, that is the formulation of a policy which abolishes the chaotic division of land resulting from sales, speculations and inheritances; b) organization of traffic, a vital function that links the various activities of life such as work, leisure and production; and finally c) legislation which must run parallel with technical progress that is the key to town planning.⁶⁸

In the third section, entitled, “Architecture and Public Opinion,” the authors lay out a strategy that would enable architects to realize their “new” ideals of architecture. Clients, the document notes, are not aware of the real problems of architecture in general and housing and urbanism (the emphasis of this new architecture) specifically. Thus the document argues that an architect has to also double up as a pedagogue, that he should create through education not only a body of verifiable “truth” which can become the basis for a domestic science but also use education to bring up newer generations with a healthy and rational concept of architecture. It is only then “[T]hese generations (the architect’s future clients) would be capable of correctly stating the problems of housing.”⁶⁹

⁶⁶ In his work on CIAM, Mumford uses the term urbanism instead of Town Planning to talk about the scope of Modern Architecture. I, on the other hand, prefer to follow the version given in Ulrich Conrads, *Programs and Manifestoes on 20th-Century Architecture*, [1st English language ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1970).

⁶⁷ CIAM, "The La Sarraz Declaration." p. 110.

⁶⁸ Ibid. p. 110.

⁶⁹ Ibid. p.111.

The final section discusses the relation of architecture with the nation-state. Here the authors declare that nation-states until now had also fallen prey to the charms of academic architecture which preached imitation and adherence to historical styles. Consequently they spent “considerable sums on the erection of monumental buildings contrary to the efficient utilization of resources making a display of outmoded luxury at the expense of the most urgent tasks of town planning and housing.”⁷⁰ To remedy this situation nation-states, the document argues, needed to withdraw their confidence from the academies [of architecture] and bring about a “veritable architectural renaissance that would take its place quite naturally within the general orientation of the country’s economic and social development.”⁷¹

Perhaps like all manifestoes, the “La Sarraz Declaration” is often hyperbolic, not to mention utterly simplistic. Only a grossly reductionist argument would claim that the essence of life is functionality or that the essence of the present age is standardization and rationalization. Furthermore it is a document that is ripe with internal contradictions. Take for example, the assertion that “architecture’s new attitude, according to which it aims of its own volition to re-situate itself within economic reality, renders all claims to official patronage superfluous.” If this was indeed the case, then why devote an entire section to nation-state in which the authors plead with the state to reverse their present indifference and take up the cause of new architecture. Finally, the document is also surprising at many levels. For example, in a declaration that is presumably a call to action for architects, why allocate the first section to “The General Economic System.” Why not start with architecture directly? Moreover, why name the second section Town Planning and not architecture?

⁷⁰ Ibid. p.112.

⁷¹ Ibid. p.113.

Yet for all its naiveté and inconsistencies, the importance of the document cannot be underestimated. And as Martin Steinmann has recently argued, its real value lay not so much in that it represented the real production of a new architecture but rather in its expression of a “directly political claim” for the kind of “new architecture” that it was championing.⁷² Why then, one may ask, did this “new architecture” feel it necessary to constitute itself in the realm of the political, that is, make an explicitly political claim on its behalf?

An answer begins to form if we look at the logic that informs the document. It is a logic that finds, I will argue, its greatest expression in the works of Walter Gropius who was, arguably, the foremost ideologue of this “new” and “Modern Movement” in architecture.⁷³

Born in Germany in 1883, Gropius, the son of an architect father, studied architecture in Munich (1903–04) and in Berlin (1905–07). In 1907 Gropius joined the firm of Peter Behrens that also employed, at the same time, many future luminaries of the Modern Movement such as Ludwig Mies Van Der Rohe and Le Corbusier. In 1919 Gropius, upon the recommendation Henry Van De Velde, joined the Grand-Ducal Saxon School of Arts and Crafts in Weimar, which he later transformed into the world famous Bauhaus. However, by about 1934 the political climate in Germany forced Gropius to leave for England with the help of a fellow architect Maxwell Fry. Gropius’ stay in England lasted for a few years subsequent to which he moved to the United States in 1937. Upon coming to the United States, Gropius joined the Graduate School of Design (GSD) at Harvard, with which he remained associated till his demise in 1969.

⁷² Martin Steinmann, “Political Standpoints in CIAM 1928-1933” *Architectural Association Quarterly* 4, no. 4 (1972). pp. 49-57.

⁷³ Though Gropius himself was unable to attend the meeting at La Sarraz, he was nevertheless, as Mumford argues, instrumental in framing its agenda. Eric Paul Mumford, *The C.I.A.M Discourse on Urbanism, 1928-1960* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2000).

It was during this tenure at Harvard that Gropius published a volume of his own essays which he had written over the course of roughly the last three decades. Gropius's own reasoning for the book was two-folded. At one level, it was to be a rebuttal of sorts. As he notes, "...I am a figure covered with labels, maybe to the point of obscurity. Names like 'Bauhaus Style,' 'International Style,' 'Functional Style' have almost succeeded in hiding the human core behind it all...Every so often I feel a strong urge to shake of this growing crust so the man behind the tag and the label may become visible again"⁷⁴ At another level, the book was to be an exposition of the man behind the label and tag. Yet, for Gropius, this was no "mere" or "particular" man but Man as Architect. The book then was also homage to this man: man-as-architect.

The tone of the book is not that of a researched or academic work. In fact, more often than not, reading the book makes one feel as if Gropius is a savant enlightening the world about architecture. Yet it is precisely for this reason that the book is intriguing as it lays out not only the total scope of figure of the architect but also performs an outstanding job of placing this figure within "universals" such as freedom, truth and history. Fittingly, Gropius entitled the book, *Total Scope of Architecture*.

In the book, Gropius constructs this scope along the following lines. We are now, he argues, in a different age: an age of science and industry. And though we have made many tremendous and sweeping transformations, this age, as a period of history, is still in its infancy. "[T]he spiritual content of our civilization is not yet so settled that it may be fully symbolized..."⁷⁵ thus even though we are surrounded by new discoveries, by machines, and by industry, we have not yet grasped their essential nature. The results, Gropius argues, are there for all to see. Machines are used for

⁷⁴ Walter Gropius, *Scope of Total Architecture*, 1st ed. (New York,: Harper, 1955). p. 11

⁷⁵ Ibid. p. 45.

merely imitating handicraft or as economic means for dispensing with manual labor; science under the pace of its own development is steadily moving towards greater specialization and compartmentalization; education is reduced to a kind of specialized knowledge that prepares every man for work as soon as possible, without really educating him. “A ‘trade-mentality,’ so to speak, has superseded the desire for a balanced life as it informed former periods” of history.⁷⁶ In short what we are witness to, Gropius argues, is an age that is internally differentiated and alienated from its fundamental character

Not surprisingly architecture, Gropius argues, is also plagued by these ills. It too has limited itself to a narrowly conceived vocational ideology. Mired in styles and isms that continue to be developed for their own sake, this “specialized” architecture has left the artist isolated and confined within his task. Indeed, not only is the public unaware of the potential of architecture but is actually uninterested in it. The blame, Gropius notes, lies squarely on the shoulders of architecture as it has,

“...degenerated into a florid aestheticism, as weak as it was sentimental, in which the art of building became synonymous with the meticulous concealment of the verities of the structure under a welter of heterogeneous ornament.”⁷⁷

Is there an antidote to this problem of degenerated architecture? Is there a way to revert it back to its hallowed calling as the actualization of the “spiritual content of our age” and thus redeem that spiritual content.” Fortunately for this Age there is such an antidote and it lies, according to Gropius, in the figure of the architect/artist who is able to envisage a totality. “Our century has produced the expert type in millions, “he

⁷⁶ Ibid. p. 46.

⁷⁷ Walter Gropius, *The New Architecture and the Bauhaus* (Cambridge, Mass.,: M.I.T. Press, 1965)., pp.81-82.

notes, “let us now make way for the men of vision.”⁷⁸ Yet, why should the architect be the one to actualize the spiritual content of the age? And how is the architect/artist, this man of vision, to realize this mammoth task. As answer to the first Gropius draws our attention to the “innate ability and independent nature” of the architect. The work of a “true” architect, he notes,

“[C]onsists of an unprejudiced search for an expression that symbolizes the common phenomena of life...His work is the most essential for the development of true democracy, for he is the prototype of the “whole” man; his freedom and independence are relatively intact. His intuitive qualities should be the antidote against overmechanization, apt to rebalance our life...”⁷⁹

The answer to the second question lies in how Gropius understands creative ability. According to him creativity is not something that one can learn from books. In fact bookish and the specialized knowledge(s), Gropius argues, is killing creativity; ergo his distaste for the Beaux-Arts tradition and the ideology of art for art’s sake. Both, he felt, had a very narrow conception of creativity and design, either as skill or as blind adherence to styles of the past. Skill, for Gropius, was important but only to express creativity. Creativity, on the other hand, he argues, is not really some determinate thing but rather fundamentally a universal capacity. “*Every healthy human being is capable of conceiving form. The problem seems to me not at all one of existence of creative ability but more of finding the key to release it* [Emphasis in original].”⁸⁰

Having surrendered this position and this is the most important, that to be human means to have the capacity to conceive form, to imagine and envisage it, it

⁷⁸ Gropius, *Scope of Total Architecture.*, p. 18.

⁷⁹ Ibid. p. 146.

⁸⁰ Ibid. p. 44.

necessarily follows, for Gropius, that man's essential nature is architectural, is creative is design. Therefore his statement, “[G]ood architecture should be a projection of life itself and that implies an intimate knowledge of biological, social, technical and artistic problem [emphasis in original].”⁸¹ Or his assertion that, to design “... does not mean to apply a fixed set of esthetics, but embodies rather a continuous inner growth, a conviction which recreates truth in the service of mankind [emphasis in original].”⁸²

I shall have more to say on the equation of architecture and momentarily. For now however, let us reconstruct the theoretical moves that Gropius makes, and see how they align with the pronouncements of the La Sarraz Declaration:

- 1) The development of mankind occurs in historical (st)ages. Each stage has its own “spirit of the age.”
- 2) This “spirit of the age” is not the property of any particular culture or place. Indeed, it is not even a determinate thing, but rather a “potential” content that each age *must* actualize (give form to) through concrete means in order for this age to be true to its own essential character.
- 3) In the present age, the age of modern civilization, we have progressed far along one direction, but this has not helped us discover the “spiritual content” of our age. If anything, the extreme specialization (whether in science, arts or in architecture) has obscured it. Consequently, our modern age is out of balance with itself. It is out of sorts with its own essence, with its ideals.
- 4) The need of the hour is (re)balance our age, and bring it in harmony with its own “spirit,” its own content. Yet how to do this?

⁸¹ Ibid. p. 18.

⁸² Ibid. p. 153.

- 5) By harnessing and releasing the same latent spiritual content also that exists in all of us and makes us “healthy human beings”, our creativity, our ability to conceive, to visualize, and to imagine.
- 6) Fortunately, the “key,” that is, the means to releasing this universal ability is already in existence.
- 7) This is the architect, who is the “prototypical” man and who thus has (presumably in greatest measure) the innate ability to envision the totality of our age and its spiritual content. Through architecture we can develop the “spiritual content” of our age so that it can actualize itself in concrete terms.
- 8) This will set our modern age back its path and with it the historical development of mankind.

Recreating Gropius’ logic gets us right to the question of why the La Sarraz Declaration had a directly political claim as a constitutive feature. If the “new” architecture was, as Gropius was arguing, 1) a projection of life itself, and 2) being able to envision and bring to concrete manifestation the totality of the spiritual content of our age, then it naturally followed for the proponents of this “new” architecture (read: the signees of the La Sarraz Declaration) that the rightful place of architecture was not the realm of “mere” buildings but rather alongside those other “universals” that determine modern existence, that is, chiefly the economic and social spheres.

“[T]he intention that brings them [architects of CIAM] together here is to attain the indispensable and urgent harmonization of the element involved by replacing architecture on its true plane, the economic and sociological plane.”⁸³

However, this restoration of architecture to this plane, its true plane could hardly happen, as Gropius, and the proponents of modern architecture knew, without

⁸³ CIAM, "The La Sarraz Declaration." P. 109.

the cooperation of the public, who given the degeneration of architecture were uninterested and unaware, and thus had to be educated about this new conception of architecture-as-planning and economics. Standing in the way of this education, and ultimately the adoption of the “new architecture” were the academies which received their special power from the patronage of nation-states. Thus what had to be done was to make a claim to the nation-state; the ultimate arbitrator of political power in the present age.

“States...must concern themselves with those questions [those elaborated within the La Sarraz Declaration] whose object is to endow the country with the most productive and the most advanced systems of organization.”⁸⁴

And if the states were to do that, that is withdraw their confidence from the academies mired in the past, and put their faith instead in the future; the figure of the architect, who had the innate ability to conceive, to have a vision (of the spirit of the age), then,

“...they [states] would bring about a veritable architectural renaissance that would take its place quite naturally within the general orientation of the country’s economic and social development.”⁸⁵

But if the states were to ignore this (political) claim of architects, it would not simply be a matter of producing bad buildings or even a case of bad representation of modernity through architectural achievement. No, what was at stake here, as Gropius and the La Sarraz Declaration implied, was nothing short of the destiny of our very selves and of our historical age.

2.4 *Chalo Dilli (Onwards Delhi)*

The ideological underpinnings of the La Sarraz Declaration and Gropius’s claim that the “essence” of architecture was synonymous with the universal

⁸⁴ CIAM, "The La Sarraz Declaration." p. 112.

⁸⁵ Ibid. p. 112.

development of the spiritual content of an Age and of humanity was, perhaps, not as revolutionary as the proponents of CIAM made it out to be. As Arindam Dutta has recently argued the particular reformation of the architecture that happened in the early twentieth century represents the bureaucratization and universalization of taste and beauty in the 19th century that formed the crux of the colonial and capitalist effort towards achieving hegemony.⁸⁶ From such a perspective, Gropius, and the members of CIAM would appear as the aesthetic vanguard of a politico-economical system which was attempting to render itself natural, and self-evident. There is much value to such an interpretation.

Yet what is critical for us, at least in terms of our question of the meaning of the term architect in India is how this particular “political” reformulation of the figure of the architect as being the prototypical man, and the essence of architecture being coterminous with the development of the spiritual content of an age became the “ideal”, indeed, became the particular figure of the architect in postcolonial India. Take for example the following argument put forward in the journal *Design* for the creation of a nationalized body of experts dealing with the physical development of the nation.⁸⁷ Chiefly championed by Patwant Singh,⁸⁸ the editor of *Design*, this

⁸⁶ Arindam Dutta, *The Bureaucracy of Beauty : Design in the Age of Its Global Reproducibility* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

⁸⁷ Published and started out of Delhi since in 1957 by Patwant Singh, The journal *Design* was envisaged as an interdisciplinary journal that would bring together cutting edge ideas in the fields of architecture, urban planning, visual arts, graphics, and industrial design. Subject areas, Singh felt, that, up to that point, had tended to have isolated audiences that rarely looked at or understood each other's fields. A chief emphasis of the journal was to question why urban development in India was being undertaken in ways that ran counter to the most up to date ideas of aesthetic and humanitarian sensibilities. Starting from this agenda design soon became the foremost forum for disseminating how the state, architecture, urban planning, design, and architects could come together to solve the problems of housing, over population and the like, in short much of the same ideas about how design must be viewed and what the role of the architect us that Correa elaborated in his address at the conference on the “Architect and the community.” *Design* published its last volume in 1988. Personal conversation with Patwant Singh.

⁸⁸ Patwant Singh (March 28, 1925 - August 8, 2009) was an accomplished writer, commentator, journalist, editor and publisher. Born in New Delhi, Singh lived there all his life. Though he initially involved in the family business of building and engineering he soon merged these interests with his love for writing. He started up his first periodical, *The Indian Builder*, in 1953 as publisher. In 1957, he

nationalized body, it was claimed, would usher in the kind of positive transformations of society that the ideals of Modernism had engendered in the “developed” nations of the world.⁸⁹ Furthermore, such a body, Singh argued, would lead the way in implementing “objective and impartial” processes of architectural and physical planning in India.

In, and of itself, Singh’s argument was not particularly new in India. As Partha Chatterjee has recently argued, the Planning Commission of India, indeed the postcolonial Indian State itself, was formulated on these ideals. That is, the state was itself justified on the idea that it would be the generator, the source of the development of the nation and its people through its actions and decisions based on “scientific,” objective, and impartial processes.⁹⁰ Yet what was different about Singh’s argument,

unveiled the interdisciplinary journal *Design*. In addition to these Singh also authored a number of texts related to politics in South Asia and on Sikh Identity.

⁸⁹ Patwant Singh, "A Case for a Central Ministry for Urban Development," *Design* 8, no. 10 (1964). pp. 13-14.

⁹⁰ Chatterjee, "Development Planning and Indian State." pp. 51-72. As per Chatterjee’s argument, the main reason the Indian nationalist elite demanded self-rule was not because colonialism represented the political domination by an alien people over indigenes, but because

“... it stood for a form of *exploitation* of the nation (the drain of national wealth, the destruction of its productive system, the creation of a backward economy, etc.)...*The economic critique of colonialism then was the foundation from which a positive content was supplied for the independent national state...*”[emphasis added]

In other words, what Chatterjee argues is that, for the nationalist elite, the true value of the sovereign state of India was that it was a *historically necessary condition* for the *development* of the nation. And that,

“...a developmental ideology then was a constituent part of the self-definition of the postcolonial state. The state was connected to the people-nation not simply through procedural forms of representative government, it also acquired its representativeness by directing a programme of economic development on behalf of the nation.”

Yet, directing this development, insofar it was thought of as a linear process marked by clearly defined steps and affecting the whole of society, required two things. Firstly, it required the constitution of a modality of knowledge that would function both inside and outside the immediate political process of the state. This modality of knowledge, so constituted, would then act as the legitimizing principle as well as the domain for the rational determination and pursuit of the universal goals of development. Planning, Chatterjee goes on to show, solved the first requirement. The second thing required to direct this program of economic development on behalf of the nation, Chatterjee argues, was the existence of a singular consciousness, one will, and one actor, through whom the, “[P]articuliar interests [of various constituents of the nation] needed to be subsumed within the whole and made consistent with the general interest.” Furthermore, this

“...one consciousness, both general and rational, could not simple simply be assumed to exist as an abstract and formless force, working implicitly and invisibly through the particular

and especially reminiscent of the CIAM ideals, was the reason Singh gave for the creation of such a body which would be distinct from the Planning Commission. According to Singh, the real reason why India required an additional nationalized body of experts managing its physical development was in fact the failure of the Planning Commission of India, and

“...the inability of our policy makers, planners, and specialists to learn from the mistake [sic] of others and the narrow perspective in which they tend to view all activity other than their own.

...One would expect, for instance, economists to be concerned about the physical consequences of their projects and to anticipate and provide for that consequence. That, unfortunately, is far from being the case. Manifest in every sphere of development activity today is the “tunnel vision” of those in charge of planning and implementation...”⁹¹

By putting forth this reason what Singh’s argument did was to expose an apparent seam that existed in the project of developing India. As studies of the state-sponsored planning exercise in first few decades of India’s independence have shown, the entire planning process in India was essentially divided into two levels.⁹² On the one hand, there were the members of the Planning Commission, typically comprising experts on economic planning. The chief function of this august body was to decide on behalf of

interests of the civil society. It had, as Hegel would have said, ‘to shine forth, ’ appear as existent, concretely expressing the general and the rational.”

The only one actor that fulfilled both this condition, Chatterjee notes was the postcolonial Indian state.

⁹¹ Singh, "A Case for a Central Ministry for Urban Development." p. 15. Of course, that Singh’s argument mapped almost word for word many of the ideals of the “new” architecture was not surprising given that the coterie of people involved in the production of the journal, apart from a few representative of “other” design professions, literally read like a list of the who’s who of Modern Architecture. Indeed, its editorial board included almost all the leading ideologues of the Modern Movement, like Walter Gropius, Siegfried Giedion, Marcel Breuer, Richards Neutra as well as their Indian “counterparts,” Kanvinde, Mody and Rehman. See figure no.

⁹² Pranab K. Bardhan, *The Political Economy of Development in India* (Oxford, UK ; New York, NY, USA: B. Blackwell, 1984). See also, Sukhamoy Chakravarty, *Development Planning : The Indian Experience* (Oxford [Oxfordshire] New York: Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press, 1987).

the nation what were to be the priorities for the nation. This was then formulated as the famous “Five Year Plans” that became the benchmark of the Indian style of planning. Yet, the Planning Commission was itself not involved in the implementation of these Plans. Taking care of the “practical” side of things, and making up the “second tier” of the planning process, were often bureaucrats and under them engineers who held various important positions in bodies such as the Public Works Department (PWD), the development authorities of individual cities etc. Indeed, for Singh and the other contributors to *Design* this separation of duties was precisely the reason many a well intentioned plan(s) of the Indian government did not produced the intended results. Consequently what was required, they argued,

“...would be setting up of a Central Ministry for urban development with wide powers, sustained by unqualified support of the entire cabinet, and having under its control the requisite planning and implementing bodies...”⁹³

Of course setting up such a body which would direct the planning of the Planning Commission also meant asking the question who was up to such a task of providing a “vision” to the planners as well as combining the twin functions of planning and implementation(see figure 1.02) . Clearly it could not be the economists who populated the Planning Commission, and who, as Singh argued, were part of the problem with their tunnel vision. It could not certainly be the engineers. If anything, they were even more victims of the “specialist” mentality. Furthermore, there was another grievous problem with the engineers. For Singh, and by this time for architects, engineers represented the regressive aspects of India’s history. As the former saw it, engineers being a part of the Public Works Departments were a crucial component of the colonial set up. How could they be India’s future?⁹⁴

⁹³ Singh, "A Case for a Central Ministry for Urban Development." P. 14

⁹⁴ One of the first projects Bhalla was involved in as the first president of the Council of Architecture in 1976 was a feasibility study of the Public Works Department. The recommendations of the study

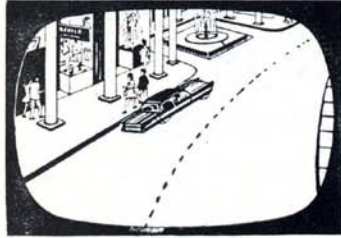
What was required then was someone who embodied both qualities of being able to envision the totality of the planning process and who also had the skill to implement it. It is at this juncture that the reformulation of the architect as undertaken within the twin ideologies of the La Sarraz Declaration and Gropius again came to the rescue. For the only figure who could possibly answer this challenge was someone who was the prototypical man, and whose life symbolized the unprejudiced search for the common phenomena of all life; a man not of blinkered expertise but a man of vision who could look beyond the immediate confines of narrow specialization to envision a totality. In other words, the architect as propounded within the ideals of CIAM.

The last statement was not something that Singh himself made but to the readers of *Design*, familiar as many of them were in the ideals propounded by Gropius and other members of CIAM, the logical extension of his argument was clear.⁹⁵

published privately under the title, "Report of the Committee for the Revision of the Central Public Works Department Code, to restructure the Central Public Works Department and create a division of architecture that was to be free of the "control" of engineers. Unfortunately for architects, such a reorganization of the Public Work Department never occurred. The grip of the engineer, technology and science on the nation (and on CPWD) far exceeded their own. For a discussion of the presence of science and technology within the national imagination of India see, Prakash, Gyan. *Another Reason: Science and the Imagination of Modern India*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999. See also, Nandy, Ashis. *Science, Hegemony and Violence: A Requiem for Modernity*, Oxford India Paperbacks. Tokyo, Japan., Habib, S. Irfan, and Dhruv Raina. *Social History of Science in Colonial India, Oxford in India Readings. Themes in Indian History*. New Delhi ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007., Raina, Dhruv. *Images and Contexts: The Historiography of Science and Modernity in India*. New Delhi New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.

⁹⁵ This issue of the "architect" readers of *Design* being familiar in the ideals of the "new" architecture cannot be underestimated. Apart from journals such as *Design*, there was from the 1940's onwards "physical" exchanges between "architects" from India and "western" architects were prolific. For an idea of the extent of this space of exchange see for example, Kalia, *Chandigarh : In Search of an Identity*. See also, Jon T. Lang, Madhavi Desai, and Miki Desai, *Architecture and Independence : The Search for Identity--India 1880 to 1980* (Delhi ; New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); Cody, *Exporting American Architecture, 1870-2000.*, Kazi Khaleed Ashraf, James Belluardo, and Architectural League of New York., *An Architecture of Independence : The Making of Modern South Asia : Charles Correa, Balkrishna Doshi, Muzharul Islam, Achyut Kanvinde* (New York, N.Y.: Architectural League of New York, 1998)., Jon T. Lang, *A Concise History of Modern Architecture in India* (Delhi Bangalore [India]: Permanent Black ; Distributed by Orient Longman Ltd., 2002).

THE GREAT DEVELOPMENT PANORAMA



1. Delhi Development Authority is engaged in the transformation of the National Metropolis.
2. A massive social housing programme for the weaker sections has already made a headway. About 25,000 flats in different residential areas have been released and over 7,000 more have been planned.



3. Houses are given away to the community service personnel (dhobis, barbers, domestic servants and cobblers etc) at subsidised cost. Allotment of Janta Houses to the people of Delhi (income not exceeding Rs. 3,000 per year) has been taken in hand in a big way.
4. Residential plots are developed and given away to the people for building houses. About 30,000 plots, which include about 20,000 residential and over 6,000 commercial, have been developed.



5. For rehabilitating the squatters. Resettlement colonies in different parts of Delhi have been developed and over 50,000 families have been rehabilitated.
6. Under the beautification scheme hundreds of new parks have been laid in different areas which not long before were squalid slums. As many as 5 lakh tree saplings have been planted on road sides and other green areas of Delhi.



7. A new subzi mandi has been developed in Azadpur. A big cycle market has been constructed at Jhandewalan.
8. Modern Shopping centres at Kalkaji and Pusa Road and an Interstate Bus Terminal near Kashmere Gate have been set up. Two major truck terminals have been developed at G. T. Road and Rohtak Road areas.



DELHI development authority

issued by
THE PUBLIC RELATIONS MANAGER

Figure 1.02: Advertisement by the Delhi Development Authority outlining development for Delhi. *Design Magazine*, January 1974.
Source: From author's collection.

An excerpt from an article penned by Joyce Roy an “architect” contributor to *Design* is most illuminating in this regard. Commenting on what she felt was the pathetic condition of a massive housing project undertaken for the Heavy Engineering Corporation of India (BHEC) by engineers, she notes,

“What then, is the answer to the “Why?” Do the architects work at the level they do because they have little control or freedom; or does the administration give them so little responsibility because they seem incompetent to handle it? This is a vicious circle which must be broken...

...From the beginning a truly eminent, competent *architect-planner* must be put at the level of director who would have under him all the administrators. Social scientists, engineers and staff concerned with the design and execution of the township...

...*This may seem like a bureaucratic panacea but it is an obvious solution. The crux of it is the attraction and selection of an architect-planner who can command the respect he will work “above” and yet “with,” namely competent engineers, social scientists etc...*” [Emphasis added].⁹⁶

What is noteworthy in the above quote is the casual way in which Roy shifts registers, much like the ideologues of CIAM did, between architects and architect-planners. What is also significant is the way it mirrors that all encompassing role of the architect in which it was the architect who was to be placed at the helm of the development of the nation

But perhaps the most compelling example that it was such a figure of the architect that saturated the imagination of those who were demanding that title architect be protected is an exchange between the members of the Joint Select

⁹⁶ Joyce Roy, "The Quality and Calibre of Physical Design in India's Biggest Industrial Complex," *Design* 8, no. 5 (1964). pp. 15-24.

Committee of Ministers formulated for the passing of the Architects Bill and T. J. Manickam, Principal of the School of Planning and Architecture at New Delhi. The exchange deserves quoting in full:

Shri. Naval Kishore Sharma: all right my next question is, in the course of your discussion with Mr. Mody you agreed that the job of the civil engineers and of the structural engineer is different from that of an architect?

Manickam: Yes.

Shri. Naval Kishore Sharma: And the supervision [of the building] part is an entirely different act and the architectural part is entirely different. In view of that would you agree to the deletion of the words “supervise the erection of the building” from the definition of an “architect”?

Manickam: We clarified that the structural engineer would be supervising the structural portion of it. Otherwise the architect has to supervise all the aspects.

Shri. Naval Kishore Sharma: Would you agree that the architect’s job is to design the building?

Manickam: Yes.

Shri. Naval Kishore Sharma: And the construction part is not your job?

Manickam: The architect is not a contractor. Construction of the building is a contractor’s job.

Shri. Naval Kishore Sharma: So it is not your job?

Manickam: No.

Shri. Naval Kishore Sharma: Construction is not your job; structural part is not your job; electrification and other things is also not your job?

Manickam: We have to supervise all the aspects.

Shri. Naval Kishore Sharma: What aspects? You just said your job is to design a building.

Manickam: We have to see all the things are in the proper places in that design.

Shri. Naval Kishore Sharma: but as the progress of a building goes on, whether a particular thing has been put in a particular place or not, is none of your concern.

Manickam: It is. We do see that the particular thing is according to specifications.

Shri. Naval Kishore Sharma: It should be the job of the civil engineer.

Manickam: No. No.

Shri. Naval Kishore Sharma: Why should you intervene? After all the civil engineer is qualified to do that and see that the building is constructed as per the plan submitted by the architect.

Manickam: you just mentioned about electric installations. The fittings, the position and their location are the architect's responsibility.

Shri. Naval Kishore Sharma: it may be his responsibility but is it not the job of an electrical engineer?

Manickam: We do not have the electrical engineers always.

Shri. Naval Kishore Sharma: There are; why do you say they are not there?

Manickam: But the architect has to supervise and see...

Shri. Naval Kishore Sharma: I think the architect's job finishes as soon as the design of a building is furnished.

Manickam: I am sorry, Sir. It is not like that.

Shri. Naval Kishore Sharma: I just want to know one thing. I want to know whether for a complicated building you would want a place for an architect, a structural engineer, an electrical engineer, health engineer etc. should they all be operative or can an architect alone do it?

Manickam: We take the services of all the experts.

Shri. N. Sri Rama Reddy: *But you want to sit at the top?* [Emphasis added]

Manickam: *No, Sir. It is a matter of coordination. There is no question of sitting at the top; it is coordination.* [Emphasis added]

Shri. U. N. Mahida: This is in respect of [sic] building activity and I have not been able to appreciate the part an architect plays in coordination. What is this coordination in the building activity? Now please explain that with some parallel in other professions or human activities. *This coordination is very difficult to comprehend. Is it coordination or monopolization? We have not quite followed.* [Emphasis added]⁹⁷

For non-architects like Mahida and Sharma, coordination implied an attempt at monopolization and “design” meant the “mere” layout for something. It is as Sharma argues that the work of an architect ceases once the layout of a building has been submitted. Yet for Manickam, Mahida’s and Sharma’s accusation were totally misplaced. As far as he was concerned they did not really even understand what he meant, by design and coordination, thus, his vehement denial of the charges of monopolization. For Manikam, a self-professed architect, the two terms implied something totally different. Design was not a “mere” drawing up of a layout. Anyone could do that. Indeed, that is what the draughtsmen in architectural offices do. For Manikam a careful student of CIAM’s ideals design meant something far more profound.⁹⁸ It meant being to “envisage” the totality. It meant providing the “idea,”

⁹⁷ "The Architects bill, 1968: Report of the Joint Committee." p. 37. At one level, this framing of the architect through design and supervision was not something new too. Such arguments on behalf of architects were made fairly common place the world over. Indeed, its commonality is in precisely the reason why I call this moment the moment of the architect, that is the moment when a singular history of the meaning of the term architect comes in to make the “domain” of the architect in postcolonial India. For an example of how similar claims were made on behalf of architects elsewhere see, Mary N. Woods, *From Craft to Profession : The Practice of Architecture in Nineteenth-Century America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999). p.4.

⁹⁸ Prior to his directorship at the School of Architecture and Planning (SPA) in New Delhi, Manickam was the Chairman of the northern chapter of the Indian Institute of Architects from 1958-1960. He was also one of the few “architects” that the Indian state had sent to the US for higher studies. After completion of his graduate education, Manickam had travelled to Trinidad and Tobago where he had

the blueprint, the reason, and the potential that lay behind the actuality of any entity. It meant, as Gropius had theorized some three decades ago, embodying a continuous inner growth, a conviction which recreates truth in the service of mankind (or in this case the nation). Coordination within this scheme of things was thus not monopolization but merely the logical implication and the task of that particular actor who had this putatively universal capacity to design, who was the “prototype” of the whole man, and who the nation, indeed, the present age *had* to recognize if it wanted to develop and concretize its “spiritual content” to the fullest.

2.5 Interregnum

So far in this chapter I have given an account of two things. Firstly, I have sketched the immediate contexts and discussions that accompanied the legislation of the Architects Act. Secondly, I have outlined the larger context within which those immediate discussions were occurring. I have especially emphasized a particular meaning that was accruing onto the term architect at the intersections of discourses regarding the economy, development, planning, identity, and modernity that were at once global and national. In this section I revert back to the question that I had initially asked; what does the Architects Act mean to the architectural community in India today? The typical answer to this question, at least from the point of view of histories and sociologies of professions, seems to be fairly consistent. According to these the meaning of public legislation(s) such as the Act, variously phrased, is that they provide professions certain rights and privileges (authority) in the public arena by

befriended Peter Bynoe, one of the architects invited to speak at the conference on the Architect and the Community. Upon his return he too, like M. M. Rana, joined the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) as an architect. Manickam, however, left the CPWD in 1951 to join Walter George in starting the School of Country and Town Planning, which would later become a part of the School of Planning and Architecture. See School of Planning and Architecture, "Prospectus: School of Architecture and Planning, New Delhi," (New Delhi: Ministry of Human Resource and Development; Government of India, 2001).

delimiting a particular area (jurisdiction) for that profession.⁹⁹ Take for example, the argument put forward by Andrew Abbott in his book, *The System of Professions: An Essay on the Expert Division of Labor*, which claims that the central feature of all professional development is jurisdiction.

According to Abbott, professions achieve jurisdiction firstly through its “cultural machinery,” in which a profession’s cognitive structure re-characterizes a particular task as a “professional problem” that it can then work on. However, as Abbott notes, “to perform skilled acts and justify them cognitively is not yet to hold jurisdiction.”¹⁰⁰ To hold a particular jurisdiction professions need a second thing; a jurisdictional claim before a public, which

... is generally a claim for the legitimate control of a particular kind of work.

This control means first and foremost a right to perform the work as professionals see fit. Along with the right to perform the work as it wishes, a profession normally also claims rights to exclude other workers as deemed necessary, to dominate public definitions of the tasks concerned, and indeed to impose professional definitions of the tasks on competing professions. Public jurisdiction is, in short, a claim to both social and cultural authority.¹⁰¹

This explanation makes for a compelling argument. Yet, the more one investigates the matter, the more the context of the architectural profession in India seems to question such an interpretation of the Act as a mere tool to garner jurisdiction. Let us see how beginning with question of jurisdiction. As we have seen from the brief outline of the immediate discussions surrounding the Act, especially

⁹⁹ See for example, Andrew Delano Abbott, *The System of Professions : An Essay on the Division of Expert Labor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988)., See also Magali Sarfatti Larson, *Behind the Postmodern Facade : Architectural Change in Late Twentieth-Century America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), Magali Sarfatti Larson, *The Rise of Professionalism : A Sociological Analysis* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977)., Spiro Kostof, *The Architect : Chapters in the History of the Profession* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

¹⁰⁰ Abbott, *The System of Professions: An Essay on the Division of Expert Labor*. p. 59

¹⁰¹ Ibid. p. 60

those conducted under the aegis of the Joint Select Committee, a prime reason for the obstruction created by the engineers against this bill was a particular clause that defined the meaning of the term architect. The problem engineers had with this particular clause was that it would have, given that it defined what the work of an architect comprised, barred any other person from undertaking work that architects claimed they did. This, as the engineers and the other members of the Joint Select Committee pointed out, was not only unconstitutional as it impeded the right of a citizen to practice any profession s/he chooses but also monopolistic. Consequently, the greatest offensive was mounted against this particular clause. Indeed, it was only when this clause was deleted did the engineers, who had by far the greater clout, allow deliberations to proceed further. This then is a powerful instance underscoring the inability of the bill to secure any kind of jurisdiction for architects and a direct rebuttal to the explanation of the Act securing, in the Indian context, jurisdiction for architects.¹⁰²

Yet it is not only this aspect of the argument that seems to be problematic when viewed within the Indian context. The implicit logic of this explanation: architect-experts share an instrumental relationship with the Act thus its meaning (and

¹⁰² Furthermore, that architects did not get any particular jurisdiction is also evidenced by the fact that even today most municipalities accept, much to the chagrin of architects, the signature of civil engineers as valid for the purposes of obtaining a permit to build a particular building. A major effort of the Council of Architecture over the last three decades has been to get municipalities to stop this particular practice. Yet for the most part this effort has not produced much result. A major part of this ineffectuality of the architects' efforts has been simply because they cannot claim that according to the Act it is only they who can practice the "profession" of architecture. Recall here that their Act merely states that none other than those who are registered through this Act can legally "use" the title architect. Recently however, in May of 2007, Architects were able to score a small victory in this regard. According to a law passed by the parliament of India, buildings up to certain built up area now no longer need permission from municipalities. Such permission can be given by the architect directly. What this does, in effect, is undercut the authority of engineers who heavily populate most municipalities and to whom architects had to go in order to get the permission. For most architects this had been a huge point of contention. In fact a complaint I would hear regularly from architects, and one which has much historical precedent, was that how could this engineer who had no knowledge of architecture, who had only a four year degree compared to an architect's five, who was a mere functionary in the municipality have the final say whether one could make a building or not.

its being) is an instrument of sorts is also refuted by the evidence at hand. Consider here all the emotions that surround the Architects Act in India, whether this be JJ's pride on signing "Architect" after his name, the silence in the educational workshop when the President evoked a hypothetical possibility of the Act's nullification if architects continued to question its tenets, the rallying cry amongst architects when it was claimed the provisions of AICTE's Act might supersede those of the Architects Act, or even Pilo Mody's disappointment over the version of the Act that finally got legislated. Consider here also the ubiquity of the Act: its presence in matter ranging from the most mundane to rarefied circles of international treaties and exchanges. All this bespeaks an investment and an interrelationship between those expert-agents known as architects and the Act that far outstrips any interpretation of the Act as a mere tool that architects wield for their (vested) purposes.

In fact such an interpretation ignores a very crucial aspect of the Act's existence in India; the air of sacrality that seems to exist around it. Recall here Bhalla's remarks at the opening ceremony of the workshop on education in which he fashions himself as a modern day Prometheus who brought (down?) the Act to architects. Not only was this a story Bhalla would often repeat at many venues but also what is interesting that never would he, for that matter anyone, talk about the "History" of this Act. Indeed, what also never failed to strike me was a) the singular lack of any systematic enquiry into the "origins" of the Act, and b) the constant stream of anecdotes, "rumors" and myths that surrounds the Act in which, curiously enough, the agency of architects, indeed of any "human" actors, in producing this Act is obscured. Recall here also the President's remarks I began with, "...I am a creature of my Act... I cannot go *beyond* it...", or "I would love to do something like that provided I had the flexibility in the Act [Architects Act]...but unfortunately I have to respond to what is there in my Act."

The President's use of a metaphor of a boundary or bounded-ness to describe the Act, as we shall see later, is indeed crucial. But what I would like to underscore here is that for proponents of the Act-as-tool to garner jurisdiction theory statements such as these, the singular lack of enquiry into the origins of the Act, the obscuring of the agency of architects in narratives about the production of the Act, Bhalla's Promethean story, would seem to cement the argument that the Act *is* a tool that is willy-nilly manipulated towards an end; inter-professional jurisdiction. The logic here would be that, if anything, what this evidence shows is that in addition to jurisdiction within the "public" the Act maintains intra-professional jurisdiction, that is, amongst their own constituents by working to invert relations between the architect and the Architects Act, as in a *camera obscura*. To be sure there is some support of that in these instances.

But what such an interpretation also does, I would argue, is also to present a highly impoverished view of the actual complexity the surrounds the Act. Indeed, it is not only a negation of the complexity of meanings that surround the Act but also a negation of the complexity of the actual terrain that makes up the "profession" of architecture in postcolonial India. It gives much too much power, and credit to people like Vijay Sohoni and the other "elites" within the profession, implicitly claiming that they have near absolute monopoly over the Act itself. It assumes homogeneity in their attitude towards the Act. It assumes homogeneity in the subjectivities of architects in India. It assumes certain permanence in the structures of the profession itself.¹⁰³

¹⁰³ I thank Arunava Dasgupta, assistant professor of Architecture at TVB, for bringing this point to my attention. In one of our many group discussions, there was a heated debate going on about the inability of students to rise against the certain somewhat outrageous and unilateral actions of the Council against TVB. The main angst felt by most participants of this discussion was precisely that the Act had made "structures" like the Council, agents like Sohoni and their nexus much too powerful, too entrenched and intractable. It was this point when Arunava-da (the suffix *-da* in Bengali is used to refer to someone as an elder brother) suddenly burst out saying, *aare tomra bhabhcho ta ki, ei je council, ei je DDA, ei je MCD, era shob ure jaabe, kichu thaak be na. shono jhor ashle shob ure jae, ek din lage* (what are you all thinking, this Council, this DDA, this MCD, all that seems to us at this moment so permanent, so immutable, so entrenched, it takes but a day for this permanence to dissipate in the face of a tempest)

Finally it assumes a singular unchanged meaning of the Act itself. Let me briefly outline an example that signals a situation quite contrary to such assumptions.

During my fieldwork, whenever I would directly ask architects about what the Act meant I would invariably receive a well-rehearsed litany which, for the most part, reiterated the Abbotian position that the Act legalized the profession. However, when unsolicited, architects spoke of the Act in rather different ways. At the end of my first interview with Bhalla, the proclaimed “architect of the Architects Act, he suddenly changed roles to become the questioner. He asked me what I was planning to do with all “detective work” about the Architects Act, other than producing a dissertation, which would grant me a doctoral degree. I confessed that I had not given the matter much thought, though I did feel the need to do something about it. I told him I was especially enraged about the blinkered view of architectural education that the Act had. Here, Bhalla made the following suggestion to me,

“Well since you have been studying all this so intimately, would you mind suggesting how we can change the Act, especially those clauses that deal with education. Would you present me with a paper that would amend the Act...not by much... just so that we can get rid of those clauses and decouple the jurisdiction of the Act on education?”

Give up jurisdiction! Suggest amendments to the Act; change it. That was what Bhalla was asking me to do. Certainly what the Act meant to him had changed enough for him to wonder how we can change it to suit current conditions of architectural production in the country.

Perhaps a reason why such jurisdictional explanations implicitly persist with singular unified meanings-models (whether of the Act or of the subjectivities of experts) is due to a penchant amongst scholars to simply continue, even in scholarly works, the everyday assumption that when we discover a person’s motive for an

action, we have discovered the intended meaning of that action.¹⁰⁴ According to the phenomenologist Alfred Schutz, what really happens in such situations is, in many ways, quite the contrary. That is, when either asking or answering a motive based question all parties involved actually take for granted the intended meaning of an action. Thus when I asked a pointed question like why did architects want the Architects Act, and Bhalla or Menon etc. answered, the very intelligibility of the conversation actually depended on our already sharing an assumed meaning. Consequently, my question would more often than not, elicit that particular shared meaning which we implicitly assumed

But there is another reason why such models persist. This, as Timothy Mitchell among others argues, has to do with a particular epistemological structuring of the world.¹⁰⁵ According to this way of thinking, which has its origins in nineteenth century epistemological models, the world is structured through a series of dualities: subject- object, technology-nature, idea-form, reason-force, and imagined-real. Furthermore, what is also assumed are two additional things, 1) each of those entities are distinct (as in pure, unalloyed), and 2) one is the actor and the other the acted upon. Understood in terms of our discussion at hand, the problem with such thinking is that it “tidies” up what is essentially a far messier picture of reality by selectively rearranging, jettisoning, or marginalizing (albeit, unintentionally) those elements of reality that do not fit this epistemological model. Thus out go statements made by Sohoni, Bhalla and others about the Act itself having a kind of “subjectivity,” its air of sacrality, the stories that point that sometimes for architects the Act is seemingly something that is not constructed by human hands, the emotions and affect

¹⁰⁴ Alfred Schutz, *The Phenomenology of the Social World* ([Evanston, Ill.]: Northwestern University Press, 1967). p.28

¹⁰⁵ Timothy Mitchell, *Rule of Experts : Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002). p. 2-3.

surrounding it. These are all either cases of ideological inversion and/or simply bad faith. Thrown out are pictures in which the identity of the profession, the Act, the members of this community is alloyed and continuously bleeding onto each other. Thrown out are pictures in which the profession is *not* an apriori idea which is then concretized through actions of its agents but rather one which is produced through numerous interactions between forces that cannot be assigned into those neatly divided dualities. The result of such thinking is that it tacitly legitimizes, obscures, and mimics the way power, identity, expertise is produced and works instead of analyzing it.

How then might we proceed without such neat assumptions? That is without assuming the inherent separation of the Act, architects, the profession. How can we give credence to those seemingly “inverted” statements, to affect, emotions, to messy realities? How might we begin to theorize the Act other than as a “mere” tool that is provides architects with jurisdiction?

2. 6 Signature: Act Redux

In his seminal analysis of the Max Weber’s concept of social action, Alfred Schutz notes that Weber’s definition of social action, “as action which by the virtue of the meaning attached to it by the acting individual(s), takes account of the behavior of others,” never really distinguishes between an act and action.¹⁰⁶ The ambiguity, Schutz notes, lies in the word action itself, which he notes can mean the already constituted act (*handlung*), but can also mean the action in the very course of being constituted, and, as such, a flow, an ongoing sequence of events, a process of bringing something forth, an accomplishing.”¹⁰⁷

Given this ambiguity in the word, Schutz asks, is it action that is meaningful or an act. The former, Schutz notes, cannot be meaningful simply because to which part

¹⁰⁶Schutz, *The Phenomenology of the Social World*. p. 15

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. p. 39

of our actions do we attach meaning, given that an action is, in essence, a seamless movement.¹⁰⁸ Indeed, as Schutz argues, it is only an act, that is, an action (whether real or imagined) *that is over and done with and lying in the past*, to which the phenomenon of meaning is applicable.

Yet even with this ambiguity cleared up, Weber's definition, Schutz notes, still leaves the question, what does it mean to say that an actor attaches meaning to his actions, unanswered. Is meaning here to be understood as a mere predicate to action? Schutz argues otherwise,

“[t]he actor projects his action as if it were already over and done with and lying in the past. It is a fully actualized event, which the actor pictures and assigns to its place in the order of experiences given to him at the moment of projection.”¹⁰⁹

In other words, each action to be undertaken (or already undertaken) by the actor is not only imagined by the actor as fully actualized event but also gets its meaning from that fully actualized event: an act, which is always imagined as ahead of the action. Thus the meaning of any action is, Schutz argues, its corresponding *projected act*. Conversely then, an act is itself the meaning-context, which gives meaning and coherence to all actions, involved in its enactment.¹¹⁰

For Schutz, the clarification of acts as meaning-contexts is important not only as a clarification of Weber's concept but also because it is the mechanism through which the whole world (of experience) comes to be. It is as he notes, “Our whole experience (*Erfahrung*) of the world,” Schutz argues, “as such is built up in polythetic Acts.”¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸ Ibid. p. 60

¹⁰⁹ Ibid. p. 61

¹¹⁰ Ibid. p. 75

¹¹¹ Ibid. p. 76

We can synthesize these Acts and then think of the resultant synthesis as the experienced (*das Erfahrene*), this becoming the unified object of monothetic attention.¹¹² This holds true of Acts of both external and internal experience. Along with the constitution of “the experienced” out of separate experience, the object of experience (*Erfahrungsgegenstand*) is constituted [Emphasis in original]¹¹³

So what implications can we draw from Schutz’s explanation of the relation between human acts, their meanings and experience for the Architects Act, which seems to present itself to our experience as an object mired in legalities? To understand, let us “attend” to it differently; not so much as an object that lies in the past but rather, following Schutz, as a “meaning-context” that is “projected” into the future. Thus, imagine, if you will, it is sometime in the 1960’s. Jai Ratan Bhalla, sketches a particular “project,” or as he put it to me, had an “idea”¹¹⁴

¹¹² The difference between monothetic attention and polythetic Act needs to be elaborated here. According to Schutz, the process of choice between successively pictured projects, plus the action right up to its completion, comprises a synthetic intentional Act (*Akt*) of a higher order, an Act that is inwardly differentiated into other Acts. As he notes, (pg. 68)

Husserl distinguishes between intentional Acts which are continuous syntheses and intentional Acts which are discontinuous syntheses. For instance, an Act which constituted the “thinghood” of a thing in space is a continuous synthesis. Discontinuous syntheses, on the other hand, are *bindings-together* of other discrete Acts. This unity is an articulated unity and is a unity of a higher order. This higher Act (which he calls a polythetic Act) is both polythetic and synthetic. It is polythetic because within it several different “theses” are posited. It is synthetic because they are posited together. As every constituent Act within the total Act has its object, so the total act has its total object. But something distinctive happens in the constitution of this total object. It might be explained like this: the object of each constituent Act has a single shaft of attention or ray (*strahl*) of awareness directed toward it. The synthetic Act which ensues is necessarily *many-rayed*, since it is to start with a synthetic collection. But it is not satisfied in being a *plural consciousness*. It transforms itself into a *single consciousness*, its complex collection of objects becoming the object of one ray, a “one-rayed object.”

¹¹³ Husserl logic, pg 147 as quoted in Schutz pg 76.

¹¹⁴ Bhalla’s “idea” here is not to be understood as some originary moment or one that presupposes any notion of Bhalla as a unified subjectivity. As Schutz argues, intentionality, and that is why he calls it an intentional Act, is itself a polythetic act; that is, a synthesis of many, lower order configurations of meanings. As is apparent from Bhalla’s comments, his decision to “do something drastic” was based on other meaning configurations and the total context of his experience, which were, importantly, “all histories,” that were similarly ahead of Architects Act of India. By “definition” this is another “infinite” meaning context and included not only Bhalla’s familiarity with the “history” of architects in other

“I think the most important thing was the profession how it existed was not being recognized at all...So what we thought was that *if we have some facility whenever there was a question of appointing an architect...* even in government services...at the time you know Chandigarh was the only example...where we had qualified architects...So in other words the profession was totally neglected...the state of the profession was so poor... *So I thought that unless I do something very drastic...* and then...and that time 1965, I fortunately became the president of the Indian institute of Architects also...and... I thought I should take advantage of the commonwealth countries...” [Emphasis added].

At this time then, when the “Act” was at its “project” stage, that is, something that was to be fulfilled in the future, its meaning was, as Bhalla notes, that of a “facilitator,” something that would work to bring an architect to the fore every time there was a need for an architect. While traditional analysis seems to stop at this moment and proceed as if this is what the Act continues to be and mean, what actually happens is quite different. Immediately after this “projection,” Bhalla, Mody *et al* begin to work towards realizing this facility. To do this they chose certain means. However, each of these “means” are by themselves also “acts”/ events/ occurrences. Recall here all the “events” outlined in the earlier sections of this chapter; from Correa’s “project” that architecture must be taught, even understood as a science, to discussion in journals, to informal and formal educational venues, to exchanges amongst politicians, state educational boards, municipalities, university chancellors,

countries but also other meaning contexts, both personal and impersonal; his personal experiences of practicing architecture in Kenya; his education as an architect in which he learnt about the “history” of the discipline; the experiences of his colleagues like Kanvinde, Rehman, Doshi and many others who were trained in the tenets of the “new” architecture. All of these and infinite other “contexts” became at once, as we saw from Schutz, “the content of the totality of meaning-configurations brought together within one moment (the moment of his idea) as well as a meaning-context of a higher order (his idea itself).

various governmental ministries, and finally back to the Indian parliament where this process continues for another two years. And as such, each of them expands, changes, transforms the “project:” building it up, increasing the polythetic-ness (as Schutz would call it) of this meaning-context.

Yet, it is not only the “project” that is rapidly transforming, expanding. As this meaning-context morphs, it also changes the context of experience of all those who come within its ambit. Recall here Schutz’s argument that the total content of someone’s experience, or the sum of all their perceptions of the world in the broadest sense, is, brought together and coordinated in the total context of their experience.” In this way then, what is produced, by this “project” is the “space” of the discipline of architecture in postcolonial India. Yet this is not some autonomous space. It is, in fact, coterminous with the meaning-context itself. And like the meaning-context, it is not some static space. Indeed, it is a space where “things” (other meanings, identities, and “projects”) collide, intermingle and hybridize. It is a space that brings in a “putatively” global scope and history of architects and architecture. It is a space where this “history” encounters an equally “global” history of development and nationalism whose specific form in India is to locate the “project” of nation building within the ideology of the state-as-architect. This is also a space where the (re)construction of the identity of architects and architecture simultaneously encounters yet another “history”; that of engineers, consulting engineers and architects already vying for their own meaning-context and space. It is a space where this project (ex)changes with members of the Indian Parliament; with administrators of municipalities, with educational boards, with other members who practices were concerned with the built environment. With each occurrence, and there are an infinite number, the space and the meaning-context continues to internally differentiate and hybridize. Then suddenly in another event, an “act” of the Parliament of India on the 24th of May 1972, at around 2:00 pm,

this continuous process is “seemingly” halted. The project is realized. All “actions” on the project stop and it is now an Act.

Those agents who proposed this “project?” are jubilant, the facility they had “projected” has materialized; a “facilitator” has arrived. And, seemingly, it is their facilitator. Its “proper” name, now changed from the Architects Registration bill to, “Architects Act” signals this “fact”. And facilitate it does. It tells them that it will “act” on their behalf of another space that is equally “imagined” and “real;” the nation itself. It “authorizes” them by accepting their demand that they, and only they, are the rightful holders of the title and style of architect. It gives them the right to self determination, govern their own affairs through a council, manage the training of those they deems to be future members of their community, so on and so forth. It solves in one stroke what many have claimed to be the quintessential problem of authority in modern times; that by what right does a particular group have the authority to constitute themselves as such and such, call themselves as such and such.¹¹⁵ It does all this for them and more.

Yet a question needs asking here, even at this “moment” of completion, does the “Act-the meaning-context, the domain it is” lie in the “past” of those agents who campaigned for it. It cannot. For the only way, “they” and all those who come after them, myself included, who were trained as an architect in India, can claim the “title” architect as a hyphenated subjectivity to buttress our own, is if that meaning context, that was projected continues to project itself and remains as it were, *ahead of us*, always “projecting” and “producing” that domain called the “professional domain of architecture in India.” Indeed, a quick look at the language of the Act itself confirms

¹¹⁵ As the political scientist Honig argues, the quintessential problem facing “authority” in modernity is how to justify the claim to such authority, since modernity implies the dissolution of any ultimate authority such as “God.” B. Honig, “Declarations of Independence: Arendt and Derrida on the Problem of Founding a Republic,” *The American Political Science Review* 85, no. 1 (1991). pp. 97-113. See also, Jacques Derrida, “Declarations of Independence,” *New Political Science* (1986). pp. 17-25.

this. Recall here how the Act defines who an architect is; as someone whose name is contained in the Register of Architects. What this implies is that as long as there is that register, that Act which makes the register, there is something called an architect in India today. Recall here Bhalla's comment that the signature achievement of the Act was that it gave recognition to something called architecture and architects in India. What his comments testify is to this sentiment precisely.

But there is something more to be considered here at the moment of the completion of the Act. While it provides architects with this domain, "their" domain which always goes ahead of them clearing the way for them, it does all of this in a curious manner. It sets up, an indeterminacy, an ambivalence, if you will, at the heart of all of this. It says that they are "free" to do all of this if and only if they "sign" their names into a register it creates, if they remain within its ambit, its space. And through this (per)formative act it brings them right back into that "messy" space where the identity of the architect, architectural expertise, and the discipline is ironically, not either "global" or "universal" and self-evident, where architecture and architects are always and already entered in a series of relations with other meanings, where the title and the style of the architect has to be constantly negotiated, (re)constructed, maintained, and (re)produced.

Perhaps a compelling example of this ambivalence is the following remark that A. G. K. Menon made to me. Recall here that it was he who had also mentioned that in 1972, the Act was "victory enough." Later on in the conversation this is what he had to say,

...so like in anything in democracy...this solution is not necessarily the best solution but a compromised solution...you give and you take. What we took was the fact that the profession was recognized...an architect--- one who registered with the council that is what we took. What we gave was whole lot

of other baggage including disciplinarity and this and that. We said let the (colonial) system continue...we never made an issue out of it. *So all one could say was those who got a B. arch was an architect, but if you started to go into defining who / what was a B. arch the bill would never have passed. So like anything it is a negotiated thing* [Emphasis added].

Menon should know. As a young Turk in the seventies, the legislation of the Act suddenly opened up a world for him. It gave credence to his labors, and to the labors of many others like him. It permitted that they could call themselves “architects.” This was, as he had to so eloquently expressed, “victory enough.” Yet, much had also changed in thirty-five years that had elapsed since then. Though , on the one hand, he had become an internationally known architectural conservationist and educator, and started the TVB school of Habitat Studies, he had seen not only attack on his persona but numerous attack on the college itself due to stipulations contained within the very facilitator of architecture and architects; the Architects Act of 1972. Indeed, so vehement was this attack, that soon after I left the field, TVB was forced to shut down on a mere technicality.

Yet here too the picture was not this simple. It was not a case that the Act was good early on for Menon and now it was “evil” personified. Like the “juniors” who had decided to confront the President in the architectural workshop in Ahmedabad, what the Act meant to him was far more nuanced. Let me end with a particular incident that brings this complexity into sharp relief.

One day as I was rummaging through Menon’s cabinets to gather some primary documents about TVB, I came across a file that contained a writ petition submitted to the High Court of New Delhi by him and others on behalf of TVB against

a ruling made by the Council.¹¹⁶ According to this ruling, the Council claimed TVB had apparently not complied with a rule passed the Council that a college of Architecture recognized by the Council had to possess absolute title over the land where it was located. As the writ claimed, the Council had decreed that TVB had to comply with its ruling within a specified date and that a failure to do so would necessitate action against TVB, that might lead to its “de-recognition” from the list of colleges that could grant a degree in architecture and thus an entry into the register for its students.

Not feeling favorably disposed to the council myself, having been denied an access to “study” the first register that was created in 1975, I turned to Menon and mentioned what I felt was the incredible manner in which the Act and the Council interrupted the everyday of the discipline. Menon, turned to me and said,

Tell me about it Jaideep. The ridiculousness of the situation is appalling. What does owning the land have to do with teaching architecture? Can you tell me that? But this is not the most ridiculous thing...for years I have been trying to argue that we do not need math and science as prerequisites for students to enter into architecture. Do you know how much resistance I have faced? This is our mentality... a hangover from colonial times, where we were supposed to be draughtsmen, merely redrawing what our colonial master architects imagined, calculating quantities of materials to be put into making a building. The farcical nature of this is appalling. But you see every time I mention this, I get all kinds of gut reactions to this. I have actually gone and asked architects so tell me, what help has your training in math and science given you as an architect that you could not have picked up along the way. Do you know what

¹¹⁶ Filed on the 22nd of July 1999 to the Chief Justice Mr. Variava and his lordship’s companion Justices of the Honorable High Court of Delhi.

one architect answered (laughs)... he said well we used all these chemical and materials how would we know what chemicals make that product we used.

WHAT! I am tired, tired of this fighting, tired of this mentality, the Council says include math and science so we stick to it. I am tired of fighting it. It is up to people like you now to carry on.

I agreed with him, and said that in my own way, I do so but from the outside.

Menon: from the outside, what do you mean from the outside?

Jaideep: Well through writing, plus I have not registered with the Council, so under the Architects Act I am really not an “architect” in India, even though I was trained as one.

Menon: No No, you have to register, it is *our* Act. You have to register. You cannot do this from the outside Jaideep. If you are on the outside you will be shrugged off as not an architect and therefore do not know....The way to approach this from the inside. *Remember it is our Act* [emphasis added].

Despite all his critique of the meaning-context and the way it impinged upon his personal, professional, and educational activities and tired of being attacked and working to change the Act, it remained and remains for Menon, much like the “juniors,” an extremely complex ambivalent “thing,” I, on the other hand, have still not registered.

2.7 Addendum:

I began this chapter with a quote from the President of the Council in which he referred to the Architects Act as Pandora’s Box. His immediate intention in using this metonym, as far as I was able to glean, was to fend off the increasing sense of unease against the Act that seemed to pervade the workshop. Ironically, as this chapter shows, his characterization is not far from the truth. Scratch the surface of this legal “object” and a veritable plethora of meanings, histories, and events leap to question its object-

hood. Histories of nation-building, reformulations of the architect-subject, of architecture, alloyed identities, meanings all present themselves. But these are just what this chapter focuses on. There are in fact many more; histories of the politics between the Bombay group of architects which essentially comprised the IIA and the Delhi group of architects who came to populate the Council, histories of how other ways of building in India were slowly marginalized through the production of this particular space of the discipline, histories of gender and the gendering of the history of the discipline, so on and so forth. Each of these histories and meanings exist within the meaning-context and space that is the Architects Act.

At one level my reasons for limiting myself to the particular narratives I have are purely pragmatic. There are just so many contexts one can explore. At another level however, there is a more immanent reason. This was the “crisis” that I had briefly mentioned in the first section of this chapter. To briefly recapitulate it; the crisis in question was the legal battle between the Council and the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) over which of these “bodies” had jurisdiction over architectural education.¹¹⁷ Each had claimed that the regulation of schools of architecture and architectural curricula was their prerogative. Battle lines had been drawn and architects had rallied to the cause. Discussions had taken place and letters were fired off to the Minister for Human Resource Development (MHRD), Shri Murli Manohar Joshi, in which architects pleaded with him to delink architecture from the

¹¹⁷ The All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), is the statutory body and a National-level council for technical education, under Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development. Established in November, 1945 first as an advisory body and later on in 1987 given statutory status by an Act of Parliament, the AICTE is responsible for the development of the technical education and management education systems in India. A major agenda of the AICTE is accreditation. It is assisted by 10 Statutory Boards of Studies, namely, UG Studies in Eng. & Tech., PG and Research in Eng. and Tech., Management Studies, Vocational Education, Technical Education, Pharmaceutical Education, Architecture, Hotel Management and Catering Technology, Information Technology, Town and Country Planning.

AICTE which they claimed represented the agenda of the engineers. This they claimed was most

...urgent and critical since Architecture cannot be allowed to be reduced to mere construction or engineering devoid of any cultural and artistic expression. 4 year engineering courses are ill equipped to train architects who have 5 year distinctive courses in architecture followed by specialized master's and doctoral programs to create qualified architects capable of expressing their culture and art.¹¹⁸

Any failure in separating architecture from engineering

...would lead to creation of cultureless construction, without any artistic expression and that would become symbol of indifference of our time. That will be a great shame to us all.¹¹⁹

As well as demeaning a profession that

“responded to the needs and aspirations of our people, our culture and lifestyle in its rich diversity and unity, the quality that the whole world recognizes as Indian.”¹²⁰

The matter had finally gone to the Mumbai High Court, where Acts battled with each other. In the end, the Architects Act of 1972 had prevailed over the AICTE Act of 1987. The court had held that “as far as Architectural Education is concerned, the Architects Act, 1972 is a special legislation and the AICTE Act is a general legislation and therefore the provisions of the AICTE Act to lay down functions for technical education generally cannot be construed to displace the authority of the Council of Architecture constituted under the Architects Act, 1972.”

¹¹⁸ Akhtar Chauhan, "Open Letter to Human Resource Development Ministry (Sub: Controlling and Regulating Architectural Education in India)," [Architexturez.org, http://www.architecturez.net/FILES/archive/document.archive/e/aicte-coa.iasa.01.shtml](http://www.architecturez.net/FILES/archive/document.archive/e/aicte-coa.iasa.01.shtml).

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

Yet at the same time what the above except from the letter sent by architects to the Minister for Human Resource Development clearly shows is that the crisis had managed to raise old fears amongst the architectural community especially with regards to one thing that Act did; the protection of the title and style of the architect. The Court's decision in favor of the position of the architects had, to a large extent, quelled the fears regarding the title. However, where the style of the architect was concerned, it was a different matter altogether. As the crisis shows, anxieties regarding the "style," that distinctive quality of, architects that was forged in their training could still be attacked. It is then to this question of that "style" of architects, the thing that "makes" them "architects" that I turn to in the next chapter.

3. 0 THE MOMENT OF DESIGN

*Architect woh hain
jo aksar fasta hai
interviews ke sawaal mey
badi companiyon ke jal mey
boss aur client ke bawaal mey*

*An architect is one
Who is often entangled:
in questions asked at interviews
within the web of corporate ideas
in the bickering between a client and boss*

*Architect woh hai
jo pak gaya hai
meetings ki jhelai mey
submissions ki gehraai mey
teamwork ki chataai mey*

*An architect is one
who is fatigued by:
the minutiae of officialdom
submissions and deadlines
the impossibilities of teamwork*

*Architect woh hai
jo laga rahta hai
schedule ko fislane mey
targets ko khiskane mey
roz naye naye bahane banaane mey*

*An architect is one
who constantly:
tries to undo schedules
postpone targets
daily come up with innovative excuses*

*Architect woh hai
jo lunch time me breakfast leta hai
dinner time me lunch karta hai
aur commutation ke waqt soya karta hai*

*An architect is one who:
has breakfast when it is time for lunch,
lunch when it is time for dinner
naps in the commute between two places*

*Architect woh hai
jo paagal hai
Daaru ke pyaar mey
cigarette ke khumar mey
birdwatching ke wichaar mey*

*An architect is one
Whose passion manifests:
in the ecstasy of intoxication
in the swirling smoke of cigarettes
in the contemplation of women*

*Architect woh hai
jo khoya hai reminders ke jawab mey
na milne wale hisab mey
behtar bhavisya ke khwab mey*

*An architect is one who is
at a loss to answer questions
perplexed at things that do not match up
yet, is always dreaming of a better future.*

*Architect woh hai
jise intezaar hai weekend night par
dhoom machane ka
boss ke chhuti par jane ka
increment ki khabar aane ka*

*An Architect is one who waits:
for the weekend to party
for the “boss” to go on a holiday
for the next paycheck*

*Architect woh hai jo sochta hai
kaash padhai par dhyaan diya hota
kaash teacher se panga na liya hota
kaash ishq na kiya hota....*

*An architect is one who wishes that he
...had paid more attention to his
education
... had not rebelled against the teachers
... had not fallen in love*

Priyank Jain(TVB)¹

¹ During My fieldwork at TVB, Priyank was in his fifth (final) year of the undergraduate degree in architecture. This particular poem written in Hindi about architects is something he had penned for his classmates in his third year.

In the previous chapter, I argued that the ideal architect in (for) postcolonial India, as elaborated through conferences, trade magazines and the debates within the Joint Select Committee, was a peculiar figure that emerged through an apparent resonance between global discourses on Modern Architecture and the equally universal ideas about nation-building and technocratic expertise promulgated by the postcolonial Indian State. Yet, as we also saw, this was not the “figure” that the Architects Act of 1972 enshrined. Repeated arguments by engineers and other interested parties ensured that the Act could not, and did not, ratify such a “content” to the title, architect that it “protected.” Indeed, the way the Act defined the architect; as one whose name is in the register of Architects, made no reference to any specific *content* that could be associated with the title architect.² Needless to say, this presented a problem for those who were claiming the title architect.

Fortunately for them, however, here too, the Act came to the rescue. Not so much overtly, but rather through the backdoor; in a clause that directly linked the registration of Architects in India to their being education in “recognized” schools of architecture.³ Bhalla provided me with the following reason for this clause.

You see, at that time we needed to do it. At the time of the passage of the bill... my apprehension that time. ..and I didn't put it quite rightly in the parliament...the engineers insisted that they should also be enrolled as architects...now, we knew at that time there were 4 *lac*⁴ engineers who were practicing...and they were practicing for ages also and we...we thought...we

² *The Architects Bill, 1968: Report of the Joint Committee*, 1969. Recall here that the deletion of the content of the architect was precisely the reason why someone like Pilo Mody considered the Architects Act to have failed in what it set out to do.

³ *Ibid.* p.5.

⁴ A *lac* is equal to one hundred thousand. Thus according to Bhalla there were about 400,000 engineers in India in the early seventies. Though I have not been able to confirm the exact number since engineers are not required to register with any particular society to practice in India, the data from the numbers of colleges of engineers in the 70's suggests a somewhat similar number.

had only two thousand ... u know only one thousand seven hundred architects who got enlisted, who had the qualifications.

As he had rightly mentioned, the way the issue had been framed in front of the Joint Select Committee four decades ago was indeed slightly different. When the Chairman of the Joint Select Committee, Mr. M. H. Samuel, has asked Bhalla if he was satisfied with the Bill as it stood, Bhalla had answered,

As mentioned in my memorandum, I am not satisfied with the Bill for the reason that it does not protect the practice of architects. But we are not going to ask for something which we know we would not [sic] get now, as we are not large enough in numbers to be able to do all the work in the country. Realizing the fact of the situation, we welcome this Bill as a first step. As I said in my memorandum, it may be that in another ten or twenty years we may come back again and say: please we are now strong enough to undertake all the building work all over the country...Till then I think we are happy with the Bill as it is.⁵

Yet Bhalla's reasoning was quite similar and its outline went something like this: the Act, as it stands while protecting the both the *title* and the *style* (method, content) of the architect, nevertheless has a problem: it renders the title as an empty placeholder; if engineers ("unqualified" architects) were to register under the Act, then even the much prized protection of the title architect would come to naught; since we (qualified architects) are a minority at the present time there is not much we can do about this; the need of the hour is thus to produce, populate, as many architects with the "right" qualifications as one can; let us take what we have achieved (the protection of the title and the right to decide which schools would impart architectural education) and use these "right" schools as a front to lead the charge to produce the "right" kind of architect; with enough "rightful" holders of the "title" architects would get their due

⁵ *The Architects Bill, 1968: Report of the Joint Committee.* p.17.

recognition of being that figure on whose shoulders lay the entire task of providing a vision as well as a concrete form, through the built environment, to modern India.

By 2006, when I was conducting my fieldwork, this strategy seemed to have worked. The numerical growth of architects was well on its way. In fact it had exceeded expectations and the number of architects and institutions imparting architectural education in the country had swelled exponentially. At the time of the passage of the Bill in 1972, the number of “recognized” schools of architecture contained in the official “Schedule of Institutions of Architecture” was merely sixteen.⁶ In the same *Schedule* published in the 2005 version of the *Handbook of Professional Documents*, this number had swelled to 114, roughly a ten-fold increase.⁷ The nineties has been an especially productive decade. In 1990 the number of schools of architecture in the country was 45, by the year 2000 this had increased to 106; a rate of growth of about six new schools of architecture opening every year. Indeed, the increase in the number of schools showed no signs of abating whatsoever, and the Council was seriously perplexed about how to properly manage this rapid mushrooming of schools all over the country.⁸ A similarly spectacular growth had also occurred in terms of the number of registered architects. Whereas in 1975, the first time the register was officially published, there were 2336 registered architects; by 2005 this number had swelled to 26240.⁹

Yet, did this numerical increase also imply a similar degree of success in terms of producing the “right” kind of architect, the kind in whose name it was asked that the

⁶ Ibid. p.21. The first “official” schedule of Institutions was printed in the report of the Joint Select Committee. Thereafter it is updated by the Council regularly and published each time there is a new version of the professional handbook of Architects. .

⁷ The Council of Architecture, *The Architects Handbook of Professional Documents* 2005. pp. xv-xxiii

⁸ Personal communication with Vijay Sohoni, current president Council of Architecture, India

⁹ Architecture. pp. xxvii. Here too the nineties was a dramatic decade. In the ten years between 1990 and 2000 the number of architects who registered was 12792, approximately forty-eight percent of all registered architects in India

title be protected, that is, the kind of architect who was an expert at “design,” and who would be at the helm of the development of the nation and society, guiding its affairs, arbitrating it. In other words, did this numerical increase also signify a similar success in producing the kind of architect that the pronoun “we,” signifies in Bhalla’s statement to the Joint Select Committee?

In this chapter I attempt to unpack this question through my interactions with architectural educators, architects and, students at one such recognized school of architecture, The Tulsi Vidya Bharati School of Habitat Studies (henceforth TVB), New Delhi. Founded in 1990 TVB is, today, one of the best known schools of architecture in the country. And though recognized by the Council of Architecture, its origins, as we shall see, stem from ideals different than the high modernist vision of development. If anything, TVB has always had an explicit agenda to produce architects who would be a critique and an alternative to the ideal architect within the high modernism, as well as an architect who, as the director of TVB told me, refuses to succumb to the master narrative about architecture from the west. It is TVB’s explicitly articulated positions regarding architecture and the architect-subject within and of India that makes it so central to my concern to understand what it means to be an architect in India today.

As this chapter argues, through an analysis of the design jury and the curious status of architectural representation within them, as both drawings *and* not, that one can indeed, draw, at one level, a straight line from this idealized collective architect-self, this “we” who was suffused with a will to modernity, development through design, to the “I” of the individual architect-subject in India today. In this sense, my argument is that the moment of design is also the moment of the architect we encountered in the previous chapter, which attempts to bring, as it were, a “closure” to that “ideal” meaning of architecture and the architect in India today.

However, as like in the case of the Act whose space was “polluted” with concerns other than that of “architect or architecture,” I also draw attention, at the end of the chapter, to the incompleteness of this (trans)formation. That is, I try to show that the straightness of the line, the seamless translation of this “we’ into the, “I” is not exactly complete, is never complete. That there are moments where this line would break, moments which signify an uneasiness that many of the architects I spoke with have with this figure of the architect driven by the will to modernity, development, history, moments that underscore a feeling that this figure was perhaps a “fabulous” construction in the first place, or simply, as a student told me, a slave to the desires of one’s own dream to be an architect.¹⁰

3.1 The Tulsi Vidya Bharati School of Habitat Studies.

Located in Vasant Kunj, South Delhi, off of a gravel path (see figure 2.00), the six-foot high compound walls and the surrounding farm-land make TVB appear, from the outside, more like an idyllic “retreat” rather than one of the best known colleges of architecture in the country. The first view of the college as you enter through the flimsy iron- gate (see figure 2.01) manned by a single guard does not quite change this impression. The whole complex is sparsely populated; just two disjointed low-slung green-colored buildings separated by a large lawn in the middle. To the immediate right of the gate is a small space that usually has a few cars and motorcycles that belong to students (see figure 2.02). The way to the academic block which is to the right of the lawn is through a small path that abuts this “parking.” Directly opposite the academic block lies a small open air theatre (see figure 2.03) that much like the academic block is partly submerged into the ground. The entry to the academic block (see figure 2.04) is itself divided into three parts; two flights of stair going up and a

¹⁰ Indeed, the very expression of this phrase reveals the existence of limits to this translative/transformational process.

wider flight going a few steps down to what is a half submerged basement. The building's layout is simple and essentially the same on both floors; a long corridor in the center with classrooms on the two sides (see figure 2.05). In the lower floor, the classrooms on the left function as "theory" (lecture) rooms, whilst the other rooms on both floors function as "studio" spaces (see figure 2.06).

The smaller building on campus, to the left of the entrance gate, functions as the "administrative" block (see figure 2.07). Its entry is through a door that is diagonally opposite the main gate and leads you directly into a small open courtyard. To its immediate right is the computer lab in which roughly twenty five computers lie scattered on long rectangular tables. To the left lies the main office where sit the college accountant, the secretary, a peon and typist. As you exit the courtyard through a corridor directly opposite, the conference room where faculty meetings are held appears on the left. This room itself leads off into two smaller rooms that function as the offices of the present Director and the Dean of Academic Affairs of the college, A. G. K. Menon and A. B. Lall respectively. The corridor leads to yet another courtyard that has, on the one side, the two rooms assigned for faculty offices. On the other side of this courtyard lies the college canteen. The canteen proper is a long rectangular room with the kitchen at its further end. However, its most distinct feature is not this room but rather the space in front. Dominated by a huge *gulmohar* tree, whose trunk is encased by a low brick siding made by students, this space reminds one of a "*gurukul*" of yesteryears, where a "guru" would sit at the base of a tree and classes would be held under its shade (see figure 2.08) . As I was to later experience, this is, in many ways, not all that far from the truth. For it is here in this space, and not in the rooms, where



Figure 2.00: The “gravel path” leading to TVB.
Source: From author’s collection.



Figure 2.01: TVB's Entrance.
Source: From author's collection.



Figure 2.02: The “parking” area, with the academic block in the background.
Source: From author’s collection.



Figure 2.03: The submerged Open to Air Theatre.
Source: From the author's collection.



Figure 2.04: The main entry to the Academic Block.
Source: From author's collection.



Figure 2.05: Inside the academic block, Studio space along the main corridor.
Source: From author's collection.



Figure 2.06: Inside a studio.
Source: From author's collection



Figure 2.07: The Administrative Block.
Source: From author's collection.



Figure 2.08: The *Gulmohar* tree in front of the canteen, where all the real teaching would take place.

Source: From author's collection.



Figure 2.09: Lectures in the open, the academic block is in the background
Source: From author's collection

you could easily find much of the faculty sitting engaged in discussion over numerous cups of tea that the canteen steadily provided. It was also here that students would stream in from time to time, join in on the discussions and open their “lunch” boxes, starting an impromptu feast of sorts in which one and all would join in.

In many ways this feel and the air of informality is something students and faculty at TVB are extremely proud of and continually point out as one of the core values of TVB. Meenakshi (name changed), for instance, a second-year student, called TVB a place where the environment “provides what suits me or my types.”

Here we get the freedom to work, we work the way we want to, teachers tell us the work to be done, but how it is to be done is absolutely on us. This makes us use our brains, old experiences and then things come out. If some students are not working, they are not punished like in other colleges. Teachers sit and talk (see figure 2.09) about it, within themselves, and with the students ...

For Arunava Dasgupta, Associate Professor of Architecture, the intimate spaces and interaction help to produce conditions where one can produce the distinctive product of TVB, a thinking architect.

Students and parents often complain that graduates of TVB do not get the most lucrative jobs once when they graduate. I say... look there are approximately 140 schools of architecture that exist in this country, 139 of them produce architects who will automatically get plugged into the industry and make the standard commercial building. If you want to do that, go to any of the other colleges...

The idea that TVB is a place where a different kind of architect is produced is not something new and actually a part of the school’s foundational philosophy which took shape in part in the mind of one of its founder member, M. N. Ashish Ganju in the early seventies. After finishing his architectural training at the Architectural

Association in London, under Peter Cook and Warren Chalk, Ganju returned to India to pursue his architectural practice.¹¹ Always interested in issues of rural development in India, Ganju joined the premier institute of architecture in New Delhi, the School of Planning and Architecture¹² (henceforth SPA) as visiting faculty. Working at the SPA was a revelation of sorts for Ganju,

I thought ...given that the majority of the population was in the rural areas, it was funny that architects had nothing to do with rural areas...so I was trying to promote the rural thing in SPA...but matter[s] came to a head when one of the students who had me as a guide failed because the examiner could not understand what we were talking about

Instead of curbing Ganju's enthusiasm for working in rural India, this particular incident served to renew it. Fortuitously for him, it was also at this that he met up with the husband-wife duo Sanjit and Aruna Roy. Both ardent followers of Gandhi, Sanjit, better known as Bunker, and Aruna had set up in 1972 the Social Work and Research Center (SWRC) in Tilonia, Rajasthan, based on Gandhian principles of empowering rural India. Sensing Ganju's frustrations with the kind of education architects were receiving at the SPA, Bunker suggested that the latter open some kind of non-governmental organization (NGO) that would address some of the issues of building in and for rural India that interested Ganju in a systematic way. Heeding this advice Ganju directed his energies at putting together a team of individuals who were similarly committed to working in rural India. The first recruit was Vinod Gupta, a recent graduate of the School of Planning and Architecture. Joining Gupta and Ganju was Dr. K. L. Nadir, an associate professor of Sociology and Anthropology at the Indian Institute of Technology, New Delhi, and A. G. K. Menon,

¹¹ Personal communication with Mr. M. N. Ganju. See also short biographies of architects in Association Francaise d'Action Artistique, *Architecture in India* (Paris: Electra, 1985).

¹² Defacto the national school

a colleague of Ganju at the SPA, who had recently returned from the completing his graduate degree in urban planning at Columbia University. To begin with the group's attentions were focused on a few projects, mostly unbuilt works, which they proposed all over rural India with Bunker and Aruna Roy. The question of building a school was not even on the horizon.

It was only in 1974 when a few things fell into place and helped prop up the platform for the idea of a school of architecture. The first of these was a feature in the magazine *Seminar*, dedicated to, 'The Architect in India,' which Ganju and Menon were asked to edit.¹³ According to Menon, putting together this feature got them thinking and talking about the profession in a more structured way,

You see there was this perennial question... what is it to be an Indian architect? What does an Indian architect do that is different from another architect? Which leads you to the question about the meaning of Indian architecture...these were the issues that came out...we got that magazine out, we had a lot of people including non-disciplinary people write about it... so one way or the other we would explore it... we would explore each other's works and we decided we would explain each other's works...why we do what we do, and maybe throw light on what it is to practice in India and what we it is that we aim in that practice.

The second development was a design submitted for an urban resettlement scheme in Manila, Philippines on which both Ganju and Vinod Gupta worked, and for which Menon was the Town Planning consultant.¹⁴ Although their submission did not win the competition the design scheme in many ways presented a platform where

¹³ "The Architect in India," *Seminar* 204 (1974).

¹⁴ Ganju M. N. Vinod Gupta and A. G. K. Menon, "A More Comprehensive Concept for Urban Resettlement Schemes," *Design* (1976). pp.46-47.

Ganju, Gupta and Menon could synthetically present the lessons they had learn while working in rural India.

The final push was a formalization of the NGO that had so far worked loosely. The name selected for this NGO was *Greha*, the Sanskrit word for home.¹⁵ It was here, amongst the members of *Greha* that, quite by chance, the idea of a school was born.

Aruna Roy's father, the one who has made the memorandum for SWRC... he helped us formulate an NGO which we called *Greha*...so *Greha* was born...and then we went to the auditor and talked to him that we wanted it registered... he rejected our draft...we went back and worked on it...and then he [Aruna's father] told us...that our first objective seemed to be that of starting a school of architecture...we hadn't even thought of that...it was a rather farfetched idea in '74.

The idea however lay dormant for almost a decade. It was only revived in the early eighties by two colleagues of Ganju, Ranjeet Sabiki and the artist Ashima Chowdhury who had been instrumental in starting the first Women's Polytechnic for Art in New Delhi. The three belonged to a discussion group populated by young artists and architects called Contemporary Architectural Trust. The main focus of this collective was to foster a critical dialogue between artists and architects, especially with regards to New Delhi's urban development. It was at one such meeting, that Sabiki and Chowdhury raised the idea of starting a school that would rival the SPA, the only college of architecture in Delhi at the time. Sabiki who knew of Ganju's NGO and its objectives immediately sounded Ganju on the idea of the latter heading this school. Initially Ganju was reluctant. "I said Ranjit you must be joking...I have a

¹⁵ Although the NGO *Greha* was formed in 1974, it was officially registered under the Societies registration Act – XXI of 1860 in 1986. Memorandum of *Greha*.

whole career in front of me. What am I going to do? I can't do it...I am 40 years old...I like building...You want someone older..." Sabiki nevertheless managed to persuade Ganju. And very soon the *Greha* group started working on a proposal for a college of architecture.

The proposal for the new school appeared in 1985.¹⁶ The plan was grand. The School of Architecture was supposed to be a part of the larger institution, "The Delhi School of Design," which would also offer courses in interior design, textile design, fashion design, graphics and communication media.¹⁷ By itself, the School of Architecture was to offer three kinds of programs.

A five year full time course leading to a bachelors degree in architecture

A short duration part-time refresher program for professional re-training in various specializations

A two year full time post-graduate program in specialized areas leading to a Masters degree in architecture¹⁸

Unfortunately however, the school remained at the level of a proposal.

Sometime in 1987, negotiations between the various parties involved broke down and the school remained unbuilt. But this time, the idea was quickly taken up again, with the arrival of S. K. Sharma, the then Chairman and Managing Director of the Housing and Urban Development Corporation of India (HUDCO).¹⁹ Sharma, who was also an

¹⁶ Greha, *The Delhi School of Design* (New Delhi, 1985).

¹⁷ Ibid. pg 2

¹⁸ Ibid. pg 6

¹⁹ The Housing & Urban Development Corporation Ltd. (HUDCO) is a public sector company fully owned by Govt. of India for financing of housing and urban infrastructure activities in India. HUDCO was incorporated on April 25, 1970 under the Companies Act 1956. The cardinal objective of HUDCO is to undertake housing and urban infrastructure development programs in the country, provide long-term finance for construction of houses for residential purposes in urban & rural areas and finance or undertake, the setting up of the new or satellite towns and industrial enterprise for building material. HUDCO's prime mission is to promote sustainable habitat development to enhance quality of life. Its services and products can be classified into following five categories: 1. housing, 2. urban Infrastructure, 3. building, 4) technology promotion, 5) research and training, and 6) consultancy. Housing and urban Development Corporation Limited, "Hudco: Corporate Profile," (HUDCO, 2007).

avowed Gandhian, had been working with rural India through HUDCO for sometime now. He was especially interested in creating a cadre of community and rural activists who would help marginalized communities achieve self-sufficiency in terms of housing issues.²⁰ Sharma's idea of these "barefoot architects" was much influenced by Mao's program of "barefoot doctors" in China. Launched around 1968, barefoot doctors acted as a primary health-care provider at the grass-roots level. They were given a set of medicines, Western and Chinese that they would dispense. Often they grew their own herbs in the backyard. As Mao had called for, they tried to integrate both Western and Chinese medicine, like acupuncture.²¹ Sharma had somewhat a similar idea for formulating a cadre of "architects" in India.

For Menon, Ganju *et al*, this idea was however not new. Bunker Roy, the founder of the SWRC, had already proposed the idea almost a decade ago. In fact, SWRC was informally known as the "Barefoot College," and its main campus was to be built by "barefoot architects."²² Furthermore, a nascent articulation of this idea of barefoot architects was also expressed in the two stage course structure for the School of Architecture in the "The Delhi School of Design."²³ With Sharma's entry, however, the idea only strengthened. It ultimately found its expression in the "Report of the Study Group constituted by HUDCO to study the restructuring of Technical Education," published in 1988. The timing of the Report was crucial. Earlier that year, the Indian Government had adopted its National Housing Policy.²⁴ The thrust of this policy was to "modify existing planning and design standards of centralized housing

²⁰ Mr. M. N. Ganju, by S. K. Sharma, Letter to Greha Society. New Delhi.

²¹ Aviva Ron Guy Carrina, Yang Huib, Wang Hongb, Zhang Tuohongb, Zhang Lichengb, Zhang Shuob, Ye Yidec, Chen Jiayingd, Jiang Qichengd, Zhang Zhaoyange, Yu June and Li Xueshenge, "The Reform of the Rural Cooperative Medical System in the People's Republic of China: Interim Experience in 14 Pilot Counties," *Social Science and Medicine* 48, no. 7 (1999).

²² Personal Communication with Bunker Roy, See also the www.barefootcollege.org

²³ Greha. Pg. 3

²⁴ Government of India, *National Housing Policy 1988* May 1988.

agencies and authorities to suit local conditions and requirements.”²⁵ Addressing the education of architects and engineers specifically, the policy noted,

The curricula of engineering and architectural colleges and other technical education institutions will be suitably re-oriented to promote architecture relevant to the Indian lifestyle and the needs of the community. Programs will be developed to improve the skill and capabilities of construction workers, artisans and petty contractors. Appropriate technology will be evolved and its use encouraged with a view to increasing productivity. *For this purpose formal and non-formal training facilities will be strengthened and provided on a decentralized basis at the regional, district and taluka level* [Emphasis added]²⁶

The *Greha* group was quick to seize on this particular directive of the National Housing Policy. Under the aegis of HUDCO, Sharma quickly put together a high level study group which included not only the core members of *Greha* (Menon, Ganju and Nadir) but also Sharma himself and P. S. A. Sunderam, Joint. Secretary (housing) Government of India, K. Dharmarajan, former Secretary (housing) Tamil Nadu State, Mulkh Raj, Chief of research and training (HUDCO) and chairman of the Human Settlement Management Institute (HSMI), T. S. Narayanswamy, Head of the Department of Building Engineering and Management, SPA, Michael Slingsby, Co-director, Indian human Settlements Program, Institute for housing Studies, Rotterdam, and J. R. Bhalla, President, Council of Architecture.²⁷

The published report contained a mixture of old and new to deal with the housing problem. On the familiar side of things was the identification of the specific

²⁵ As quoted in the Housing and Urban Development Corporation of India (HUDCO), *Proposal for Restructuring Technical Education to Meet Requirements of Human Settlements* (New Delhi: Housing and Urban Development Corporation of India (HUDCO), December 1988),. pg. 6.

²⁶ Ibid. pg. 7.

²⁷ Ibid. pg. 13

problem with technical education that rendered it incapable of providing adequate solutions to this most urgent of problems facing the nation.

Improvement is only possible if necessary organizational and attitudinal changes are brought within the State Agencies. These organizations, however, dominated as they are by engineers who know on the “brick-mortar” approach...A further problem with the engineer-builders is that they know *how to build* but they do not know *what to build*. The disciplines which can define what to build and which by training are better equipped to facilitate, are architects and planners. The curricula of these are multi-disciplinary providing for planning, designing, building technologies, building systems, history, sociology, rural ecology and other social sciences. It is significant that architectural students take up slum up-gradations, inner city improvement and rural housing projects as school theses whereas civil engineering students do not.²⁸

What was new, however, was the setting up of “habitat schools” which the Report proposed. The concept of habitat schools was an interesting amalgamation of experiences of the members of *Greha* and HUDCO’s prior dealings with slum rehabilitation in urban areas. So while the habitat schools would train architects, it would also train people in habitat planning and habitat engineering. The base for these disparate degrees would be a foundational course for three years. After these three years all students would be required to do at least one year of fieldwork, preferably in rural areas. Subsequent to this time period, students could either choose to remain in the “field” or they could return to school to undergo another two years of training in either architecture, or in habitat planning and habitat management.

²⁸ Ibid.pg. 8-9

The concept of setting up Habitat Schools was well received by many quarters of the India. The director of the Karunya Education Trust in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, wrote Sharma,

I fully agree with you that producing civil engineers we are misdirecting our energy...we are deeply interested in setting up a habitat School which obviously is the need of the hour in this country.²⁹

Yet for all the enthusiasm, the problem of funding the first such habitat school loomed large. The *Greha* group approached Pupul Jayakar, a close friend of the Nehru family, and the chief person responsible for setting up the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) a few years earlier, for assistance. Jayakar, who knew Menon through his work as a conservation architect consultant to INTACH, was much enthused with the idea and pledged some monies towards setting up such an institute. However, it was by no means enough to set up the school and the proposition to set up the school languished once again. Help, Ganju noted, came from an unexpected quarter; in the form of a prominent property broker and developer from New Delhi, Suresh Jain.

...then one day in 1989...you see my mother needed to buy some property and we had this family friend Suresh Jain... he said to my mother that I will find you a place.. we went to his house, it was early morning... he said to me...I would like to show you something half an hour away...he then drove me to Vasant Kunj and showed me this plot...he said... why don't you start a school of architecture here...I looked at the land...there was a building there...it was this unfinished thing, rooms not connected etc...

Till then, the premises in question had functioned as a nursery school run by Jain's wife.³⁰ And though not exactly what Ganju had in mind it nevertheless seemed

²⁹ Ibid. pg. 11- 12.

to fit the bill. Ganju immediately rounded up his colleagues at *Greha* and informed them of the new development. Given their prior experience of many a chance being squandered due to lack of funding Nadir suggested that Jain be asked to commit adequate funding for the running of the first three years of the School. Jain agreed. The *Greha* group then proceeded to put together powerful board of governors for the college. They first approached the grand old man of Indian architecture, A. P. Kanvinde for the position of the chairman. Kanvinde readily agreed. The next to come on board was J. R. Bhalla. Additional members included S. K. Sharma and through him, Sudershan Aggarwal who was the Secretary General of the Rajya Sabha of the Indian Parliament. Rounding off this list were Jain, Ganju and Menon.³¹ The school itself started in November of 1990 with an approximate intake of 40 students in its first batch. It was christened as the Tulsi Vidya Bharati School of Habitat Studies (TVBSHS), a combination of the names of the educational trust run by Jain (the Tulsi Vidya Bharati Education Trust) and Habitat Schools first proposed in the HUDCO report.

3.2 Pre-Final Jury Nov, 5th 2006 TVB School of Habitat Studies.

It is roughly 10:30 in the morning of the day of the pre-final jury for the urban design studio. I stand close to Mrinal, Diksha and Arvind as they add finishing touches to their drawings and project model (see figure 2.10). Being somewhat bad at making models myself, I do not offer them my help and slip away to see what the other group, which I had been tracking, is up to. The scene there is not much different. Czaee is hunched over their site model (see figure 2.11) and diligently adding trees made out of thermocol (polystyrene) to it. Dhruva (known amongst the final year students

³⁰ Jain's wife had started a primary school and an educational trust called the Vidya Bharati Educational Trust named after, Suresh Jain mother.

³¹ TVB School Of Habitat Studies, "Prospectus," (New Delhi: Vidya Bharati Educational Society 1990), pg. 5.



Figure 2.10: Mrinal, Arvind, and Diksha pinning up sheets before their pre-final jury.
Source: From author's collection.



Figure 2.11: Czaee, Dhruva and Sneha adding finishing touches to their model before the pre-final jury.

Source: From author's collection.

for his prowess at the computer) is furiously working away at the 3-D “walkthrough” of their design proposal. Leaning over him is Sneha, who is busy pointing out little additions that would make their rendering of the site more realistic.

For about three months now I have been following two student groups as they progress through the final design studio of their education at TVB: the urban design studio. Coordinated by Arunava Dasgupta, Associate Professor, the urban design studio, aims to introduce final year undergraduate architecture student to the various opportunities as well as forces that confront the expertise of the architect when working with “complex” habitat (like a city or parts of it). The design studio had begun with an exercise in which students (in groups of two or three) were asked to identify a place in the city that they found interesting. After this, they were asked to present an analysis of this site; the aim of this exercise was to ascertain the “positive” as well as the “negative” (or problematic) aspects of the site that they had selected.

Mrinal, Arvind and Diksha (or as I called them: M.A.D), had selected the newly constructed expressway called the Delhi Noida Delhi (DND) Flyway. Opened in February, 2001, the Flyway runs across the Yamuna River connecting New Delhi to the various Trans-Yamuna areas (Noida, Mayur Vihar, Patpar Ganj etc) that had mushroomed as major “satellite” areas to the main city in the last decade or so of Delhi’s (and India’s) economic boom. Promising a “world class” driving experience, the roughly 10 kilometers long and 8 lanes wide DND, cut down commute times between Delhi and Noida by about two-thirds of the time it took prior to the making of the expressway.

As M.A.D had argued in their first presentation, the “up” side of their particular site is the slowly undulating design of the expressway that opens a “new” way to see the city: a panoramic showcasing of the city for the regular commuter as well as a visitor. The flip side of the DND, they claimed, is that the panoramic view it

presents was of a part of Delhi that had traditionally been its “underbelly”; the direct area abutting the Yamuna River, which had seen much informal development and squatter settlements.

Czaee, Dhruva and Sneha (the second group I was following) had chosen a site which was diametrically different from the earlier group. Shradhanand Marg (or G. B. Road as it is popularly known) is located at intersections of colonial New Delhi and pre-colonial Delhi. As they had argued in their presentation, the positive as well as the negative aspect of their site was its “grey-ness”, that is, its in-between status that manifested itself in two ways. Firstly, in terms of its location “in-between” the more neo-classically laid out “white” 20th century colonial Delhi (also known as New Delhi) and the more “organic” 16th century Shahjahanabad (known as Old Delhi). Secondly, in terms of the function the street housed: Delhi’s only “red light” district, a paradoxical space that the city publicly denied yet profusely used. For their group, the positive aspect of this dual greyness was that it afforded an interesting dialectic between various forces of the city. The negative or the problematic aspect of the site was the extremely in-human conditions of the built fabric that the sex-workers (mostly female) inhabited as well as the form of the street which they argued acted as a separator of sorts reinforcing the difference between the two Delhi’s.

After these initial observations about their respective sites, Arunava had asked the students to come up with a design project based on their analysis. M.A.D had framed their “project” in the following manner (see figure.2.12):³²

Design Problem: The toll road is an entry to the city. The site gives us a unique opportunity to view the city from a distance.

³² The layout of the sheet, that is, the three categories design problem, design intent and design strategy was provided by Arunava. As we shall see later this particular layout is crucial to the formation of the subjectivity of architects.

The city needs to speak to the viewer. Right now, it is an anonymous statement. The skyline needs to be bold.

Design Intent: We want to capture a part of the image of the city, the image of multi-layering. We want to identify points of prominence/importance/value in the area. Both on the vertical and horizontal plane

Design Strategy: On the skyline, the vertical plane is designed keeping in mind predominantly the formal aspects. On the horizontal plane we map the functional zones according to points of importance. These are two very distinct planes of design, the vertical and the horizontal. The two planes have very distinct character and therefore we can deal with them independently and juxtapose the two and find points of negotiation.

Czaae, Dhruva and Sneha framed theirs as (see figure 2.13)

Design Problem: G.B.Road that also functions under the guise of a far more 'respectable' name: Shraddhanand Marg makes for a very interesting space in Delhi. Integral to any discussion of G.B.Road is its function. It is the only notified red light district in Delhi. At one level, society accepts G.B.Road, but keeps its own self away from it. There is a certain sense of denial which is made apparent by its strong physical separation from what is a residential fabric that runs parallel to it.

Design Intent: We intend to achieve this through creating a cultural zone which attracts people far more sensitive to the darker aspects of human life, and these people in turn give it a recognition thus attracting masses.

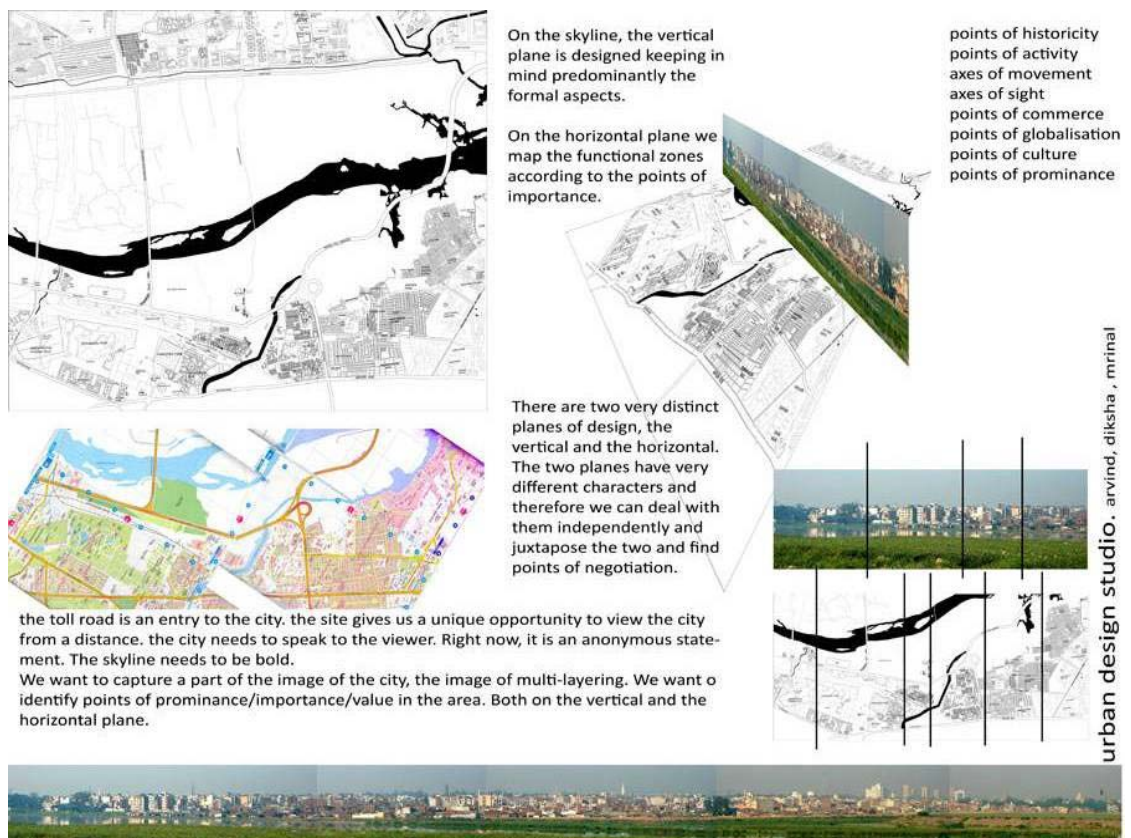


Figure 2.12: Mrinal, Arvind and Diksha’s “project sheet”.

Source: Courtesy of Mrinal Rammohan, Arvind Kumar and Diksha Aggarwal.



Figure 2.13: Czaee, Dhruva and Sneha's "project sheet".
 Source: Courtesy of Czaee Malpani, Dhruva Kalra and Sneha Gurjar.

It should have a melee of activities which cater to the senses on many levels be it visual, auditory etc. Thus it would be a zone which is on one level functions as a one of fine arts and performing arts, and on another level carry on with its function as a brothel. Giving it the first function, would induce people to look at it from a view different of that of a taboo space and activate the zone. This zone would also take on new dimensions during the upcoming commonwealth games.

After this presentation, approximately one-third of the semester, the “research phase” of the studio ended. The groups then began what is unofficially called the “design phase” of the studio. Months of intensive work followed. Students designed several plans for their site and professors (Arunava and others) gave desk-crits to the groups, helping them craft their design proposals for “trans-forming” their site. It was the culmination of this work that was to be finally unveiled to the rest of the school and to some visiting experts today.

At noon, the critics arrive. Arunava and I receive them and we make our way to the corridors in front of the classrooms where the students have pinned up their work. Arunava introduces the project to the critics and soon the jury has begun. The first group to present is Meera and Kapil whose proposal is to redesign a part of Connaught Place, the Central Business District of New Delhi. Their drawings show a plan for a clubhouse and some recreational facilities. They argue that Connaught Place needs these facilities so that it can also become a place which would attract people after daytime hours. Their main intent appears to make Connaught Place into a thriving, bustling area at all hours of the day. Kapil’s and Meera’s jury goes on for about an hour during which there is much back and forth between the various critics and the students. At the end everyone seems exhausted and we adjourn for a lunch break. I walk up to Meera and Kapil and ask them how they thought they had fared

Meera just shrugs and says “*leli*” (we got ripped apart). Kapil on the other hand is a bit more agitated. He tells me that juries are a “free for all.” Anyone can say anything isn’t it Jaideep.”

Around 4:30 in the afternoon and three other presentations later, it is Dhruva, Sneha and Czaee’s turn to present their work. Czaee, who has been given the role of the speaker for the group, begins tentatively. She explains how their central idea is to mediate between the two Delhi’s as well as transform a negative area of the city into a “positive one. The way they do this, she notes, is by, firstly, “fragmenting” the impervious and foreboding facades of the existing buildings where the brothels are housed. This is achieved, she notes, by devising a system of plotted development of houses which have a courtyard in the center. The logic being that such a house type does not have a front and back and would thus get rid of the one-dimensionality of the street. The second thing they do to make the area more welcoming, Czaee points out, is insert various kinds of institutional and commercial buildings within the plotted development they are proposing. Chief amongst these is a women’s community center. This center, Sneha tells the jurors, houses a small dispensary, a maternity clinic, and a primary school. Prerna, one of the visiting critics, suddenly gets up to ask where is all this in their drawings. Dhruva promptly rushes to the drawings and points it out to her. The conversation then veers into the specifics of how this plotted system would work. Dhruva points out that one of the reasons they propose this type of plotted development is that “time and again we were asked the question what stops commerce from taking over this space.” Czaee adds that the way they have designed the houses would restrict the commerce from taking over completely. To this, Soumi, another visiting critic, brings the question that how does their plan ensure that the brothels come back and want to inhabit the plotted developments they have made. Czaee and Dhruva respond by saying that they are giving the brothels the power to redevelop the

area. Soumi, however, does not seem convinced. Mrinal, who is standing nearby, points out that even if one of the brothels decides not to develop according to the proposal put forward by CSD, then their entire proposal fails. Czaee retorts by saying that is not the case, they have taken into consideration that not every may want to develop at the same time. “It is just a building typology we are suggesting” Czaee says. The jury goes on with this constant back and forth.

About thirty minutes into their jury however, there is a subtle yet perceptible shift in the “air.” Czaee, Sneha and Dhruva who were somewhat reticent at the outset now seem to be far more in control. Queries by classmates and critics are being rapidly brushed aside by a barrage of replies. To me it appears as if a) their jury is going well, and b) they too know that. Soon we come to the end of their presentation. I walk over to ask them the same questions that I had asked Meera and Kapil earlier. But I am unable to. A mini celebration of sorts is underway. Surrounded by a few of their classmates who are congratulating them, Czaee, Sneha and Dhruva are exchanging a stream of high-fives and hugs. They also seem to be reliving parts of the jury, while some eager juniors are now peering into their model and talking amongst themselves.

The scene is cut short by the beginning of the next jury; Mrinal, Arvind and Diksha’s. The presentation begins, once again, with Mrinal who is usually the designated speaker for this group. Like others before him, he explains their concept of the panorama and their plan to address the problem of exposed underbelly of Delhi. Soon after Mrinal has finished his opening lines, the question-answer session begins and lasts for more than an hour. This time, however, the mood is radically different. Standing in a file with their shoulders sagging, the group silently listens as the critics and other students point out the various “problems” with their design and drawings. And as the jury ends, there are not high fives but Mrinal, Arvind and Diksha staring at

their own sheets trying to decipher the various suggestions that one of the faculty members had drawn onto their sheet.

The time is almost seven p.m. In an effort to cheer them up and take their mind off the jury, I ask if they are up for a cup of coffee at a nearby restaurant. Diksha, known to be one of the most boisterous students in the college and usually the one who organizes all group events seems hardly interested. The same is also true for Arvind and Mrinal, both of who are gathering their sheets and models, all the while discussing how they must double up their efforts and re-fashion their proposals and designs before the final jury two weeks later.

3.3 The Jury as an Event:

To anyone who has spent some length of time at a school of architecture, the importance of the design jury in the education of architects is something that is hard to miss. TVB, in this regard, is hardly any different. Jury days at TVB are elaborate affairs that bring forth many changes to the school. On appointed days, the school looked very different. If you happened to arrive before the start of a jury, the chaos would seem maddening. Students rushing in all directions. Some carrying heavy rolls of paper tucked under their arms and others furiously working on their presentations. The corridors would look as if an attack of waste paper and other odds and ends had struck it (see figures 2.14-2.15). Classes would usually be disrupted or have already been cancelled as professors of “lesser” subjects (read: anything other than design) would willingly allow their students to go and watch design juries in action.

The changes would become even more pronounced if the juries in question happened to be those at the end of the semester; that is the final design jury. Preparations for these would begin weeks or even months in advance. The design faculty would talk amongst themselves spending hours trying to match and select out



Figure 2.14: Morning Scene before the pre-final jury.
Source: From author's collection.



Figure 2.15: Morning Scene before the pre-final jury.
Source: From author's collection.

of a pool of limited critics, the particular ones they felt should be at their design jury.³³ Students, once having been told of the prospective expert would immediately launch into their due diligence, which is, asking seniors and others about what to expect. Examinations would be routinely rescheduled, if they conflicted with the schedule of juries. In fact the more common practice was to make sure that all other classes and examinations would be taken care of weeks ahead of the final jury so that student would not have anything to distract them from devoting their entire existence to their presentations.

A further sign of the value of juries was the official and unofficial stories that circulated about them. In terms of the former, all parties involved would routinely tell me about how juries were essential to their training insofar as they were “rehearsals” for the reality of architectural practice in which architects had to constantly convince clients, financiers, and users of the viability of their ideas.³⁴ In terms of the latter, the stories were, if anything even more pervasive and dramatic. Thus seniors were always regaling juniors with jury stories. Sometimes these would be about a fast one that one of them had managed to pull on the professor. Other times they would speak of how this or that professor had taken their ass in a particular jury (see figure 2.16). The faculty, for their part, was no less loquacious about juries; constantly exchanging anecdotes about disastrous or spectacular jury performances. Furthermore, juries also evoked an air of nostalgia about them. Indeed, one of the laments I constantly heard from many a member of the faculty and senior students was how little subsequent

³³ In fact there was a clear hierarchy present here. The senior most faculties, who usually directed advanced undergraduate studios, usually got first chance to pick the critics who would join their jury.

³⁴ That students viewed juries being “rehearsals for the reality of architectural practice” is not an unimportant question. What it points to is that students were aware that the jury is a venue, where one “acts” that is, *performs* as architects. As I show later on, this performativity and ritualism is central to the being of juries, and of the (re)production of architects.



Figure 2.16: Cartoon depicting “taking ass” during juries. Cartoon captions, 1) “Go to your faculty,” 2) “Unzip,” 3) “Turn Around,” 4) “Present your pitiful @\$@ and hope for the best.”

Source: From author’s collection.

batches of student worked for juries nowadays. And how different (read: tougher) things were in their time. Apart from these easily apparent indications, the importance of design juries would also manifest itself in many intangible ways too. Their very nomenclature (initial jury, mid-semester jury, final jury) seems to imply that juries were, in fact, what punctuated and gave structure to the whole curricula. As Kathryn Anthony has argued, this is really not far from the truth. Students and faculty constantly see the jury as both important stages/hoops to jump through as the semester progresses as well as being a grand finale to a particular semester.³⁵ Perhaps what most symbolized the centrality of design juries was the effect they seemed to have on the prospective architect. Before juries would begin I would find the student who was about to present her work holed away in some corner of the school muttering to herself what to say in the jury. And once juries commenced it was also not unusual to find students rushing through their presentations, voices quivering, hands shaking and their faces reddening. Many times, a member of the faculty would stop a jury to allow the student to relax and begin the presentation anew. Finally, the completion of juries would always leave students exhausted (see figure 2.17).

It is this acute anxiety that surrounds juries, which has preoccupied the little scholarly work on them. Anthony, whose work remains the only one to explicitly analyze the architectural design jury, has argued that the reason juries generate such anxiety is because they are a highly flawed system of evaluation.³⁶ Lacking in structure, explicitly defined goals and formally trained instructors and critics on how to conduct them, juries, she notes, become fertile grounds for the proliferation of all

³⁵ Kathryn H. Anthony, *Design Juries on Trial : The Renaissance of the Design Studio* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1991).

³⁶ Citing the paucity of scholarly analysis of the design juries, Anthony calls them the “Taboo topic” of design education and practice. Ibid.pg. 4



Figure 2.17: Lipika minutes after her jury.
Source: From author's collection.

kinds of modes of authority, ranging from the charismatic to the paternal, and finally to a peculiar admixture of the authoritarian, tyrannical and totalitarian.³⁷ Students, in this curious admixture of powers, are left to their own devices to master the jury process through trial and error.³⁸

For some later scholars, Garry Stevens for example, Anthony's argument about the presence of the charismatic mode of learning in design juries is right on target. Where he disagrees, however, is with the characterization of this lack of structure as an epiphenomenon to the jury process. For Stevens, the lack is not so much an accident but rather a part of the jury's intentional structure which he argues, following Bourdieu, is to consecrate privilege.³⁹ The "vagueness" of comments that students often face in jury's (and desk-crits) is actually something that serves to purposefully obfuscate what, according to Stevens, is its most efficacious aspect; filtering and throwing into sharp relief the difference between the haves and have-nots, that is, those who have the feel for the architectural game, and those who have-not.

This is the crux of the matter: the cultivated habitus cannot be acquired by labored study. That is the way of the pedant, the plodder. One must have not only the right culture, but the right relationship to that culture, and that relationship depends on how that culture was acquired...Does not every architecture student aspire one day to make the Grand Tour, the leisured journey, the pilgrimage to actually see and experience the sacred sites of architecture...

³⁷ Ibid. pgs. 4-23

³⁸ Ibid. pg. 4.

³⁹ Garry Stevens, *The Favored Circle : The Social Foundations of Architectural Distinction* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1998). pg. 200.

It is obvious that talent in design is necessary for success in design. It is less obvious that talent in talking about design is also required. The studio system requires students to spend a great deal of time talking about their design, talking to other students, talking to professors at desk crits, and *of course talking at jury presentations* [Emphasis added]⁴⁰

Taken together Anthony's and Stevens' arguments present a powerful indictment of design juries. In a sense, Mrinal, Disha and Arvind's sagged shoulders at the end of their pre-final jury attest to the validity of their observations that juries are venues replete with the exercise of power and hegemony. Yet at the same time, as I realized through many conversations, it was also not as if students, faculty, visiting critics did not realize these negative aspects of juries. And in fact because most instructors did know that juries often deteriorated into such crass and blatant abuse of power they would almost never base their evaluation of students on jury performances.⁴¹ On the contrary they would even "bump-up" the grades of those students juries had not transpired well. When asked why they would do so, a reply I would routinely get is that juries are hardly adequate time for someone to judge the entirety of the effort put in by a student for a particular project.

Given such answers however what would then surprise me most was the unequivocal and singular insistence, from all parties concerned, on the centrality of the design jury in the pedagogy of architects at TVB. What I want to ask here is why? Why is it that in spite of knowing that architectural juries *are* (1) inadequate systems of evaluation, (2) venues that cause significant amounts of duress to students, (3) places where one sees such blatant displays of power, do all concerned parties at TVB

⁴⁰ Ibid. pg. 201

⁴¹ I say this not only because of my own experiences at TVB where juries were very rarely the basis for evaluating a student's performance, but also because, as I hope to show, that to understand juries in such a manner is to really miss their transformative potentials.

(students, faculty, visiting experts) unambiguously insist on the centrality of the architectural jury in the education of architects?

To my mind, the answer the above question requires us to jettison our usual understanding of juries and view them instead, as much of the evidence tells us, as highly ritualized events.⁴² Perhaps not so much in the sense that the ritual domain works as signposts of the extraordinary⁴³ (although one could make such a claim too), but certainly in the sense that juries act like, what Erving Goffman has called, a “focused gathering.”⁴⁴ That is, gatherings that involve a set of persons engrossed in a common flow of activity and relating to one another in terms of that flow. Such events, Goffman notes, meet and disperse, its participants fluctuate. However, the activity that focuses them is not only discrete but also a particular one that reoccurs intermittently rather than being a continuous one. In a similar spirit of reorientation, it also requires that we pay special attention not only all the “talking,” (something both Stevens and Anthony mention but do not emphasize) that happens in a jury, but also, perhaps more importantly, to that central actor in a design jury, around whom, pointing to whom, all the talk happens. I am talking, of course, of the architectural drawing.⁴⁵ As I hope to show these central actors have a curious status in design juries; they have a certain undecidability to them. They are both drawings *and* not.

⁴² Indeed, in her work Anthony regularly mentions that juries are like “hazing rituals,” but she does not analyze their ritualistic aspects. Her main line of arguments insists that juries are forms of evaluation. Anthony., pg. 2.

⁴³ For an explanation of rituals as signposts of the extraordinary see, Vincent Crapanzano, "Rite of Return: Circumcision in Morocco," in *The Psychoanalytic Study of Society*, ed. Warner Muensterberger and L. Bryce Boyer (New York: Library of Psychological Anthropology, 1980). See also Stanley J. Tambiah, "A Performative Approach to Rituals," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 65, no. (1979).

⁴⁴ Erving Goffman, *Encounters; Two Studies in the Sociology of Interaction* (Indianapolis,: Bobbs-Merrill, 1961)., pg. 9-10. See also, Clifford Geertz, "Notes on a Balinese Cockfight," in *The Interpretation of Cultures; Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973)., pg. 412-453.

⁴⁵ I should clarify here that though the subsequent analysis focuses mainly on two-dimensional drawings, I use the term architectural drawing in a generic manner to encompass all kinds of architectural representation, whether this be two-dimensional drawings made by hand or generated by computers, or three dimensional models (physical and virtual). If anything, my argument regarding the undecidability of drawings is further strengthened in case of three-dimensional models (physical and virtual) and computer generated drawings. Let me explain this with an anticipation of my argument. As

3.4 Drawings Taken for Wonders.

“But Jaideep, I mean I agree with you in principle perhaps...but there have to be drawings in a jury isn't it...that is our product, the building, how would you see it otherwise...” That was Tania Sengupta, assistant professor of architecture at TVB, in answer to my questions about whether one could have juries without drawings. For the last half an hour or so, sitting at one of the many new Starbucks-like coffee shops that have opened up across New Delhi in the last few years, Tania and I had been vehemently arguing about juries and drawings. For my part, I was insisting that perhaps students write about buildings, present poems, or even just speak at juries without having a drawing to back up their ideas. Tania, as the above quote attests,

I argue, design as a worldview, is based upon a particular ontological view of the world, in which the being of entities, indeed, of the world itself, is understood as an unchanging substance; an “unchanging” reality that undergirds the manifold variety of *appearances*. The design jury and the curious status of architectural representation, as I hope to show, produces this particular meaning structure (world view) of the being of entities, and in doing so produces, propagates the “world” of the architect and the subjectivity of architects within that world, in line with the ontological view of the world as substance. To this particular movement it makes no difference if representation is virtual or physical as long as the particular ideology both produced and propagated by this (architectural) “representation” of correspondence (as well as dissonance) between “reality” and representation” remains intact. A short vignette from my fieldwork should elucidate this further. One day in the faculty offices at TVB, there was a huge argument about how to present drawings at a particular exhibition on Delhi (see next chapter for more details on this exhibition). Some members of the faculty and students were insisting that merely pinning up architectural drawings at an exhibition which was aimed at the general populace was ineffective. According to this group, this is because the general public would not know how to read drawings and thus the message of the drawings would be lost in the presentation. To solve this problem they were suggesting that in addition to drawing one should include physical models. Their logic was that physical representation would be easier for the general public to understand. That is, people would be able to relate the “model” to the “real” building far better than they would drawings to buildings. At first glance this seems valid. Yet what made it curious to me was something that Anjali, one of the architects working on the sheets mentioned. According to Anjali, while she was a student at TVB, she would often have friends over to make models for her projects as home. Each time she would make these models’ her parents and grandmother who lived with her, and who were not architects, would be completely bewildered as to what she was doing. And that at no level could they even understand how these “small” houses were actually going to be “big” houses later on. The disjunct between the two perception of a “model” is rather telling about the existence of a particular worldview, amongst architects, which links (and simultaneous delinks) reality and representation in a particular way. This is precisely why they could even argue about which amongst drawings or models will represent their ideas better or worse. For Anjali’s parents, and grandmother, who do not belong to meaning structure (worldview) of the architect, this particular link between ideas, representation, and reality was not necessarily there, hence the bewilderment at the small doll-like houses Anjali would make during her training as an architect.

though appreciating the “theoretical” angle in my statements, fundamentally disagreed with my proposal in “practice”.

Of course, Tania is absolutely correct. Juries cannot, rather are not, ever held without drawings.⁴⁶ And at a jury the initial impression that strikes one is the bewildering types of drawings that are usually “pinned-up” (see figure 2.18-2.21) Firstly, there are the plans, elevations and sections of the building in question. Secondly, there are the views; axonometric, isometric, perspective, small sketches outlining a particular area and so on. Thirdly, there are, what architects call, the concept sheets. These are usually abstract diagrams explaining the ideas behind the buildings. Aiding these “concept” sheets, are a fourth set of drawings called the “system” sheets. These explain, in many cases, the traffic system (pedestrian, vehicular etc) in the plans laid out by architects, or they show land-usage systems, systems of open spaces and green (vegetational /flora) spaces. Fifthly, there are analysis sheets. These include physical observation diagrams, usually sketches or as is more the case nowadays, photographs, built vs. open ratio sheets (also called Nolli’s diagrams), sheets which show important

⁴⁶ So crucial are drawings to juries that one can quite easily imagine a jury without the presenting architect, but never without a drawing. Indeed, till about the middle of the twentieth century most juries were closed juries. That is, much like how regular examination papers are graded where the drawing speaks on behalf of the architect. In India this practice continued right up to the seventies. See for example a wonderful portrayal of life in a college of architecture in India in the movie, “In Which Annie Gives it Those Ones.” Pradip Krishen, "In Which Annie Gives It Those Ones," (India: 1989). Furthermore, the importance of drawings in the life of an architect is not limited to juries. Numerous historians have noted that it is the emergence of the architectural drawing that serves to mark the point of beginning of the profession of architecture from that of master builder or craftsman as the making of drawings signals a fundamentally different mode of practice. See Magali Sarfatti Larson, *Behind the Postmodern Facade : Architectural Change in Late Twentieth-Century America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993). See also Edward Robbins and Edward Cullinan, *Why Architects Draw* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1994). My argument is however different from such claims and stems from an observation that the art historian Robin Evans makes in which he points out that the fundamental difference between a drawing made by an artist and an architect is that for the former the drawing is the product. It is the final “thing” the artist makes. For architects, however, the drawing is just the representation of their “idea” for a building. Robin Evans, *Translations from Drawing to Building*, Aa Documents (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1997). See also, Robin Evans, *The Projective Cast : Architecture and Its Three Geometries*, 1st MIT pbk. ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Mit Press, 2000).



Figure 2.18: Pinned-up drawings for a jury.
Source: From author's collection.



Figure 2.19: Pinned-up drawings for a jury.
Source: From author's collection.



Figure 2.20: Pinned-up drawings for a jury.
Source: From author's collection.



Figure 2.21: Pinned-up drawings for a jury.
Source: From author's collection.

nodes, that is public and private institutions of significance, existing land usage sheets, building heights sheets, building type sheets, studies of the change in building forms over time (morphology) sheets.⁴⁷ Some students would even include sheets showing the existing infrastructure (sanitation, electrical etc.). Finally, time permitting, there are sheets that draw out details of the plan, or even parts of the building and its construction.

Apart from this variety, however, the next thing that catches one's eye is that all the "talking," that happens at juries, happens in the presence of drawings. In fact it is not only that everyone present talks in the presence of drawings but also that all their talk is directed at drawings, and importantly, *is about* drawings. Yet, as a soon as one notices this, what is surprising is that while all this talk is about drawings, it is really not about them *as drawings*. Take, for instance, how Mrinal introduced their "project" at (to) the jury that I had outlined earlier (see figure 2.22).

We decided on *these two sites* [pointing to the drawing]... one is the open area site next to the ...and the other one is Sarai Kale Khan

After our previous discussions in which we stated that our premise was basically the visual experience that you have (while driving into New Delhi from Noida)... it should say something that way about the rhythms... That is what we were trying to create....*that is*[pointing to the drawing] the axis that you come from Noida...and *that is*[pointing to the drawing] the void space that we have...that sits right on the axis which is a sort of huge spiral sculptural

⁴⁷ A plan showing the relationship between built form and open accessible space (including streets) by presenting the former in black and the latter as a white background (or the other way round). Named after Giambattista Nolli (or Giovanni Battista, April 9, 1701 – July 1, 1756) an Italian architect and surveyor.



Figure 2.22: Mrinal and Arvind present their work to Soumi and Perna.
Source: From author's collection.



Figure 2.23: Arunava and Dhruva in discussion over the latter's presentation.
Source: From author's collection.

form as the backdrop. And *the whole thing* [pointing to the drawing] kind of lifts up and culminates on the tower over *here* [pointing to the drawing]. So actually when you come down *here* and you start driving and you take *this sweeping turn*... actually this whole thing kind of leads your eye right up to *this point*. So the whole thing sort of forms a visual composition. [Emphasis added]

What is curious about Mrinal's introduction is that each time he makes statements such as "we decided on *these* two sites," or "*that* is the axis that you come from Noida," he posits the drawing of a building/site/road not as a drawing but rather as the thing itself. Especially telling in this regard are his statements about the panorama that greets the visitor through which he literally takes all those who are present *into* the Delhi-Noida-Delhi Flyway by inviting them *down there*, "*starting to drive, taking the sweeping turn* and finally coming up against the grand vista of New Delhi itself (and not, as the case actually is, a drawing/photograph of it).

Now, it can perhaps be argued that this particular effect, that is, *the drawing being posited as the thing itself* is due to a certain degree of poetry and imaginativeness on Mrinal's part. To be sure, Mrinal's evocation of the DND is especially vivid, and some architects, as I found out, can and do "describe" their locales better than others. But what I want to underscore here is not so much the vividness of his description but rather that within them, a) the drawing of the building *is* the building, the drawing of the DND *is* the DND and so on, and b) that all present at the jury *believe* that it is so. In fact, as I realized, through the many juries that I attended, that what actually gives credence to Mrinal's statements is that everyone who is present at juries *talk* this way. I would consistently hear exchanges that (re)produced, maintained, and reinforced the notion that the drawing is the thing itself

(see figure 2.23). Witness this conversation between Czaee and Soumi, a visiting juror, during the former's presentation of their "project."

Soumi: can I ask you something...you referred to *this* building [pointing to a drawing of a building in the sheet] in the front... and you said you wanted to retain *it*...when you say you want to retain *it*...what aspect of *it* do you want to retain?so the hardware market is gone ... What are you...

Czaee: we are retaining *it* in terms of its function...

Soumi: so *it is* [pointing to the drawing of a building] a brothel... because the hardware market is gone..?

Czaee: yes the hardware market is gone from *here*... [Emphasis added]

Like Mrinal's introduction what takes place in the conversation between Czaee and Soumi is that in them the distance that exists between, say, the real building that is out there and the building that is drawn on the piece of paper has collapsed, thus framing the drawing of the building as the building itself.⁴⁸

Yet, it is not simply the talking that frames things and drawings in this manner. Indeed even before an architect can or does open her mouth to speak in a jury, the drawing also, itself, attests to all present that it is, indeed, the thing itself. This, it does, through the architectural scale. By making each dimension of the building and its environs on paper correspond with the dimensions of the building and its environs "in reality," the scale makes the drawing of a building scream that it is indeed the "real" building. It is then no surprise that a question visiting experts often asked at juries at TVB was about scale. "What scale is this drawing"? It was also not surprising to hear

⁴⁸ Indeed, in one discussion during the same jury, Prerna, one of the visiting critics, had an elaborate discussion about where to "enter" the building from. How the "entry" into the building would affect its experience. My point here is, as above, that in all cases how architects talk in juries about drawings is as if the drawings are buildings themselves.

students being reprimanded for not making human figures in drawing. The logic given, for the latter, is that they give a sense of scale to their drawings.

Furthermore, juries routinely figure drawings at many different scales. These are either decided by the instructor beforehand, or according to a rule of thumb; the smaller the area (the architect wishes to show) the smaller the “scale” to be used and vice versa. Hence site plans, which simulate not only the particular site on which the architect proposes her building but also its surrounding context would often be drawn at a scale of 1(millimeter) : 200 (millimeter) and greater. Building plans and elevations are drawn at a somewhat intermediary scale of 1:50, and drawings that show detailed layouts sheets at scale(s) of 1: 25 or lower.⁴⁹ The underlying principle governing the presentation of drawings at different scales is again one of drawing being the thing itself, as can be gleaned from the following answer I received when I asked a student about the need for so many different scales.

“Different scales allow us to interact with the buildings differently, thus when we draw at a lower scale, we are literally in the building, and when we use a larger scale we are away from the building.”

Now if, on the one hand, the astonishing thing about drawings in a jury is that they are not talked about drawings but as things themselves, then on the one hand, drawings in juries while being things themselves are also, more reassuringly, drawings (representation), in the sense of being “models” for and of things.⁵⁰ To see how, let us return to the jury again, specifically to Mrinal’s introduction of his project.

⁴⁹ With the coming of Computer aided drawing (CAD), the “reality” factor of drawings has increased exponentially. Indeed, in CAD’s all “objects” are made in 1:1 scale, as if it is real. The screen of the any CAD software program is in that sense the epitome of Cartesian space. It is completely limitless and can extend itself in any direction infinitely. See also note no.43.

⁵⁰ This issue of drawings being “models” of and for things is not unimportant. In juries there are two kinds of drawings. Drawings that represent things that are already existent, thus making them models *of* things, and drawings that represent the building that is to come, thus making them models *for* things. As will be clear in this chapter, my argument is that all drawings are simultaneously both and this is, in fact, that gives drawings the kind of power that they have. See also note no.43.

As I had earlier argued, the point of interest in his introduction is that drawings are posited as things themselves. Yet what is also noteworthy is that while *it is his* statements that “perform” this particular move, they are also considered to be not doing so. That is, his statements, in and of themselves, are not considered as performing that move, that is as performative sentences, by those present but rather as describing things, that is the utterances are understood as being constative, or descriptive statements. And insofar, as they are considered descriptive statements, that is, descriptions *of a* thing, they also bring to the fore, the “mere” drawing-ness of drawings.

Moreover, drawings also points to their own being as representation. They do this through their own material presence. And in their presence, materiality, formatting, every element of formatting, such as the border of the sheet, title, the name plate containing the names of the architect(s) and the project, and so on, the drawing, as a thing, a piece of paper, a computer drawing, something that many of the students had labored months on at end, always draws attention to the fact that the space of the sheet is a “bounded” space that is set apart from its surrounding reality. It tells us, that in their bounded-ness and with graphic markings, drawings are, in fact and after all, “merely” drawings (representations).

There is, however, yet another moment where one realizes drawing in a design jury are representations of things and not things themselves. Consider again, the two exchanges, in full, we have analyzed so far. First that between Mrinal, Arvind, and Diksha and their jurors,

Mrinal: We decided on these two sites... one is the open area site next to the ...and the other one is Sarai Kale Khan

After our previous discussions in which we stated that our premise was basically the visual experience that you have [while driving into New Delhi

from Noida]... it should say something that way about the rhythms... *That* [pointing to sheet] *is what we were trying to create....*that is the axis that you come from Noida...and that is the void space that we have...that sits right on the axis which is a sort of huge spiral sculptural form as the backdrop. And the whole thing kind of lifts up and culminates on the tower over here. So actually when you come down here and you start driving and you take this sweeping turn... actually this whole thing kind of leads your eye right up to this point. So the whole thing sort of forms a visual composition.

Anupam (visiting critic): tu yeh sub apne model se explain kar de (you explain all this through you model) quickly...because I have not understood your drawings...especially when you put the zone thing...you don't understand what the design is... you only understand zones.

Mrinal: ok so *this is what we have done...*[pointing to model]this is the housing...that is the cinema and multiplex, that is railway housing over here...then that is the information center, that is the public area, those two are the heritage centers, that's the metro station

Anupam: what's that half circle?

Mrinal: [still pointing to model]...that is the large entry from this site towards the Interstate Bus Terminal...These are the hotels and the lodges, that tower is heritage marker which doubles as a museum

Anupam: but you said there is no museum?

Mrinal: it is a "Heritage Information Center"...so it will become a kind of nodal point from where heritage walks and tours can begin... so it is vital node.

Prerna (visiting critic): I have a problem with this you know... I have a huge problem with this...why do this... *why are you doing this?*

Mrinal: that is how we govern this... this becomes the culminations of the whole....

Prerna: I understand that... but the proposed structured doesn't complement that... I think you have to design in a way that all of this comes together as one...right now it [the drawings] does not look like that.. *I understand your intent...* there needs to be something that ties this together... [Emphasis added]

Then, between Czaee, Dhruva, Sneha and their jurors,

Czaee: we were looking at couple of different kind of fabric situations...this entire stretch [of the road] forms an interesting intersection between Old Delhi and New Delhi here...*so what we wanted to do was to mediate...* another thing we noticed was... there was a movement of public spaces...that were [sic] coming up...there was the Ram Lila ground... there was this entire belt of transport which was suddenly getting very active ...the metro being here...New Delhi stations being there... *so what we wanted to do was to be able to retain this road as it is....* to do so we needed to sort of mediate between this zone and the GB road zone..

Arunava: ... *is this your earlier model...?*

Czaee:... so this still retains its position in the city instead of being continually shifted somewhere or the other ... and the mediation that was far more local to us was the mediation between the fabric and the road ...to do this we were looking at a system of public spaces that happen... these public zones were more along the lines... of institutions we were looking at which worked for various people in the community.. *..so we identified a couple of those ...like this... where important nodes are happening ... one here ... another here... also we were attempting to break the linearity of the structure by ...because we introduced the landscape here...* we already have the Anglo-Arabic school

here...ever since it got shifted to Minto Road most of the building was not being used...*we have tried to reuse this building and gradually open this zone up...in doing so we came up with different kinds of institutional zones that we put in...there was one zone we put in here... we introduced a women's hospital ...crèche maternity center...*in doing so we allow women from this fabric and women from this fabric ...to use this zone... it is also looking at the larger level picture at some extent...in terms of old Delhi. And allowing us to empower the women...so that they can hold their own...because, at some level, the commerce we are looking at here is a skin based commerce...

Prerna: what scale is this?

Czaee: 1: 1200

Soumi: can I ask you something...you referred to this thing in the front... and *you said you wanted to retain it...*when you say you want to retain it...what aspect of it do you want to retainso the hardware market is gone...what are you...

Czaee: *we are retaining it in terms of its function...*

Soumi: so it is a brothel now... because the hardware market is gone...

Czaee: yes the hardware market is gone...so instead we gave it a commerce [sic] at the lower level...and at the back...there used to be a police station and a bank.. *so what we have done is that we have shifted the bank....*given spaces where an NGO can operate out of...maybe a cooperative can operate out of ...[Emphasis added]

The thing to note here (as the italics suggest) is that by uttering statements such as “we wanted to mediate (Czaee),” or “this is what we have done (Mrinal)” and simultaneously pointing to the sheets, the presenting architect and all those who are present also seems to understand drawings as drawings of what they wanted to do.

That is, as “representations” of their intentions. Furthermore, the kind of questions posed by Soumi, Arunava, Anupam and Prerna reinforce the notion that drawings are (and should ideally be) representations of the intentions of the architect. And when they are not, or rather when they are perceived to fail to proffer themselves as such, students are often reprimanded as is evident from Prerna’s comments

Prerna: I understand that... but the proposed structured doesn’t complement that... I think you have to design in a way that all of this comes together as one...right now it [the drawings] does not look like that.. *I understand your intent*...but there needs to be something that ties this together...

Finally, here too, it is not only in the statements made by those present at the jury that we can see drawings as representations, drawings themselves also attest to their “fact” as representations. And they way they do this is through their organization that is centered on the concept sheet. Recall here how the students had been asked, in an earlier exercise, to frame their design projects under the headings “design problem, design intent, and design strategy.” As is standard practice, this information makes its way into something called the “concept sheet” which underpins how students organize the display of their drawings.⁵¹

As far as I could glean, drawings in juries are always organized in either one or the other of the following ways. On the one hand, there is horizontal arrangement; from left to right, that is, the progression of sheets from left to right indicates the progression from the beginning of the project (analysis sheets) to the designing stage (concept sheets and sketch diagrams) to the culmination of the project (design sheets).

⁵¹ The concept sheet is usually an elaboration of the “design intent” that formed a part of the project sheet that I had mentioned earlier (see fig. 2.12-13). In this sense the concept sheet emerges out of the initial project sheet which presents a larger framework including the design problem, the design intent and the design strategy. That the “intention” (of the architect) becomes the “concept” on which a layout of the buildings is based also serves to further, as we shall see momentarily, the argument(s) regarding juries and drawings that I make.

On the other, is the lesser used vertical arrangement; from top to bottom. Here the progression from top to bottom indicates the progression from the beginning to the culmination. In each case, whether the horizontal or the vertical arrangement the key are the sheets in the middle (the concept sheets) which constantly reminds the viewer that the sheets either below it or to the right of it are fundamentally a representation of what is contained in them; the concept or rather the intent of the architect. Indeed, even the very organization of the content of the concept sheet itself confirms this. That is, its internal sequence from design problem to design intent and finally to design strategy mimics the flow of the sheets themselves from analysis to concept to design.

My intention in presenting this indeterminacy to drawings, their undecidability, something that is exacerbated by the talking that happens in a jury but nevertheless remains even without the talking or anyone other than drawings being present, is not to refashion the argument that the structure of juries is fundamentally vague. To the contrary, as I hope to show this indeterminacy to drawings in juries is central to the *effect* a jury seeks to produce. Yet before we see what that is and how it is produced, we have to, for a moment, step outside the confines of the jury and look at how architects talk about things, themselves and drawings.

3.5 Things That Make Architects Go Hmm

A theme that consistently punctuated my interactions with students and faculty at TVB was question of difference. From day one, almost everyone I encountered told me that they, as architects felt, and were different from everyone else. Often this was a difference from their siblings, family members, and friends, who were not architects.

Rahul (student): see you can actually see the difference (stresses on the word) of thoughts in siblings , one who is doing architecture here and or maybe somewhere else and somebody who's not doing architecture

Tania: that is one thing that architects feel is

Jaideep: a sense of alienation?

Tania: ...not alienation, they just feel *different* and I think I have a feeling it is more than other disciplines mostly... there may be other design disciplines who feel that... but for instance... I am just saying that my sister and brother-in-law... economics people... very much left leaning thought...I feel they don't feel as different from everybody

Jaideep: so why do architects feel different?

Tania: there is something very peculiar about architects...

Jaideep: what?

Tania: They are clued on to the kind of the range that is very big, which is kind of...

Rahul: I haven't really sort of got that answer for you right now

At other times, I was told that they were different from those they worked with, real estate builders (developers) as well as their clients.

Aanchal: let me give you an example...My brother is also an architect... now he was working on some residential project...this is way back when he started out...client told him *aise aise karna hai... idhar ek balcony chahiye* (do it like this...there should be a balcony here) floor extend *hoga* (will be extended)... and then suddenly when it came to the payment part of it.. What did the client say...Sir *aisa hai design to maine aapko bata diya tha* (I am the one who gave you the design)... *aapne kara kya* (what did you do?)... He was saying you made the sheets... but I gave the design (laughs)...how do we explain there is a difference between what they said and what we did...

Jaideep: what is that difference?

Saurabh: resolution... how to resolve... it has to resolved... who makes it

workable... Architect does it... there is a difference between what a builder makes and what an architect makes... difference *hota hai* (there is difference)...Go to a house made by an architect and one made by a builder... there is huge difference... I have seen this...

Someone at the back: *yeah value kisi ko smajh mein nahi aayegi* (This value is something no one can understand)

Saurabh: people even today say... why should we hire an architect... but most regret going to a builder.. .because the *chat* (roof) leaks...they (the builders) don't know how to plan...

Aanchal: I think the objectives of both people are different... the builder is out there to make money... architects seek to do something more than just putting all the things together which work in the best...

Initially, the very ubiquity of these narratives of difference (and I was told about many such stories) made them seem vague, in the sense, that they lacked any specific content as to what the difference is.⁵² But at the same time their very ubiquity made me realize that their value of themselves as architect hinged on this difference. However, as time passed, I began to realize that this “vagueness” was perhaps due to my not listening and that, accompanying these stories of difference were other narratives that did, indeed, give somewhat of a hint as to what the specific content to that difference is. Though not quite as prolific as the former, I saw these narratives crop up in two moments. Firstly, when students would talk about how they felt they had changed since their entry to the discipline. Take, for example, what Nikita (name changed), a student in her third year at TVB, offered,

⁵² Indeed, a very well known architect, who used to be the principal of a reputed college of architecture in Mumbai, once told me that, “there are as many definitions of an architect as there are stars in the sky.”

In studio I have started to give importance to the smallest of things because I have come to know that they matter...I now understand that everything conveys meaning...even abstract drawings convey deeper meanings than is apparent. We were given this exercise in which we had to think about a person who is very close to us and express that person through lines. The lines could either be dark or light. I learnt that we can understand others just through lines and that even the flow of lines interprets something...there has been a change in my perception and my thought process...

Or take Richa (name changed) a sophomore student, who narrated how she now looks at architecture,

Initially I used to think that architecture/ architects are all about construction and buildings, maps and blueprints but now the idea has completely changed. Now I know what all details one has to go through before actual designing...such deep thought processes...it is a great deal more than I had thought...I wonder many a times what is the basic concept behind so many creations... was the making of the leaning tower of Pisa actually thought and calculated...

But the most singular account of this transformation was given to me, perhaps quite understandably, by Sumandeep, a student in his final year at TVB

It [the way of looking at things] has changed drastically. When I lay a bed-sheet on my bed, I check whether its lines are parallel to the edge of the bed...buildings now speak loud and clear to me. They say it without any hitch and I listen. A section emerges in the mind while walking through CP (Connaught Place)...it feels like a GPS (Global Positioning System) is working inside my head...I also get visions of myself from different viewpoints. Similarly it goes for built environments...

The other times I would hear these other stories were the many discussions that would take place in the design studio after hours. With classes over and the business of the day done, these discussions would invariably come to center on who an architect is, and what does s/he do and how. Take, for example, an excerpt from one such discussion between Tapan Chakravarty, assistant professor, Aanchal and Abhishek, both final year students at TVB.

Tapan: See trying to pressurize the society to look into lifestyle in a way, that I as an educated person thinks is right has been happening throughout and fumbling as an end product...isn't it ...as a designer I am not trying to explain... educate people...this is something that is dangerous to speak... but I am speaking it...I am not trying to educate people.. .educate my society... because I am as much the society as this other person is...I have no right to educate him... but as a trained tool I can be a catalyst...

Abhishek: to facilitate?

Tapan: well facilitate...you might say...things which are anyway going to happen ... but sometimes... get into a little bit of an obstruction here and there... because of things which untrained people are unable to think... as a designer I am able to see those little pebbles much better.. .or at least manage to see them which a common... untrained person... is unable to see. So I sort of knock them around ...throw them ... so that that link that is anyway supposed to happen (moves his hand) happens...

Abhishek: isn't that problem solving..

Tapan: not problem solving... at all...

Abhishek: those pebbles...

Tapan: no ...they are creating disaster...

Aanchal: sir but maybe what is happening is already a disaster...

Tapan: see a disaster may happen simply. .. because... see this person... suppose you say that they are inevitably going to land up here... a tendency is there... but right now because of some road... it is *ho nahi raha* (not happening)... to *maine kya kiya* (So what do I do?)...I am able to understand that situation... I am also able to understand that the tendency is there... so I have to give a leeeetle gap for that tendency to get...(snaps his fingers)...*ho gaya* (it happened) ... *jo shayad ho nahi pa raha hai* (that which was not able to happen)

See that is what I am saying... we have to go into looking into the various layers [of the city]...what has happened today is that somebody is standing at an intersection of road and immediately reacts to it...and says let us facilitate vehicular traffic...but as a person working in the urban system. ..I have to have those little little little 101 layers...and each one has to get facilitated...

Aanchal: but then when we are saying that we have to facilitate this..*jis direction mein* (the direction in which)...there is a tendency of something happening ...we try and allow that to happen... but then there are things which are happening that are not positive...we have to stop them at time also?

Tapan: we may not be able to stop them... you have to first figure out why is this negative thing happening... see the word happening is very important ...if something is happening... what it means is that there is a tendency for it to happen...the way it happens results in a positive or negative end product...that is what I am saying, encroachment is not positive or negative happening...encroachment is not the tendency... nobody tends to encroach... the tendency is that more people are landing up.. thus people need to build more...if they are building in a way... in a manner...which is creating a negative condition...after they have built... encroachment...then I have to

object...tendency we have to locate... Only then we can give an answer otherwise we cannot give an answer...we can't say encroachment *hua to tor do* (If there is encroachment then break it)...*torne se solution nahi mila na* (breaking things does not give us the solution does it)?

Abhishek: but *torna bhi to parega na* (but sometimes we have to break)?

Tapan *Shayad pare* (maybe)... *lekin torne ke decision lene se pehle* (but before we take that decision...)

Aanchal: alternative dena parega na (we have to provide an alternative)?

Tapan: Alternative *ki baat nahin hai* (it is not about alternatives)... *iski ek bahut seedhi si baat hai... iski actual dawa kya hai...* (It is a simple thing... the actual medicine for this problem is)...we have to locate the tendency... to take a decision we have to locate a tendency... tendency has to be first identified.

Abhishek: I disagree with the statement that encroachment is not a tendency...encroachment is a tendency...

Tapan: encroachment cannot be a tendency...they are very end level physical things that are happening.... it is a condition... tendency of this area to get over crowded.... that is why encroachment is happening....*aisa nahin hai ki log yeha aate nahi hai hum phir bhi makaan banata jeyenge... tum makaan tub hi banaoge jub zaroorat hogi...* (it is not as if people make houses even if they do not need to...they only do it if they need to)...that is what I am saying... *zaroorat ko pakro... agar zaroorat hame samajh aa gayi* (catch the underlying need...if I understand that) then I will understand that encroachment is not evil.. it is unfortunately happening...because we have not been able to help out..

The narrative(s) by Sumandeep, Nikita and Richa, and the discussion between Tapan and Aanchal and Abhishek are remarkable at several levels. In them we not

only get a glimpse of the affective charge that accompanies their sense of themselves as architects but also we get to see the intimate nature of the “crafting” of the architect-subject.⁵³ But for right now let us look at them closely to see how these frame the specific content of the difference that marks one as architects. Let us begin with the discussion between Tapan and the students.

What does Tapan say is the role of an architect? It is not, to educate society, or to even pressurize it to think like an architect. According to Tapan, that is a kind of a right (authority) an architect does not have. What (authority) the architect does have however is his training. And what that training allows the architect to do is to be a *catalyst* to society. That is to, ease those societal processes, (or tendencies as he calls them) which were happening but which have, for one reason or another, gotten obstructed. “[s]o I (the architect) have to give a leeeetle gap for that tendency to get...(snaps his fingers)...*ho gaya* (it happened) ... *jo shayad ho nahi pa raha hai* (that which was not able to happen).” Yet as Aanchal and Abhishek ask, does the architect have to facilitate all such processes. What if a process is “negative” like that of encroaching on land beyond one’s own property? Tapan’s answer to this query is rather interesting. Firstly, he notes that encroachment is not a societal process. It is, as he puts it, “a very end level *physical thing* that is happening,” that is, it is an end-product and thus the *result of* something. Secondly, he tells us that encroachment result because certain societal processes which were happening have gotten obstructed.

How does Tapan know this? How does he know that encroachments are a) “very end level physical things,” and b) result because certain societal processes were

⁵³ In this sense the pedagogy in architecture colleges resembles the intimacy that characterizes the training of craftsperson. See for example, Loïc J. D. Wacquant, *Body & Soul : Notebooks of an Apprentice Boxer* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004)., Susan J. Terrio, *Crafting the Culture and History of French Chocolate* (Berkeley: Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000).

not seen, not facilitated, and thus obstructed? Tapan (for that matter anyone) can only know this if and only if two particular conceptions are already in place. Firstly, if societal processes are conceived of as being linear and having directionality to them, that is, as having a beginning and an end toward which they are tending. Secondly, Tapan can also know this if “physical things” are also, in the first place, understood as resulting from this directional flow of societal processes. Indeed, Tapan’s very use of the word tendencies to talk about social processes is crucial here. For that matter so is Aanchal’s question about the role of the architect being the facilitation of societal processes in the direction which they are going. Both implicitly inform us that for architects social processes are indeed conceived as having linearity to them, as well as being responsible for “end-level physical thing.”

There is, however, another question that needs asking. What is it that allows Tapan, Aanchal (as representatives of architects) to conceive end level physical things as resulting from the directional unfolding of societal processes? In this discussion at least Tapan does not really answer this question. He simply states that he (and by extension architects) are, by virtue of their training, are able to know this, are able to understand that certain tendencies, conceived as they are, are there. What then has the training done for/to them so that they are able to understand this situation? For, it is this knowing which then forms the crux of the specific content that, as Tapan implies, differentiates architects from those who are not. An answer begins to appear if we look at the second set of narratives that we have before us; those provided by Sumandeep, Nikita and Richa, in which they tell us what is it that has happened since their entry into architecture.

The first thing all the speakers tell us is that since their entry into architecture, there is a change in how they see the world itself.⁵⁴ The world, they claim, as it now appears, is as a picture, as lines, and as drawings, if you will. Sumandeep is quite specific in his description. He picks two conventional drawings used by architects to articulate how the world appears to him. "...it feels as if a GPS is working... A section emerges in the mind..." Secondly their narratives tell us that this appearance of things as lines, as drawings, has two further implications. On the one hand, things appear as meaningful only insofar as they are constituted as drawings. That is, if, earlier, every element of the world, peoples, objects, ideas, and things seemed distant, unattended, translucent, it is now no longer so. "...buildings now speak loud and clear to me..." says Sumandeep. "[E]verything conveys meaning," says Nikita. On the other hand however, as drawings things also inform them that this meaning that the world-as-drawing now conveys to them is not a superficial one, but rather, as they put it, a deeper meaning, "... *the basic concept behind so many creations...*"⁵⁵

Yet is this way of knowing/seeing something that architects innately have? That is, is it *right* to talk of an architect-self prior to this way of seeing? Sumandeep, Richa and Nikita tell us no. If we look closely at their observations what they also tell us is that along with this rendering of the world-as-drawing is the simultaneous emergence of a self who understands, learns, perceives, knows, and wonders about this world-as-drawing, as-image. "*I now understand...I learnt...there has been a change in my perception...*," notes Nikita. "...now *I* know what all details...*I* wonder

⁵⁴ I use the term world here in the sense Heidegger uses it. According to Heidegger the world is not merely the physical surroundings that one finds oneself in. as he notes, "world is a name for beings in their entirety. The term is not confined to the cosmos, to nature. History, too, belongs to world...under this term we also include the world-ground no matter how its relation to world is thought." Martin Heidegger, "The Age of the World Picture," in *Off the Beaten Track*, ed. Young Julian and Kenneth Hayes (Cambridge, UK; New York Cambridge University Press, 2002). See also, Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (New York,: Harper, 1962)., pp. 91-145.

⁵⁵ Though Sumandeep does not plainly use the language that Richa and Nikita do, his choice of a "section" to explain what he sees is rather telling. A section is an architectural drawing that is generated by cutting through an object with a plane to expose what lies within it, that is, in its "depth" so to speak.

many a times...it feels like a GPS is working inside *my* head...,” note Sumandeep and Richa. Recall here, that this self does not exist before their entry into architecture and the world becoming a drawing. That is precisely why the world was translucent, opaque and meaningless. It is only when the world is a drawing, has become a drawing, an image this “knowing” self who is simultaneously able to see things and the real meanings that lie behind the things, one in front and one behind, emerges.

Sumandeep, Nikita and Richa’s explanation clarifies two aspects of the conversation between Tapan and his students that were somewhat opaque. Firstly, it gives us an explanation as to what makes Tapan claim that encroachments are not tendencies but rather end level physical things resulting from the directional unfolding of tendencies. It is because, as Sumandeep *et al* tell us, that to be an architect means to possess a super-vision into all things, that is, to possess a vision that while being ordinary at one level since they, like everyone else, can see how things are is also at the same time an x-ray vision into things, which gives them access to a level of reality that is deeper than what is merely apparent on the surface. Secondly, what also becomes clear through the observations of Sumandeep *et al* is why Tapan frames the role of the architect as a catalyst. Given that architects have this super-vision that provides them with a simultaneous view of the surface of things as well of the deeper reality that undergirds the surface, it follows, on the one hand, that architect can see the entire process through which a thing has emerged from this deeper reality, that is they are able to see how a thing has developed over time, and indeed how it will develop in the future. On the other hand, it also implies that architects can see where such a developmental process has gotten, as Tapan puts it, “obstructed.” And thus the logical task of the architect is precisely to just do enough (knock those pebbles around as Tapan says) to free up this development. In other words, be a catalyst.

3.6 The World in a Jury through the Drawing

But is this not precisely how the “things” are staged in the jury? That is, does not the jury through the indeterminacy of drawings render all things, their interrelationships, their meanings and so on in this particular manner (that Tapan, Nikita, Sumandeep *et al* narrate)? And does not the jury then, in staging things in this particular manner, also assume and project at once, that is, “make present” a subject-position (the architect) who not only sees the world in this manner, but also who, in turn, enacts the world similarly? And finally, is this not also the self, which the one(s) who “presents” the drawing at the jury, both embodies and aspires towards?

I will argue that it is indeed so on all counts. Recall here that drawings, in a design jury, are both things themselves and representations. What this indeterminacy does is two things at once. Firstly, because drawings are things themselves, things, in a jury, come to be drawings. That is, things get understood only insofar as they are drawings. Recall Mrinal’s introduction where he states, while pointing to the drawings “...we decided on *these* two sites,” or “...you start driving *here* and you take *this* turn...” Each of his statements mirror this movement of things coming to be drawings, in that the site, the road, the turn etc. that is “out there” gets progressively understood as the drawing that is in front of those at the jury. Thus, the DND is its drawing; the brothel is its drawing so on and so forth. Secondly, because the same drawing (thing themselves), in a design jury, is also a drawing (representation) of “something,” this “something,” is, in turn, understood as both that lies “behind” and “prior” to the drawing (representation). In other words, the “something” is thus understood as what the thing really is. Consequently, it is this “reality” which the drawing (representation) then “represents” to those present at the jury.

When both these understandings are in place, that is, when drawings are things and drawings are representations that represent the “truth” of things lying behind and

prior to their representation, what follows are two further invocations. Firstly, it invokes the notion that all things emerge from the “truth” which lies behind it.⁵⁶ Secondly, this world necessarily invokes a spectator (because one is looking at things-as-drawings).⁵⁷ Yet, this is no ordinary spectator. As someone who is simultaneously able to see both things themselves and that which lies behind and prior to them, from which the thing has originated, s/he can necessarily claim to see this entire process unfolding. Witness for example, how Czaee, Dhruva and Sneha explain how they came up with their “design,” (the framework) for the development of Shraddhanand Marg.

Czaee: another thing we were working with was the notion of a wall because the edge condition earlier used to be a wall, the historic wall ...to Lahori gate...so we were looking at the wall, and what we wanted to do was to fragment the wall...so we could start making connections ...so that people could start moving through ...so that the wall is no longer a restrictive element...there is no longer an outside and an inside...or the other way round...a line... it is sort of porous in its own way...we looked for a street...the closest one we were coming up with was this one...so we picked up a street...imposed a courtyard typology... *because that is what was happening here*...this fabric earlier was also is in a courtyard typology... so we picked up a courtyard and from there tried to work out a fabric ...so the way we devised it was that... it was a plot system...as to how the fabric works right now...it is a system...of plots...we devised a basic sort of plan for the plot....which can be... it does not have front or a back...so that they can be...either way it can be placed it will work.

⁵⁶ Heidegger, "The Age of the World Picture."

⁵⁷ Ibid.

Dhruva: it can be lifted like that... it can mirrored like that... and placed like that..

Arunava: where is the plot? What is the plot?

Sneha: (pointing to sheet) that is one plot....

Arunava: and these plots are square? So a person from one plot can go to the adjoining plot...?

Czaee: well while creating a situation like this we have given a bit of the rear to commercial...this part is commercial... the courtyard is stepped up by a level or twoso this becomes a far more private space...

Arunava: no what I am asking is...if I own this plot and you own this plot... is it mandatory for me to open my plot and allow you to get in to my plot? Is that a rule that you are putting form me? If I am owning [sic] the plot ...are you telling me that the plot will have to have a public access cutting across...?

Czaee: yes...because what we have done is... we have moved the threshold inward ...so we have created two layers...there is an entry that happens...which is ...the exact point of the threshold is expanded... [Emphasis added]

The crux of entire explanation that the group provided for their design is the clause “because that is what is happening here.” Though seemingly innocuous, this clause actually serves as a front for some very important assertions. On the one hand, it asserts the congruence between the world as it is staged by the jury and the world that is out there. That is, it makes the claim that how the jury stages the world is the “truth” of how the world really is. On the other hand, it also asserts that the claim made by the spectator-subject, because s/he is witness to this unfolding, *is* the “truth” of what is happening here.

Once these “facts” have been surrendered, that *this is indeed what is happening here* and *they-as-architect(s) are witness to it*, it also follows that they can

predict/propose (or what they call design) what *will* happen next, because that is how things “happen” (as unfolding from that which lies behind them, what Richa called the “basic concept”). Here too drawings are quite remarkable as they also tell us that this what-will-happen-next is indeed what the task of the architect is. Recall here the other way that drawings are representations in a jury; they represent the intentions of the spectator/presenter/architect with regards to what (building, road, park, development etc.) will be, or is to come.

3.7 Design Juries, History, Modernity and the Identity of the Indian Architect-Self

Talking about the (in)famous cockfights in Bali, the anthropologist Clifford Geertz notes, that Balinese cockfights are, in one sense, real only to cocks. That in them, nothing really happens as far as the humans are concerned, “...it does not kill anyone, castrate anyone, reduce anyone to animal status, alter hierarchical relations among people, or refashion hierarchy; it does not even redistribute income in any significant way.”⁵⁸ Yet even so, the cockfights, Geertz goes on to argue, are profoundly real for the Balinese because

What it [cock-fights] does is what, for other peoples with other temperaments and other conventions, *Lear* and *Crime and Punishment* do; it catches up these themes---death, masculinity, rage, pride, loss, beneficence, chance---and ordering them into an encompassing structure, presents them in a such a way as to throw into sharp relief a particular view of their essential nature... it [the cockfight] is a Balinese reading of Balinese experience; a story they tell themselves about themselves.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Geertz., pp. 443

⁵⁹ Ibid., pg. 443.

Design juries to architects, I will argue, following Geertz, are somewhat like cockfights are to the Balinese.⁶⁰ They are unreal, in sense that, in them, nothing “really” happens. No buildings are built; the design of/for a building that is pinned up is not what actually gets built, since there is not even a “real” project, sometimes, not even a real site. Juries, usually, do not include any clients to speak of. There are no professional contracts signed, and no exchange of money. There are no materials involved. In fact everything that an architect does otherwise and which forms the bulk of her work is, for all practical purposes, jettisoned from the design jury. Furthermore, design juries are also “unreal” in the sense that students would constantly talk of them as being “rehearsals” for the “real” world practices of an architect.

However, and in spite of all these instances of “unreality,” design juries are for architects, again like cockfights for the Balinese, profoundly real. Their “reality,” has much to do with what happens within them. Juries take everyday things, the world that we all live in and with (people, buildings, places, streets, and anything one can think of), strip them of their everydayness, and stage them through the indeterminacy of drawings at a level where a particular meaning of them is more powerfully articulated, and perceived. In this sense, the import of design juries lies in their being interpretative framework, that is, an integrated framework within and through which they experience reality and thereby act accordingly.⁶¹ They are to, follow Geertz again, a staging of the world by architects, for architects.

As we have seen, this meaning is one which is necessarily predicated on a particular subjectivity, that of architect(s), who are, not coincidentally, also the ones enacting the jury. Yet at the same time it is also important to note that juries draw

⁶⁰ The pun here, is very much intended

⁶¹ Ibid, pg. 448. For an exposition of frameworks of meaning and interpretation see, Ann Swidler, "The Concept of Rationality in the Work of Max Weber," *Sociological Enquiry* 43, no. 1 (1977). Also see, Dorinne K. Kondo, *Crafting Selves : Power, Gender, and Discourses of Identity in a Japanese Workplace* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990).

their compelling power by reiterating themes that are already familiar. I have underscored in this regard the similarity of the narratives presented to me by Sumandeep, Tapan *et al* and that which the jury stages. But my point here is that undergirding both is a particular story, very particular view of what the nature of things, indeed, the nature of the world is and the place of architects vis-à-vis this world. It is a view according to which standing behind and prior to all phenomenal things, are their basic concepts, their essences. It is a view in which what things (from buildings to humans) are, is nothing other than this basic concept developing itself over time. It is also a view that tells architects that they, as architects, are witness to this historical development of things. In the same breath it also tells them that it is they who, as witness to this historical unfolding, know how a thing will further develop, what will and should happen next.

As the historian Dipesh Chakrabarty has recently reminded us, such a view of the world, which tells us that in order to understand the nature of anything in this world we must, firstly, see it as an entity that develops over time and second, as something that develops over empty homogenous time is not one that essentially belongs to nature.⁶² That is, it is not a view that is independent of human systems of representation. On the contrary, as he notes, it signals the existence of a very specific code, a historicist code of history as well as the emergence of the modern subject who is endowed with such a historical consciousness.⁶³ It is at this level then, of a

⁶² Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe : Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, Princeton Studies in Culture/Power/History (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), pg. 74-75. For similar arguments see also, Timothy Mitchell, *Questions of Modernity*, Contradictions of Modernity ; V. 11 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), Timothy Mitchell, *Rule of Experts : Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), William Mazzarella, *Shoveling Smoke : Advertising and Globalization in Contemporary India* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003); Mitchell Schwarzer, *German Architectural Theory and the Search for Modern Identity* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1995). For arguments about historicism specifically, see Friedrich Meinecke, *Historism: The Rise of a New Historical Outlook* (London,: Routledge and K. Paul, 1972).

⁶³ Chakrabarty., p. 74.

historicist code and modern subject formations that the jury, I will argue, emerges as central in the education of architects at TVB. By invoking such a historicist code repeatedly, design juries at TVB would not only regulate architects but also form them, define them and produce them in the image of this modern subject who is always and already endowed with this code of history. ⁶⁴

3.8 In Lieu of a Conclusion

So far in this chapter I have attempted to explain the centrality that design juries enjoy in the education of architects at TVB. In doing so, my aim has been to elaborate upon the larger issue regarding the penetrative depths of the category of the ideal architect on contemporary architect-subject in India. Unpacking the indeterminate status of drawings in design juries, I have argued, that juries enjoy this centrality precisely due to their being interpretative, that is, events where architects to be are provided with a particular way to look and relate with the world. As I have shown, this is a historicist framing of the world. And that this framework *undergirds* not only the design jury, a self professed pivotal moment in the making of architects, and the many narratives that architects at TVB tell about themselves, but also, as we saw in the previous chapter, the ideal of architect and his (and it always is a he) relation to modernity, development, and the nation. From this perspective then, the subjectivity of architects in India today can be seen as direct heirs to that figure of the

⁶⁴ According to Foucault, this is precisely how a subject is produced “legally.” juridical notions of power appear to regulate political life in purely negative terms - that is, through the limitation, prohibition, regulation, control and even 'projection' of individual's related to that political structure through the contingent and retractable operation of choice. But the subjects regulated by such structures are, by virtue of being subjected to them, formed, defined, and reproduced in accordance with the requirements of those structures. See Michel Foucault, "Power and Strategies," in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Writings & Other Writings*, ed. Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980). There is something else to also note here. In her work on design juries Kathryn Anthony notes that the origin of the term “jury” to designate such presentation of design by architects is not really known. While I would not claim the term jury was explicitly imported from legalistic jargon, perhaps there is good reason why such presentations are called jury, since what really happens in them is a subjection and concomitant production of subject through their subjection to the “code” of architecture. This code as I have argued, is actually the code of historicism.

architect as elaborated through the apparent resonance between global discourses on Modern Architecture and the equally universal ideas about nation-building and technocratic expertise promulgated by the postcolonial Indian State. Thus the moment of design is, in this sense, the moment of acquisition, propagation, and (re)production of a particular code/ structure that attempts to bring, as it were, a “closure” to that “ideal” of the architect in India today.

However, as I must also stress, that this “closure” is only apparent. As I also realized during my fieldwork at TVB, that existing alongside this continual translation of the said ideal archetype onto a particular subject or even to a group of subjects, was an awareness of the problem associated with such (re)production of the historicist code of architecture. For Menon, this historicist code was the reason for the continued subjection of the architect in India

You see it is like this... if you were to take the general point of view...let's talk generality...it is a question of who writes the narrative. As the world stands today, it is the west that is writing the narrative...I was asked to talk to the American Institute of Architects (AIA) on Architecture and Globalization ...there I argued...that as long as you, the Harvard's and the MIT's and all say that we have a superior product to give and we are willing to give you scholarships to study with us...we are never going to improve...you think you are doing us a favor since you are training Indians to...but you have not poisoned so much...but put their mindset into a direction that is your master-narrative...within your master narrative...MIT came to us once...not a second time because I asked questions, 'why do you want to come to my place? Is it because you want cheap student labor? Is it because you want hospitality? Is it because you want a context? Why are you coming here?' Why would I invite

someone from you...you are only going to absorb me into your master narrative.

Indeed, it was precisely to escape such absorption TVB was started. Recall its beginning as *Greha* a Non-governmental organization that worked outside the ambit of the postcolonial Indian State, to aligning itself with the Roy's who were championing Gandhian alternatives to Indian State's heavy handed top down methods of development, to presenting itself as an alternative to the SPA at Delhi, long considered the "national" school of architecture, and finally to its very name "School of Habitat Studies" instead of the usual moniker "School of Architecture," TVB's own "history" attests to a diffusion of the historicist logic and language of State sponsored nation building (The National Housing policy for example), developmentalism, technical expertise that was to be embedded onto the ideal modern-Indian architect.

Finally, as I learned through my discussion with the founding members of the school, such attentiveness to "other" idioms of architecture, the architect, or at least a sense of discomfort with the norm was even present in the first prospectus of the college through two notions that figured prominently in it: the craft of building and the contextualization of architecture.⁶⁵

For Ganju, crafting a building implied something completely different from what he had learnt and how architects were imagined and trained in India.

[T]he craftsmen... I worked with them... to build a stone canopy... our engineer put his hands up... he said I don't know anything about this...these people [craftsmen]know better, they decided what is the size of the timber ...the member... there were no calculations. They decided because they carry embedded in their genes the information required to make that particular judgment.... and to my great surprise... you now when the main beam was put

⁶⁵ Studies., pg. 5.

the other way... the wider part ...the bigger dimension was not vertical... it was horizontal... I was like...how can that be? I have always been told for a beam...the bigger dimension should be vertical. They [craftsmen] said nothing doing...it will stand...the stone mason who put that up gave me a wonderful piece of advice... of knowledge. He started telling me about materials and how they carve stone as if it is wood. They were doing the same thing...as a carpenter...He said to me 'you know it doesn't depend on the material ... it depends on the man doing the material.' Now this is completely the opposite of what we have been trained in the Bauhaus...about the purity of material... the honesty of the material. He said it doesn't depend on the material! It depends on the man...who is fashioning this material! And these people know...People used to make fun.. I have read this... how Europeans would make fun that in India... we build a build a stone palace like a boat... as if its wood... The [Europeans]...they just couldn't understand it... they thought it a perversion...the honesty of material! This man he explained it to me and it made complete sense...and the more I thought about it, the more sense it made...

The other word, context, Menon noted was to function similarly.

We were very clear. You see when we said to people that architecture has to be context based, it defeated the imagination of most people we talked to...[they said] 'architecture is architecture, design is design...how is context important...what does it have to do with education' ... these are the questions we received... ...so in Nov. 1990 when we started the college...we had this syllabus...worded out in this syllabus....it was very clear....that the teaching of architecture has to be context based, it cannot be an abstract idea of an architect and architecture, and to teach architecture in India would be different

from teaching architecture elsewhere. So we had a long discussion on that and we realized it was essential to have it context based...

The city was to be a laboratory... not only in the sense that it would be a place where we would effectively get to try out our ideas...also in the sense that we would learn from the city...how this city has developed...the various ways people build in it.

Indeed, for Menon and other members of *Greha*, the project of Modernity in general, and of architectural modernity in particular, with its concomitant ideas of historical development and the west as its sovereign subject was itself a "context."

This is a thing we have already debated quite a lot. Because, by the time we started the school the modernist project had already been withered away and all its fallacies exposed. So we debated a lot and we had to re assert our role in society. We were terribly conscious of the fact that if we as architect became like in the west separate from society and very inward kind of profession we would have no role in a country like India. We are a developing country...we change...we have to materially change that condition.

So yes we are aware of the historical development of the west where the socialist agenda was repudiated... But if we were to look at our condition here... There is no way that we can get away from that. It's not like following the same footstep. We are aware of our responsibilities. I will give you an example really ...currently the city [New Delhi] is following a world bank agenda which says privatize. Now when you look at it you say I am sorry ...I cannot in good conscious. I see all the arguments are right...

inefficient...corruption lack of delivery ...so privatize...so one can see all that... But when all is said and done... We still feel that the state cannot abdicate its responsibility. Before you came these two gentlemen who came were really

trying to enlist me in to this rickshaw thing. The Supreme Court has banned rickshaws in the old city. How can we do that? Their argument is we are a modern city and we can't have this kind...

So I am afraid whether we like it or not as long as our conditions being what they are there is no way that we can say that architecture is not going to be concerned with the well being of society. Though we agree in the west it has become ...a god that failed ...it did not live up to its promise... And architecture became a fascist thing...

Look we always have to be in touch with ground realities. We couldn't escape this...we couldn't take the step saying now this is 1990... let us now accept the fact that architects have nothing to do with it... We are not social engineers...

We are not this... we couldn't do that... yes, we are not social engineers...but we have to be involved... and the main thing we are saying is we have to make a difference. In society we are merely perceived as aestheticians and we said no architecture is deeper than that. And how do you show that. You can only show that by being involved and saying if you involve architect things can be different...Better...

Moreover, it was not only at the level of institutional history and memory that one can sense the disintegration of the claims made on behalf of the ideal architect and the ideals of design as a form of knowledge. Indeed, the very question of the language involved in the "talking" at juries is noteworthy in this regard. Though mostly conducted in English, talking at juries would also, at times, be Hindi or a combination of the two (Hinglish). Such switching of linguistic codes, I will argue, points to two crucial things. One the one hand, its points to untranslatability of certain experiences of the students and faculty, that is, architects in India, to the particular language of "design" and the "architect" that I have been discussing so far. On the

other hand, they signal the presence of other “idioms” and imaginations of architecture and architects (see chapter four for an analysis of one such idiom and its concurrent imaginations) that would pervade the space of the jury.

Furthermore, such “interruptions” to the ideals of design would become evident in the numerous discussions I had with students. Especially telling in this regard was a conversation I had with Czaee, Dhruva and Sneha a few days after their rather successful pre-final jury presentation. After about half an hour of discussing their impressions of how the presentation had transpired, the conversation turned to the one question that the three felt they had not answered quite up to mark. This was about defining their main contribution in their proposal for the redevelopment of Shradhdhanand Marg.

Czaee: you know... can we actually...can we actually through our built form make social change here? Or a social structure or a new thing...

Sneha: because *jahaan pe* (wherever) society... architecture is not the solution

Jaideep: but can architecture, does architecture effect a solution? Any solution?

Sneha: No, the problem is that these [the politics of the identity of the women sex-workers who live in the brothels at Shradhdhanand Marg, land use, Delhi’s recently released Master Plan etc.]...that these are very big issues.

Jaideep: no doubt... I agree with you there. You have a very complex set of issues that are present in this area.

Sneha: so there is no solution to it...

Jaideep: well perhaps there is no solution, but can you not figure out what is your role as a designer...as an architect...? You had mentioned something about “grey-ness” in your proposal, perhaps your role is to work with the forms of the building that are there...

Sneha: but then it becomes...it ends up being a very shallow exercise... and when you start dealing with the real issues you realize that the issues are ...monumental.

Czaee: but that is the problem with it... Jaideep...How do we remotely...plan to change an area by adding or not adding a building?

Jaideep: is your expertise... are u generator of changes?

Czaee: that is what is expected out of us...

Jaideep: well you can always refuse...can you not?

Czaee: that is not how they [jurors] are looking at it, right? The jury thinks you have taken the site, then you bloody fucking well know...they expect you to deal with it...they think you know what to do....

Jaideep: well can you not say I cannot deal with the grey?

Sneha: the grey has already been dealt with. When we take it up all we are saying is that that it's not the appropriate way ...

Jaideep: is that what you are saying?

Czaee: what we were saying was that the grey is too separated

Jaideep: But didn't Sneha just say that...maybe it is not separated...since people come here all the time.

Sneha: See Jaideep...that is the issue, it is very contradictory...

Czaee: yeah everything we have on our site is a contradiction!

Jaideep: fine, perhaps that is the interesting thing,

Sneha: which is...which is...making us go into a position where we are not...

Czaee: we are not able to take up any direction at all!

Sneha: yeah, any direction at all. We are just stuck up where we are

Jaideep: why?

Sneha: because everything is so contradictory...we are not equipped to deal with that...

Having attended numerous juries at TVB and elsewhere, I was quite familiar to the difference between the kind of conversations that occur in juries about design and the expertise and role of architects and outside of them. Yet what struck me at the time about this particular discussion was how diametrically opposed what Sneha, Czaee and Dhruva were telling me when compared their own presentation in the design jury a few days ago. In the space of the jury where the emphasis is all on a particular idea of the architect, and their expertise that is based, as I have argued, on historicist logic, the groups answer to the same question had been quite unequivocal. Recall, their entire design, the *sine qua non* of their contribution, their expertise and identity was based on the assertion that as architects, they could see what was happening here, that they had the “super-vision” which gave them access to the deeper realities of all elements (people, places, things, discourses, what have you) that made up their “site.”

Here, however, in the intimacy of this discussion, they were telling me that what was frustrating them was precisely that their site was too complicated, that as architects they felt they did not have the tools to even begin to “grasp” the various implications of what was going on. In effect, refuting their claims and assertions.

My point in mentioning this is not to claim that Czaee, Sneha and Dhruva were somehow being disingenuous in their presentation at the jury the other day. Rather, my point is that, firstly, as Czaee and Sneha state, in the jury what is expected of them is that, in order to be architects, they *have* to know what do (next). And that embedded in the knowing what to do next is a construction of things, anything, as necessarily unfolding under a singular temporal logic, that admits no contradiction (precisely why they are frustrated). Secondly, that existing alongside with this certainty, somewhere,

at some level, is an uneasiness with such a claim, and, an awareness that “things” are, perhaps, not really slaves to singular logics as the historicist code of architecture and the architect would have us believe. Finally, it is also to note that there was indeed, (an)other idiom(s) than design which the architects at TVB also claimed as their expertise, as something they were, as one student remarked, good at, and as something that made them architects. It then to this “otherness” to describe themselves as architects that I now turn.

4.0 THE MOMENT OF *JUGAR*

Badrinarayan's House, Jan. 6th 2007.

Badri: I don't know but the last five years of my work...I have never had to prove that I'm an architect...never had to sign anywhere... put down my registration number anywhere... or I never really took time...people have come to me because they know the kind of work I do...

Jaideep: but what about when people ask you what you do?

Badri: I think I would call myself a designer and designer is very loose term in India...anyone calls themselves a designer (laughs)...I feel I'm a designer...I design everything from small toys to lampshades in buildings to towns...to educational methods. Have I shown you the toys that I have designed?

[Shows me the toy] (See image 3.00).

Jaideep: my god...is this from a peanut shell Badri? ...and what is this

Badri: it is a coconut shell

Jaideep: nice! *woh kya lagaya hai* (What have you put there)? m-seal?¹ You are very handy with the m-seal Badri...

Badri: I'm handy with a lot of things. [Laughter]... This bottom drawer is actually...the source of all creative things

Jaideep: moth balls...what else do you have in there?

Badri; all junk basically... I have fooled a lot of people into thinking that this is my pet... I carry it in my box and all that...and somebody tried to feed it a cabbage also... [Laughter]...ok then...I was not quite satisfied with this one... then I made this one [Shows me another toy] (See image 3.01).

Jaideep: nice! If you rotate it then the legs come out...is this in leather?

¹ M-seal is a polymer based adhesive that is quite popular in India.



Figure 3.00: Badri's "tortoise" made with coconut and peanut shells.
Source: From author's collection.



Figure 3.01: Badri's "mixed media" tortoise.
Source: From author's collection.

Badri: its mixed media...this comes from a Shantiniketan bag... and this is mechanism...and can you believe it I was crazy to enough to sit and make this... hand cut all these curved plots ...this is actually cardboard... you have to move it very gently...thumb pin....there are some pins in holes inside...it's just tinkering with things...

Jaideep: this is very ingenious yeah...

Badri: the principle is the same as the aperture controller of camera

Jaideep: how did you sit and figure this out.

Badri: oh this wasn't my idea...this is actually my partner, Dhruvajyoti, with whom I share this passion for making things... he was into tinkering with cameras and all that...so after that I made this I was wrestling with this problem of how to make a turtle which could retract its legs.... so I told him that I want something which you rotate something in the base and the legs come out... and that guy says funny you should be asking this because last night I also went home and I was thinking of a similar thing and I think I have the right solution for you. ..I said what is it?...he said have you seen the aperture controller of the camera... I said yeah... that uses a spiral and it moves radially... I said okay... then I devised this... but after that this whole thing... of how to use that idea....so it actually you know two layers of cardboard...one layer has got spiral cuts and there is another disk which has radial... so then the spiral moves against the radial the pin gets pushed outwards

Jaideep: actually very simple but very ingenious...

Badri: magical!

Jaideep: ah! So when the radial gets moves...this is just getting pushed to the extreme...

Badri: and to guide the... you see these legs are attached like that to the radial...the pin goes through and through the radial and the leg and then there are these wedge-shaped pieces which guide the legs... so they move within these grooves

Jaideep: oh so there are wedge shaped pieces?

Badri: yeah you can see them from the side

Jaideep: so the one cardboard...

Badri: a hexagon and on that cardboard the radial grooves are cut out...

Jaideep: on that piece of cardboard... only but *yeh radial katne mein to...*

Badri lag gayi hogi (it must have been an ordeal to cut it like this)?

Badri: *Arre pooch mat...haath se baith ke kaata hai* (don't even ask me how tough it was...I sat and made it with my own hands)...I used to be crazy at one time...*abhi to bahut sober ho gaya hu (laughter)...par abhi bhi thoda sa pagalpan hai* (now I am much sobered...but there is still some madness left)...I

have made that fish mobile... have you seen that mobile? see dilli haat mein there were these fish things available... they are very brightly colored... they are parchment but their design is like this... all these things do is sit there...that's it... but they sit very elegantly...so I turned them into a mobile...now it looks like an aquarium

Jaideep: *kahan hai* (where is it)?

Badri: dekh (see)! I think an architect is supposed to try and understand the mysteries of things around life forms

Jaideep: I want to take the photograph of the mechanism... this is fantastic...so nice...

Badri: of...other life forms

Jaideep: ...but is that how the architect is understood?

Badri: this is what studio was supposed to be all about...if you read my portfolio I'm trying to get at this notion of what architecture is...I think the architect is the ultimate *jugaru* man...

4.1 Design-*Jugar*, *Jugar*-design.

If there has been up until now an overarching emphasis to the two previous chapters, it would have to be that they explore “moments” of the space of a putatively coherent national architectural culture in India today through the agency of certain social agents who claim and produce for themselves the title architect and the expertise, design. It is in this connection that the chapters attempt to show how certain social agents laid claim(s) to the meanings of terms architect and design as they emerged in the resonances between global discourses on architecture and the developmental ideologies of the postcolonial Indian state. How they articulated their own positionality within the modern Indian national imaginary as one that bridged the fault line existing between the expertise of planners and engineers on whose shoulders the postcolonial state had entrusted the responsibility for forging the environment of (for)the modern Indian nation?

It is also in this connection that I have tried to show how these social agents articulate design (what they claim is their expertise) through drawings that they make which render the world in their undecidability, as developing from “ideas” that lie behind “reality.” How such a linear (re)presentation of the world, in turn, simultaneously invokes and produces a particular time-space as well as a subject-position (the architect) who occupies this particular time-space. And finally how the architect-subject, by virtue of occupying this position, claims to be gifted with a supervision(ary) ability to see the “actual” processes that make up the world and thus able to provide a design for a future that-will-be, whose becoming is designated, in the first place, by the invocation of the apparent “linearity” of the world itself.

At one level thus, my writing the chapters under the twin sign(s), architect and design, is hardly surprising as it is precisely through, and under, their particularized meanings that certain social agents have articulated themselves-as-architects, and a putatively coherent national architectural culture in India today. At another level, my emphasis is also not surprising since it has much to do with my interest, as elaborated in the introduction, to understand this culture that constantly attempts to turn itself into a sign of (for) the world of these (expert) social agents who call themselves architects in India today.²

However, as I have also consistently hinted, this is a culture that is, in many ways, chimerical. That it does not perform, in spite of its (and the architect's) best efforts, what can be called a semiotic capture of the totality of that world of (for) architects. That is, it does not exhaust the entirety of the experiences of the architects, I met.

In this moment then, I want to pursue (an)other sign on which these social agents lay a claim, and through which they articulate themselves, their expertise and their field. This is the Hindi-Urdu word *jugar*, which roughly speaking, translates as, a way (out), a device, to assess, and to maneuver. Being from Delhi myself, I was very much aware that *jugar* and its synonyms, *tarkeeb*, *upay* (strategy, strategic), *thor* (to break), are words that have much currency in Delhi, and the northern parts of India. They regularly figure as examples of ingenuity and a way of doing things. They appear in jokes, anecdotes and sayings in which *jugar* appears as a metaphor and a metonym for individual action, or something that puts together an individual, a

² In many ways this sharing of meanings is what the culture constantly attempts. Recall here the discussion that took place in the deliberations in the Joint Select Committee, the particular elaborations of the expertise of the architects in conference, journals, the centrality enjoyed by the design jury, etc. From such a perspective, all these are instances of attempts to build such a culture.

collectivity all the way up to nations, regions, and indeed the world.³ Yet what grabbed my attention is the special affinity many architects claim they have for this word, so much so, that they would constantly assert that *jugar* is what architects are experts at and that architects are the greatest *jugarus* (those who do *jugar*).⁴ It is this claim(s) that interests me here.

My interest, however, in these assertions is not so much from the point of view of proving that *jugar* and *jugarus* enjoy a status that is, in anyway, equal to design and architect. They do not. Indeed, as I show, how architects view *jugar* and *jugaru*, unlike their views about design and architect, is far more ambiguous. My interest in the claims to *jugar* and being a *jugaru* is also not about proving its authenticity. That is, I am not particularly committed to ascertaining whether or not what architects do is, in fact, *jugar*, or whether it is even true that they are the best *jugarus*. Rather my interest in this claim(s), like my interest throughout this dissertation, is firstly, on what do these social agents mean about what they do, about (their)self, and others when making the claim(s) that *jugar* is what they are proficient at, and that they are the greatest *jugarus*. Secondly, my interest also lies in trying to understand what do these meanings, as articulated through the claims to *jugar* and being a *jugaru*, then imply for the meanings about what they do, about (their)self, and about others, as articulated in their claims to design and being an architect.

My task here is thus to present an account of the claims to *jugar* and being a *jugaru* and its various meanings and implications. Accordingly I first present the

³ A fascinating example of a saying involving *jugar* is: *jugar pe duniya kayam hai* (literally; *jugar* holds the world together). What is particularly interesting about this saying is that it is a take on a more highbrow saying according to which it is *umeed* (hope) which holds the world together. That *jugar* transposes and appears as a synonym of hope is extremely telling. There has recently been a movie made with the same name. See Anand Kumar, "Jugaad," (India2009).

⁴ More recently *jugar* has emerged as buzzword amongst management professionals in India where it is pitched as an "Indian ingenuity. See for example, Krishnan T. R., *From Jugaad to Systematic Innovation: The Challenge for India* (The Utpreraka Foundation 2010). There are also numerous blogs available on *jugar* now. As well as newspaper articles written from the point of view of management studies on *jugar*.

multitude of sentiments that emerge when architects talk about *jugar*. I then show the different ways in which architects articulate *jugar* and *jugarus*. From there I present a short vignette of an architectural project of redesigning the urban village of Khirki in New Delhi,” in which I was involved as an “architect” with my colleagues from TVB. All through my attempt is to tease out the various understanding of selfhood, and “others,” of what they do and its implications for the architect, design and a culture called architecture in India today that is embedded in these articulations of *jugar* and *jugarus*.

4.2 Architects Debate *Jugar*.

Though I regularly found architects claim that *jugar* is what they do and something at which they are extremely proficient, it does not mean that they all share the same opinion to its value, or that it even has any “official or academic” recognition or discourse about it. Indeed, if anything the “official” view of *jugar* is quite negative. Dr. K. L. Nadir, one of the founding members of *Greha* and TVB expressed his disapproval of *jugar* when I asked him about the state of architecture in India today. His comments deserve quoting in full.

...very difficult to say where it [the discipline, the profession] is going...what is very clear is there is a level of efficiency and the certain modicum of creativity within a derivative architectural culture...it is a derivative architectural culture...some amount of creativity which is a third order creativity... *what is being done is some sort of attempt at contextualizing architecture but without a deep transformation*...they are really responding to nationalism...but the response is not theoretical. The response is not even at a high grade of creativity. It is just a recognition of here we are...and what we are doing...*so there are series of pastings*, which go by the name of regional architecture. In one sense that fits in precisely what the West wants Indian

architecture to be...the whole subject of regional architecture is precisely that... the tropicalization of architecture. "Make it a bit traditional otherwise our architecture will be lost." But this recovery is on western terms. Unlike, say the Japanese, India has not produced even the best of architecture...has not reached the level Japanese Architecture, where the West is creatively re-inculcated within Japanese culture of architecture.

But this is not surprising; it is very much like our political leaders. Nehru would be the best example or today's Communist Party of India-Marxists (CPIM) would be another example, who are merely imitating a kind of western culture... *and here and there making adjustments... what is called jugar*. It hasn't gone beyond that neither at the political level nor...it is not only our architects are to be blamed. Our political imagination also...there is the work of Partha Chatterjee, *how Indian nationalism itself has been collaborative...it [the Indian culture] is a very collaborative culture...the middle class fought... made an attempt to be a part of the ruling class through some adjustment*. We wanted to be like them [the British]. It is only later when mass politics came, things changed. It [nationalism] was servile... and it [servility] goes on...in one form or another.

I am not seeing any major thinking...that is why there is so much of Prima Donna-ship in Indian architecture. Everybody wants to play prima donna... they want to be treated like great actors...*Kalakaar hai...Amitabh Bachhan hai...Lata Mangeshkar hai...* that is my outsiders view...they have never reflected on their practice... probably that has something to with Indian culture also ...part of it is Indian culture. If you look at the West for the last two centuries they [architects] have been struggling to define architecture...professional values... culture...whole books outlining the

actual...you know Dadaism...Metabolism...this ism, that ism. There is no such movement in Indian architecture, though there is greater need here. They [the West] follow this culture of modernity... after all modernity is something that happened in the West in the 16th century. Modernity is indigenous to the West. For us, it is either an imposition or a gift. Take it as you please. When you think of colonialism you think of imposition. When you think of cultural contact you think of it as a gift...but either way it is a graft... for them it is natural...they are thinking...look at the CIAM resolution...it is a tribute to western analytical culture, to self reflexivity (sic)...There is no such culture here. Nothing. They have repeatedly reflected...we have not. In this sense there isn't much to talk about in Indian architecture or its growth in the larger historic sense of ...as contributors to a culture... culture of architecture. Here we talk about culture creating architects...not about architecture itself creating culture. After all architecture itself is culture...it creates culture. At that level it hasn't added anything to our cultural sensibility. Look at the Bengali art or Marathi Literature, or contemporary southern literature. In these, there have been attempts, some successful... much higher level of creativity...it is not true of architecture [emphasis added].

Dr. Nadir's displeasure for *jugar* is not hard to discern. But what is most interesting is the way *jugar* seems to represent everything that is antithetical, that is, an "other" to modernity, reason, criticality etc. In his description it is, first of all, a superficial thing, a window dressing of sorts. In contrast with "real" or "deep transformation," the modernity represents *jugar* is just surface-oriented "pastings." Secondly, *jugar* also represents for him lethargy of sorts, a lack of pro-activity. Indeed, it is in many ways the reason why there are no "movements" of architecture that originated from India. Not unrelated to this, *jugar*, in a third sense, also reveals

an unthinking attitude. It is neither theoretical nor creative but rather a derivative process that basically imitates true rethinking that has already taken place elsewhere. Fourthly, because it is a derivative process, and not well thought out or even reinterpreted within the context of India, *jugar*, for Dr. Nadir, also enables the “egotism” and “exceptionalism” that he feels is prevalent amongst architects in India today.

Furthermore, for Dr. Nadir, *jugar*'s derivative nature also ensures that it is antithetical to individuality. Since fundamentally imitative, it always represents a culture which has become collaborative and servile. The attitude, he notes, is one of “adjustment,” and compromise. Indeed, this compromise is not only at the level of everyday action but also at the level of ideals. “Indian nationalism, its leaders” and politicians of today have always compromised. Our very struggle for independence, Dr. Nadir argues, quoting postcolonial histories, was to begin with a reflection of this compromising attitude where “we” wanted to be like the British. Undergirding such negative evaluation of *jugar*, by Dr. Nadir, is fundamentally the assertion that *jugar* has very little to do with what he understands as modernity; the ability to make history.

Architecture is a part of creating of culture... how does it contribute to the contemporary struggle for the meaning of life and existence? That question is never asked. That is, we never see it as creating culture... they [architects] see it as culture determining architecture ... but not the other way around. What culture determines in architecture is not creativity ... it goes beyond. A third rate novel is one when culture determines novel... first rate novel is one where novel determines culture. Otherwise every novel is determined by culture... Who doesn't know what...? It is elementary... tomorrow if you were asked to write history of Indian architecture between 1940 and today...global history of

architecture...what will be the contribution of Indian architecture...a line ... maybe not more... that is our contribution... you can write two paragraphs on Corbusier ... one paragraph on Wright...but what can you write of Indian architects. Its net contribution ...of course everyone contributes... but when history is finally being written nine-tenths of it is left out...

However, it was not only he who provided such a critical assessment of *jugar*. For Menon, *jugar* also represented a “lack,” at the level of architects in India and of Indians in general. It reflected a “patchwork” attitude with “which we [Indians] did everything.” What such a temperament did, he told me, was to inculcate a culture, as the term patchwork suggests, where Indians found ourselves just living from one crisis after another. “You see Jaideep, the entire problem is this ‘*sub chalta hai*’ (anything goes) attitude which we have. We do not believe in looking at things till they do break down.” As with Dr. Nadir, for Menon this *jugaru* attitude of managing things, and waiting for a crisis to happen to take any action guaranteed a lack of professionalism, as well as, decorum that he felt characterized architecture and architects in India.

Where Menon did differ from Dr. Nadir, was in where he located the genesis of *jugar*. If for Dr. Nadir, *jugar* had something to do with an essence of Indian culture, for Menon its origins were clearly more recent. According to him, India’s and architecture’s immediate colonial history was inextricably tied to the inculcation of this attitude.

I do feel that it [the unreflective attitude] is evidence of our development as a postcolonial society... and you can discuss this about the various characteristics of such a society where the rule becomes more important than its meaning... and that I find is a typical in postcolonial position and it’s sort of...a good example of that is X.⁵ as far as he is concerned rule is a rule...

⁵ Name withheld.

meaning.... forget it...and it's this kind of fanaticism for rules that one was objecting... but I don't think he had a mind to understand the difference. I rooted that into our postcolonial condition... that once the British told us you are not supposed to think you are supposed to do... we don't think... disciplinarity requires thinking... requires reflexivity. It just does not come to us...

The force of such negative reviews aside, *jugar*, as I mentioned earlier, also enjoyed a great deal of currency amongst architects. Indeed, in secret, its status was quite the opposite, as Medha (name changed), a third-year student noted,

“...each one of us...*andar se* (from inside)...we are constantly in awe of people who can do *jugar* ... but then we are like no no no... *aisi baat nahi hai* (it is not like that)...

For many to know about *jugar* was to have signaled one's entry into architecture. Lakshmi, told me about how *jugar* was the first thing she learnt about at TVB.

We hear about *jugar* all the time, even I was wondering about this word... you know I keep telling my parents ...and then they hear me talking in school...I use this word *jugar*...and then my parent ask me...where did you learn this word.. TVB... I say it is a TVB word... *jugar*...

Furthermore, for many students to be good at *jugar*, that is, be a *jugaru*, was source of pride. It was to feel and be highly valued. Thus, each batch at TVB had their students who were known as the best *jugaru(s)* and one of the coveted “titles” that were handed out to the seniors by an entering freshmen batch during fresher's night celebrations was that of “*Greatest Jugaru.*” Such pride at *jugar* was however not limited to students, Tapan, whom we have already met in the previous chapter, also noted the sense of pride architects have in their ability to do *jugar*. In fact, when I asked him about how was he at *jugar*, he replied, “*jugar toh UP ka word hai... toh hum log paida*

hi huay hain jugar se” (well *jugar* is a word from UP, [Uttar Pradesh where Tapan is from] so we say we are even born thanks to *jugar*).

Conversely to not be good at *jugar* was seen as sign of perhaps not being able to cope with the exigencies of architecture. Indeed, students would constantly measure each other based on how good a *jugaru* they were. One day as I was sitting at the college canteen I found a first year student quite visibly upset. Upon asking what had happened, she informed me that she was rethinking her decision to join architecture. She felt she was not good enough,

well I think...I think ...some people are better ...they have this weird cool-ish sense of discipline ...going on...unless I have complete clarity I don't get to work .. so... that is the reason why somebody else...somebody else's work is talent...if I have... have doubts in my head...if it doesn't come out, I won't do the press start. I can't do *Jugar*...people...*jugar lagaenge* (do *jugar*)...I can't do that... I don't have the ability to do that... so that's also bugging me...because every time you can't expect that you know.

Much of this “feeling-not-good-enough” to be an architect because one is not good at *jugar* came from the fact that *jugar* was also seen as something quintessentially architectural. Karan, a batch mate of Lakshmi talked about his experiences at two different schools of design.

I was at a design school in Bangalore before coming to TVB, I quickly learnt there were two words that were essential for a designer; *jugar* and faffing...when I came to TVB...happily I was already aware of *jugar*... When I asked Karan what was faffing, he told me that it was basically how to “bullshit” your way through everything or anything. When I pointed out that I was told *jugar* is somewhat similar. Karan immediately disagreed.

Karan: I think that is difference between design students and architecture students...design students....it's mostly all about faffing...even if you do a pretty good piece of work... and you can't talk about it.. You are totally fucked...you are fucked...but *sahi jugar* (right *jugar*) is to come out of crisis by doing something instinctive...

Jaideep: but is not *jugar* itself *kaam chalau* (anything works), at least that is what I got from what I have heard...

Karan: you know what I think... I think *jugar* is basically doing work without going through the grind...

Jaideep: so it is a short-cut...

Karan: I wouldn't call it a short cut... I think in this scenario...a shortcut is taken in a very negative sense...*jugar* is not negative... it is basically a very smart way of doing things... that architects do...

Tapan, though, disagreed with Karan's observation that faffing was just bullshitting. According to him faffing has its place in architecture too. It is, however, a limited role. "Only at design juries," is how he put it. But like Karan, he too noted that *jugar* was essential, even central to architecture and architects. In fact for him, *jugar*, architecture and design were all inextricably linked; architecture and design was all about *jugar*.

Tapan: architecture conventionally has always worked on *jugar* ... *humne ek project de diya ...ki design bana ke lao...jab product aaya...bol diya...ye galat hai...yeh galat hai galat hai... galat hai... ab jao. ab usme design methodology tum kya banaoge ... kaunsa design methodology* (architecture has conventionally always worked on *jugar*...we give you a project...go and make the design...now the design comes back...we say...this is wrong...This is

wrong...wrong...go again...now where is the question of design methodology...which design methodology)

Jaideep: *phir design studio kyu banaya hai?* (Why do we have design studios?)

Tapan: *studio isliye banaya jaata hai... ki tum jugar kar ke laaye ho... woh jugar sahi answer laaya ki nai ... nai laya... bata diya ...phir jugar karo...*

(The studio is there so that you can go and do *jugar*...we just say did your *jugar* give you the right answer...if it did not... we will tell you...go and do more *jugar*)

The many different sentiments, often loved often reviled, that constitute how architects view *jugar* are rather telling. At one level, they speak of a certain degree of (intense) emotions that accompany how architects talk about their field, their knowledge and themselves. At the same, and in spite of the different points of view about *jugar*, they signal also to the ubiquity and endurance of *jugar* as a phenomenon not only in the world of architects in India, but also in the general populace, and “culture” of India.

But most importantly, perhaps, the heterogeneous comments speak to the resistance that *jugar* and *jugarus* put up to any easy definitions. They speak of *jugar* and *jugarus* undermining any single classificatory lens that might be brought upon them. This holds true whether it is the charge against them, leveled by someone like Dr. Nadir, or Menon, of being antithetical to modernity and reflexivity, or the praise Karan and Tapan heaped on *jugar* saying that it is what architects essentially do and are.⁶ For is it not true that both, those wear *jugar* proudly on their sleeves, calling

⁶ Menon’s and Dr. Nadir’s, criticism of *jugar* and Tapan and Karan’s praise of *jugar* may, at first glance, make it seem that what one is dealing with, in case of attitudes that architects have towards to *jugar*, is one of a generational divide. That is, *jugar* while being anathema to those who were trained in the high modernist ideals of architecture is more acceptable to those who are, so to speak, second generation of architects of Independent India. As will become clear from this chapter, such is not the case. Indeed, as I argued in the previous chapter architectural training in India cannot in its very being escape its modernist legacy insofar it remains in the moments of the jury and design as a historicist

themselves *jugarus* and those abhor *jugar* and wish it away, also simultaneously claim that they are the “rightful” holders of the title “architect,” that they “design,” and are producers of architecture.

4.3 *Jugar* and the *Jugaru*: the Articulations of (An)Other Architect-Self

A prominent metaphor architects would use when talking about *jugar* is that of craft. Not so much in the sense that *jugar* is some form of craft but rather that *jugar* involves a crafting, a craftiness, if you will. And that to be a *jugaru* means to be crafty, astute, and clever. Badri, a practicing architect and a visiting faculty at TVB gave me the following story by the way of explaining this craftiness.

Yaar... let me tell you about *Jugar*...amazing story... happened to me when I started out after college. I was working with K. T. and in those days we were involved with some projects in and around Gurgaon. One such project was to design a small community hall for this village... this was a very small project...hardly anything... I just had to provide the drawings for the building... there was no site visit nothing... just to make the drawings...K. T. *ne mujhe de diya* (K. T. asked me to do it)... so I started working on it.

While I was working I began wonder if my drawings would make sense to the guys on site, especially since there was not be any contact between me and the workers in the project...to *maine ek jugar lagaya* (so I did a *jugar*)... instead of making the drawings according to the standard conventions... that is...you know plan on one sheet elevation on the other and so on...I took a big sheet...made the plan in the center...then the front elevation below it...the back elevation above it, the right elevation on the right... so...*mein bara khush tha* (I was quite happy)... the drawings then got sent off to the site.

framing of the world. Also as Menon mentions (see previous chapter p. 208) architects in India should not give up this modernist legacy. If *jugar* does straddle a divide this would roughly be one between that of the “official” versus the “unofficial” realm and discourse” of architecture.

Now months later, the building is built. There is a small opening ceremony for it. And I am invited...so I go there. *Ceremony hua* (ceremony took place)...the building looks fine...everything is great...everyone is happy.

I am introduced to the master mason...*ki yeh architect saab hai* (this is the architect [honorific])...we get talking...I tell him building looks great...what a good job etc. etc... when suddenly this guy fishes out the drawing I had made...he then points at the plan and innocently asks me... *sir, yeh building to ban gayi... ab yeh baaki char buildingey kub banegi* (sir, we have made this one building... when are we going to make, the four other buildings whose drawings you sent me)

The punch line of Badri's story suggests that it can be read in many different ways. At one level, one can read it as him trying to underscore the "gap" that exists between him, the "trained" architect, and master mason, in spite of his earnest attempts to produce the kind of drawings he felt the latter would understand. In other words, to show me that there is much that is lost in translation between the two.⁷ At another level, it could also be that through the punch line Badri's was pointing to the inadequacies of his own training that had left him handicapped and unable to communicate his ideas to anyone other than those sanctioned by training similar to his (I shall have more to say on this "gap" later on as *jugar*, in a way, indexes it too). To be sure that was a bit of both of these. But there is also a third way one can read Badri's story. As per this reading what Badri was also bringing to my attention is a

⁷ A more literal example of such attempts as translating and building a culture are can be seen in all through the 1950's publications of the *Indian Architect*. These would always contain a short editorial that had English to Hindi translations of common building materials and practices. Yet, what is noteworthy about these translation is the following; firstly, these were clearly meant for architects who were not aware of "local" names for building practices. Secondly, the kind of translations provided are themselves very telling. Usually translated into sanskritized Hindi, the resulting terms were hardly the kind of language used in everyday Hindi. See for example, "Hindi Equivalents," *The Indian Architect* 1, no. 2 (1959). pp. 25-26.

craftiness that allowed the master mason to build the building without recourse to drawings he did not comprehend or even any drawing at all.

A similar claim about *jugar* being astuteness and a *jugaru* being someone who is astute was also made by Saswati, a first year student at TVB who related the following story about her friend Chandiwala, also a student in the first year at TVB.

...we were asked to make a model in the model workshop... we had to make a structure.... we had to make triangles and stick it on the board...such that each triangle had to be exactly on the board but on opposite sides...that is the board had to be in the middle and the two triangles had to be mapped onto each other. ...now what did Mr. Chandiwala do...*jugaru* ...he cut out Christmas tree shapes...he cut out the shape... and *jahan par paper tha usne fevibond laga diya... yeh dikhane ke liye* (where the paper came together he stuck it with fevibond...to show that) that they are stuck...they were not actually in one plane...they were two different planes stuck together...

When I came to school that day for the submission, people were already saying see *Chandi ne kya jugar mara hai* (see what *jugar* Chandiwala has done) ...but the teacher caught on... and Chandi was screwed

Though Chandiwala's *jugar* was not so appreciated by the faculty in charge, what Saswati's story, nevertheless, tells us is that students, at least, were duly impressed with his presence of mind and his ability to quickly think up a way to make his job easier.

Indeed, this ability to think through things quickly was also how many architects explained *Jugar* to me. In such cases, it especially indexed thinking strategically, having mental dexterity and to be able to hold several disparate thoughts and ideas together, and manage them. Thus I was often told about how being a *jugaru* means being a strategist par excellence. In fact one architect I met, Debashish, had

made a career out of such strategic thinking. Accordingly his introduction to me, perhaps, in some measure due to my incessant questioning about *jugar* was, as “the greatest *jugaru* of them all.”

Debashish, like most architects, had begun his career with a standard sort of architectural practice. But his interest in architectural conservation eventually led him to establish an architectural heritage conservation cell in the municipality of Ahmadabad, his hometown. So successful was this effort that Debashish was soon getting called to many cities to start similar cells. That is what his architectural practice had ultimately morphed into.

Basically, I am an interface person...I interface between politicians, locals, municipalities, and increasingly the academia to essentially bring about awareness of urban heritage...I have always worked with municipalities...all over the world...

In fact his present trip to TVB was also because the college required his interfacing on a particular project that was being proposed to conserve certain localities in Shahjahanabad (Old Delhi). What the designers who were working on this project needed from him were specific strategies on “interface” with governmental bodies so that they would fund it, as well as suggest strategies that would make the project itself feasible for the inhabitants of the area.

Throughout the day Debashish gave many examples of such “interfacing.” His personal favorite was this recent project that he had undertaken in Kolkata that involved preserving some of the city’s older bungalows. Initially the Marxist Government which is in power in West Bengal had resisted his efforts,

They told me I am trying to preserve “bourgeois” buildings (laughs). They were totally against it... but then slowly I got the locals interested and started some functions and heritage related activities... and guess what...we finally

had Jyoti Basu⁸ himself come in and inaugurate the heritage festivals....(laughs)...but that was a tough project...at one point even the builder's mafia got involved... *onek chaku thaku dekhalo* (I got shown many knife-points)...but what I proposed to those guys was... you develop a building and charge a fee...that got them...

And as I watched him regaling all of us with story after story of similar strategizing he had undertaken, all the while shouting instructions, such as, “add more drama, give some romance... add a character picture at the end...” to the students who were trying to improve their presentation, I could not help but admire his managerial skills, that is, his “*jugar*.”

Such emphasis on mental dexterity, on strategic thinking does not, however, imply that for the architects I met *jugar* is something that happens entirely in one's mind. Accompanying this notion of *jugar* as mentality, as I found out, is also an understanding that *jugar*, and being a *jugaru*, means, much like the term crafting also suggests, a bodily doing, a making of things with one's hands. This is especially outlined in the conversation that I had with Badri which is quoted at the beginning of this chapter. Though Badri begins by calling himself by the more usual epithet, a designer, we learn, firstly, that he does so since “designer” is a very loose term in India. That it does not have, in common parlance at least, the kind of connotations that architects provide to design. Secondly, by the end of the conversation, we also learn that being a designer, for him, means being a *jugaru*. It is as he says; “I am trying to

⁸ Jyoti Basu (8 July 1914 – 17 January 2010) or Jyotirindra Basu was an Indian politician who belonged to the Communist Party of India (Marxist) from West Bengal, India. He served as the Chief Minister of West Bengal from 1977 to 2000, making him the longest-serving Chief Minister of any Indian state. He was a member of the CPI(M) Politburo from the time of the party's founding in 1964 until 2008. From 2008 until his death in 2010 he remained a permanent invitee to the central committee of the party. On his death, he was the last founding Politburo member of the Communist Party of India (Marxist).

get a bit of that [*jugar*] notion of what architecture is...I think an architect is the ultimate *jugaru*.”

And as to what is it that makes Badri, the architect, a *jugaru*. It is the toys which he makes, the fish mobile that he made. All of them not only bear witness to the cleverness of his mind, to his mental dexterity (he had, after all, created a tortoise out of coconut and peanut shells!) but also to the skillfulness of his hands, to his metis.⁹

The notion of an architect who “designs” with his hands, who makes buildings through his metis is something Ganju, TVB’s ex-director, also emphasized. I have already mentioned in the previous chapter his experiences with a craftsman that changed his perceptions about his own, what he called, Bauhausian ideas regarding honesty of materials and structures. Later he also told me how TVB was actually an attempt to bring in the artisanal; the crafting of things to bear upon the architect and architects as it was (is) in India.

This whole professional thing is another kind of game...which I find profoundly boring ... because you know it’s much more than that...in the 20th century we have seen professions reach a point of expropriation of ordinary person’s liberty to the extent, it is dangerous today... you see the big problem is this ...with the profession... is that it is completely divorced from the act of building.... so much so now that I am contemplating...and am writing a new approach to architectural grammar and it anchored *in the act of building*... not

⁹ According to James Scott metis is fundamentally a practical knowledge that is based on experience. Metis, he notes, “is mostly applicable to broadly similar but never identical situations requiring a quick practiced adaptation that becomes second nature to the practitioner (p.317). For further explanation of metis and its relation to skillfulness, see, James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State : How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*, Yale Agrarian Studies (New Haven [Conn.]: Yale University Press, 1998).pp.309-341. See also, Marcel Detienne, Vernant, Jean Pierre, *Cunning Intelligence in Greek Culture and Society*, European Philosophy and the Human Sciences (Hassocks [Eng.] Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Harvester Press; Humanities Press, 1978)., Michael Herzfeld, *The Body Impolitic : Artisans and Artifice in the Global Hierarchy of Value* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

in compositional strategy... I don't want it to become painting and fine arts...*learning from building...*

One exercise that emerged out of these attempts to bring the artisanal into the world of architects was the 1:1:1 exercise which all entering students at TVB had to undertake. This exercise, which spanned the whole of the first year for entering students at TVB, firstly involved learning to draw one's own body. From this stage students were asked to draw one of their classmates. The next stage involved working with clay which students had to fashion into three identical objects. The objects in question had to be an everyday object and could not be abstract shapes. They were then asked to cut it and make drawings of the sectional objects. Subsequently students had to draw an enclosure for themselves. Out of the many enclosures that were drawn, about eight were selected in the next stage. The class was then divided into smaller groups of four who spent the rest of the year building these structures with clay on the grounds at TVB.

At first glance, many aspects of the exercise seems to mirror familiar themes in the training of architects anywhere; making projectional drawings of objects, cutting them up into sections, anthropometrics etc. To be sure those themes are present in them. Ganju himself was quite clear that as an architect one had to know how to make architectural drawings, to know sections, elevations and plans. Where the exercise was different was the way one knew all of this. It was not to be a mental knowing but rather through the hand, through working with materials, with one's own body, with the bodies of one's immediate associates. It was here, in this manner of knowing, that the artisanal came in. Indeed, the tragedy of knowing architectural drawings without them being embodied was something Ganju had himself experienced.

I once had...a very strong experience about how drawings are read or not read.
How things are made by craftsmen... I was working on this nunnery

project...they had a really good carpenter...the rest were quite useless. This one was good. I had designed a set of moving louvers...but there was a detail of an additional part missing in them...which is the part which makes them move. At the time you could only make them move by hand...or by string. So I had designed these and the carpenter was making these... I had made a drawing... all dimensions and all... there was a pulley to carry the movement down... so now this pulley was fully described as an engineering drawing...now this carpenter wanted to know how to make it..

So I was asked by the site manager to explain it to the carpenter... I pulled the carpenter aside ...we stood up... drawing in our hand... he had cut a piece of wood slightly bigger than the dimensions he could read on the drawings...overall dimensions...and he says to me... please draw it on the piece of wood... I take this piece of wood and I very nervous...*I am charged up...not at my best...and my minds goes completely blank...I can't draw... I have been drawing all my life...I can draw anything...because it is on a piece of wood, which is 3-dimensional...suddenly I realize the difference between we who project and somebody who makes it with his hand... you know.. I am shocked... it had never happened to me...I can't draw...I cannot draw this pulley...it seems very easy...you have a cubicle thing... and you have to draw it on that...my mind is blank... so there is... it's a very different act... it can be bridged... [Emphasis added]*

Between crafty, craftiness, strategic thinking, smartness and metis, skill, “embodied making” the articulations of *jugar* and being a *jugaru* by architects in India present an understanding of themselves and their skills that is quite distinct from that which is imparted in the discourse of the architect and design. If, as I have argued, in the former the architect produces his (and the ideal architect is always a he) “object”

by means of a visual spectatorship, a being witness to, which puts him at a remove from those very objects, then the claims to *jugar* and being a *jugaru*, do not seem to have either anything of the distancing, or the “visual,” in them. On the contrary, as we see in many of the comments, the emphasis when articulating *jugar*, bespeak in all cases an involved laboring of the *jugaru*. Furthermore, if the visual spectatorship of the architect also asserts a transparency, a methodological rationality, then the involvement and embodiedness of *jugar* and *jugarus* announces, an implicitness- or even an “opacity” of the methods of *jugar* and the *jugaru*. Recall here, Badri’s initial reaction, when I noted that his tortoise was “ingenious.” It was as he replied, “magical.”

Yet at the same time, involvement, mental dexterity, and magic is not all that articulations of *jugar* and *jugarus* register in distinction to architect and design. In addition to these, the enunciations of the claims to *jugar* and being a *jugaru* also disclose something else; (an)other elements that is extremely important, if not, quite central to *jugar* and *jugarus* as distinct from design and architect. Not surprisingly however and especially given *jugar*’s opacity and embodied nature, to realize them I had to be “involved” in *jugar* myself. It is, then, to that involvement I now turn.

4.4 The Khirki Village Project.

Given my own background as an architect, one of my roles at TVB, apart from my presence as a historian and an ethnographer was also that of an “architect” with the urban design and research cell of the college. It was in this particular capacity that I was asked to join in the Khirki Village project that the college was involved in.

Flanked by Delhi’s arterial Outer Ring Road, to its north and by Saket, an upscale residential locality to its south, the “village” of Khirki today lies in the heart of posh South Delhi (see figure 3.02). Initially settled in 1327 adjacent to the Khirki Mosque (see figure 3.03), the village grew around the mosque and together with the



Figure 3.02: Khirki Village in the map of New Delhi.
Source: Courtesy of the TVB School of Habitat Studies.



Figure 3.03: The South face of the Khirki Mosque around which the village now exists.

Source: From author's collection

Satpula Dam formed a part of Firoze Shah Tuglaq's Delhi.¹⁰ Traditionally its inhabitants eked out their living through farming on the land near the village. Soon after India's independence in 1947, the village faced a massive upheaval. It was mostly abandoned by its Muslim residents who moved to Pakistan in the wake of riots following the partition of India.¹¹ Like many other places in Delhi, Khirki was then used as a rehabilitation colony for Hindu refugees who crossed over from Pakistan.¹² Later Khirki was incorporated into the National Capital Region (NCR) of Delhi that was itself created under the first Master Plan of Delhi 1962. It is since then that Khirki is labeled an urban village.¹³

TVB's association with the village has a long history that began much before I started my fieldwork. In fact, students from the college had been visiting and studying Khirki from as far back as 1993.¹⁴ In those days its study was part of the larger emphasis the college had on investigating three fundamental settlement patterns seen in human habitats in general.¹⁵

Additionally, TVB's interest in Khirki was also due to its being a part of what the school called its Related Studies Program (RSP). As per its concept, the RSP of TVB was geared to be a response to a "tendency amongst contemporary practice to look 'outside' India to derive architectural ideals."¹⁶ What the RSP recognized was, "that in our [India's] contemporary environment, we [architects] still have strong evidence of an indigenously evolved architecture of great culture and environmental variety which provides a rich source of academic material to root architectural

¹⁰ Ratish Nanda et al., *Delhi, the Built Heritage : A Listing*, 1st ed., 2 vols. (New Delhi: INTACH, Delhi Chapter, 1999).

¹¹ K. C. Rana, "Khirki Ki Kahani," in *Personal Papers* (Delhi).

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Delhi Development Authority., *Draft Master Plan for Delhi*, 2 vols. ([Delhi, India]: Delhi Development Authority, 1960).

¹⁴ A. G. K Menon, letter, October 4 1993.

¹⁵ TVB School Of Habitat Studies, "Prospectus," (New Delhi: Vidya Bharati Educational Society 1990).

¹⁶ TVB School of Habitat Studies, "Related Studies Program," (New Delhi: TVB School of Habitat Studies, 1992).

education...”¹⁷ Given this, the objectives of the RSP was two folded. Firstly, it was to collect first-hand data of traditional manmade environments. Secondly, to incorporate this first hand data into research and studio exercises that would take place in the school.¹⁸

The RSP at Delhi, of which Khirki was to be a part, had an additional aim. According to Menon and Ganju, one of the problems that plagued contemporary architecture of New Delhi was that its imagination in spite of Delhi’s ancient history was actually limited to just the last 100 years or so.¹⁹ That is, only limited to the city designed by the British architect Sir Edwin Lutyen in 1912.²⁰ Consequently, most of the discourse regarding an identity for the city, generated by a handful of western publications, remained woefully unaware of this larger history of Delhi. What studies such as Khirki intended to do, one the one hand, was that it would allow the school to become a repository of the architecture of Delhi thereby filling up this yawning gap in the knowledge of Delhi’s architecture. On the other hand, exercises such as Khirki were to also provide a credible basis on which the school and the city could enter into meaningful dialogue.²¹

Though stemming from this longer association, TVB’s and my involvement in the particular project emerged out of concatenation of events that were of a more recent vintage. One of these was the immense humanitarian crisis that unfolded on the streets of Delhi following The Supreme Court of India’s decision to seal and later demolish all buildings of the city that were violating the building by-laws of the Master Plan of Delhi 1985. The events and discourse that surrounded this crisis are too

¹⁷ Ibid.p.2

¹⁸ Ibid.p.2.

¹⁹ A. G. K Menon, "The Contemporary Architecture of Delhi: The Role of the State as Middleman," in *Indo-French Seminar On Delhi* (New Delhi 1998). p. 1-45.

²⁰ Ibid. p.1.

²¹ Studies, "Related Studies Program."p.1.

complicated to be reproduced in their entirety here. But suffice to say, that if implemented in toto the judgment of the Supreme Court would have led to a sealing and or demolition of roughly 70% of Delhi neighborhoods and some 200 primary and secondary vehicular roads all of which, according to the Municipality of Delhi's annual report of 2005 were violating, in one way or another, the tenets of the building by-laws as laid out in the master plan.²²

The intensive media coverage of the “demolition drive,” as this particular episode came to christened, had a series of cascading effects on the governance of the city. One of these was the realization amongst the upper echelons of its power that the present “top-down” Nehruvian style method of planning for the city initiated in the 1960's by the formulation of the first master plan of Delhi was deeply flawed.²³ The need of the hour, they argued, given the realities of the city's situation, was a “bottom up” and more localized style of development that would engage the citizens in the process of planning for the city.²⁴ This particular ideology was also given much fillip by the current Delhi Administrations which had a few years earlier started a program called the “*Bhagidari* Scheme.” Literally translated as the “partnership,” the scheme was loosely modeled on similar neo-liberal policies implemented in London in the 80's. The main idiom governing this new imagination of citizen-government relationship was that of commerce and entrepreneurship such that the Delhi government and the citizens were now being described “stake holders,” in the development of the city.

²² For a detailed coverage of the events, see Newspapers in Delhi from September 2005 till date. See especially, "Supreme Court Rebuts Center, Delhi Government," *The Times of India*, November 7 2006., "What If Residents Start Protesting?," *The Times of India*, November 7 2006., "B.J.P. Blames Congress-Led Delhi Government," *The Times of India*, October 11 2006.

²³ This was the general theme of the introductory lectures given by the Chief Minister of Delhi, Ms. Sheila Dixit, Mr. S. Jaipal Reddy, Minister for Urban Development, Mr. B.L. Joshi, Lt. Governor of Delhi, and Shri Anil Bajjal, Secretary (Urban Development), Ministry of Urban Development at the opening of the exhibition “Imagining Delhi,” Apr. 25th 2006.

²⁴ Ibid.

It was in this climate that the apex body in Delhi in matters concerning urban development and design, the Delhi Urban Art Commission (henceforth DUAC) held an exhibition called, "Imagining Delhi" (see figures 3.04-3.05).²⁵ A brainchild of its newly appointed director Charles Correa, whom we have already met in the first chapter, the exhibition was jointly organized by TVB. The aim of this exhibition according to the DUAC was to emphasize,

...how both small and more ambitious interventions could help make the city a more humane one. It emerged as almost self-evident that Delhi has the capacity to grow out of its own DNA, the genetic material of its culture, society, history and urban fabric, and that it is not necessary to emulate unsustainable models developed in other countries. *Delhi has its own natural heritage, its rich collection of built form, and vibrant populations with great entrepreneurial skill.*²⁶ [Emphasis added].

The timing of the exhibition was also fortuitous in another way. There was the impending Commonwealth Games 2010. Perhaps the biggest sporting event to be held in New Delhi since the Asiad Games of 1982, the Commonwealth extravaganza had brought on a flurry of building activity to the capital city. It had also brought on, in wake of this activity, a massive campaign through the televised and print media that attempted to generate a sense of pride as well as an unprecedented level of

²⁵ The Delhi Urban Art Commission was set up by an Act of Parliament in 1973 to "advise the Government of India in the matter of preserving, developing and maintaining the aesthetic quality of urban and environmental design within Delhi and to provide advice and guidance to any local body in respect of any project of building operations or engineering operations or any development proposal which affects or is like to affect the skyline or the aesthetic quality of the surroundings or any public amenity provided therein." A major lobby for setting up of this organization was the group, especially Patwant Singh, associated with the *Design* magazine. See, Rasheed Talib, "Delhi Past, Present and Future: An Interview with Patwant Singh," *Design* (1970). pp.23-28.

²⁶ Exhibition Held at the India Habitat Center, New Delhi, from April 25th to May 7th 2006. Delhi Urban Arts Commission, "Annual Report of the Delhi Urban Arts Commission," (New Delhi Delhi Urban Arts Commission, 2005-2006).



Figure 3.04: Ms. Sheila Dixit, Chief Minister of Delhi, and Mr. S. Jaipal Reddy, Minister for Urban Development at the “Imagining Delhi” Exhibition. In the background is Charles Correa, chairman, Delhi Urban Arts Commission
Source: From author’s collection.



Figure 3.05: “Imagining Delhi” Exhibition, held at the India Habitat Center, New Delhi.

Source: From author’s collection.

involvement of the citizens in the image of the city. With catchy slogans like, “Delhi: from Walled city to World city,” “Green Delhi, Clean Delhi, these deliberations focused on mainly how to develop New Delhi as a city befitting India’s new found global image in the 21st century.²⁷ The main rhetoric here was if the United States has New York, the United Kingdom has London, China has Shanghai and Hong Kong, India will have New Delhi. Some of these ideas dovetailed quite neatly with a series of seminars that were also a part of the exhibition, which were, 1) Bringing the City Together, 2) Delhi’s Landscape, 3) Transforming the Built Environment : Case of Central Delhi, 4) Making Heritage Work, 5) Water for Delhi, 6) The future of Delhi’s Transport, 7) The other Half of Delhi : the case of East Delhi, 8) Streets for Everyone, 9) Public Participation, and 10) What constitutes Delhi’s Genius?²⁸ Held at the India Habitat Center, the seminars, featuring, architects, historians, sociologists, urban designers, planners, and non-governmental Organizations, aimed to bring together all those who were already working with the city, at one level or another, to share ideas for a sustainable and equitable growth of the city.

The exhibition itself featured about 72 panels that were centered around the following themes, 1) Open Space, 2) Water, 3) Built Form, 4) Moving around the City, 5) Streets for Everyone, 6) Bringing the City together, and 7) Participation.²⁹ It was here, at the exhibition that a proposal by TVB for the redevelopment of Khirki Village caught the fancy of various visiting dignitaries, which included, Mr. S. Jaipal Reddy, Minister for Urban Development, Mr. B.L. Joshi, Lt. Governor of Delhi, Mrs. Sheila Dikshit, Chief Minister (New Delhi), and Shri Anil Baijal, Secretary (Urban Development), Ministry of Urban Development.³⁰

²⁷ See for example, Vibha Sharma, "Green Pitch: Delhi, Garden City," *HT Metro* 2006.

²⁸ Commission, "Annual Report of the Delhi Urban Arts Commission."

²⁹ *Ibid.* p.60.

³⁰ *Ibid.* p.61.

Though not intended as such, the Khirki proposal was soon being seen as a pilot project, that would provide a “vision,” for developing the 136, or so, similar “urban villages that dotted the National Capital Region (NCR) of Delhi. Indeed, their very naming as urban villages, had proved to be something of a double-edged sword for places like Khirki. On the one hand, it had ensured that Khirki remained exempt from many a heavy-handed urban experiments of the state under the umbrella of developing and modernizing Delhi. Additionally, Khirki had also escaped the various land tenure systems, developmental guidelines and building by-laws framed within Delhi’s master plan. Consequently, at least until now, Khirki’s environ remains somewhat idyllic and its residents claimed that they enjoy a greater degree of security, and cohesion than is otherwise present in other parts of Delhi.³¹

On the other hand, however, calling it a village had also resulted in its neglect by the public works authority. For example, Khirki had been largely sidestepped by the MCD in terms of providing water, sewerage and other facilities regularly provided to other plotted and “purely” urban areas within the NCR. Also, significantly, official and state rhetoric about Khirki was consistently through a rubric of lack; lack of planning; lack of control; lack of infrastructure so on and so forth. Furthermore, places like Khirki which seemingly developed exempt from urban by-laws and codes (re)present an anachronism (and embarrassment) within a picture of Delhi as a modern, beautiful and global city. The pilot project was thus to address all these issues simultaneously and present a grand vision of future development for the city.

Given the high stakes involved, the Lieutenant Governor’s office soon put together a task force comprising various “stake holders.” These included representatives from the Delhi Municipal Corporation, Delhi Electric Board, Delhi Police, Delhi Water Board, and members of the Khirki Village Residents Welfare

³¹ Personal Communication with Resident Welfare Association members of Khirki

Association (henceforth RWA).³² Also included in the task force were representatives of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), as most of the proposed development would occur within a hundred meter radius of the Khirki Mosque, which was a nationally protected monument, and as per the statues of the ASI, technically no development was permitted within hundred meters of such monuments.³³ Heading this task-force and fulfilling the role of experts was a group of architects from TVB who also functioned as liaison between the residents of the village and the DUAC which was also involved in the project. The DUAC group comprised of another set of experts of experts to which our group reported intermittently. The group at DUAC included its director, three other members of its governing council, M. Shaheer, professor of

Landscape Architecture at the School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi, Jasbir Sawhney, architect, and Narayani Gupta, a well know social historian of Delhi.³⁴ It also included an ex-officio member, Dr. M. M. Kutty from the Ministry of Urban Development, Government of India.³⁵ The team from TVB comprised, A. B. Lall, Dean of Academic Affairs, Arunava Dasgupta, Assistant Professor, Thiruvengadam Ramadoss Bama, Anjali Mittal, both of whom were recent graduates of the college and working as architects with the Urban Design and Research Cell, and me.³⁶

Our work on the Khirki Project began in September of 2006 and continued till February of 2007, when the proposal was formally presented the Lieutenant Governor and the chief minister of Delhi in a highly publicized event (see figures 3.06-1.13). The proposed design for the redevelopment of Khirki design and method of planning

³² TVB School of Habitat Studies, "Proposal for Khirki Village," (New Delhi2007).

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.



Figure 3.06: Members of the Khirki RWA meet with members of the design group at the local Hindu temple in Khirki Village.
Source: From author's collection.



Figure 3.07: Members of the Khirki RWA meet with members of the design group at the local Hindu temple in Khirki Village.
Source: From author's collection.



Figure 3.08: Development Plan for Khirki, design group TVB.
 Source: Courtesy of TVB School of Habitat Studies.

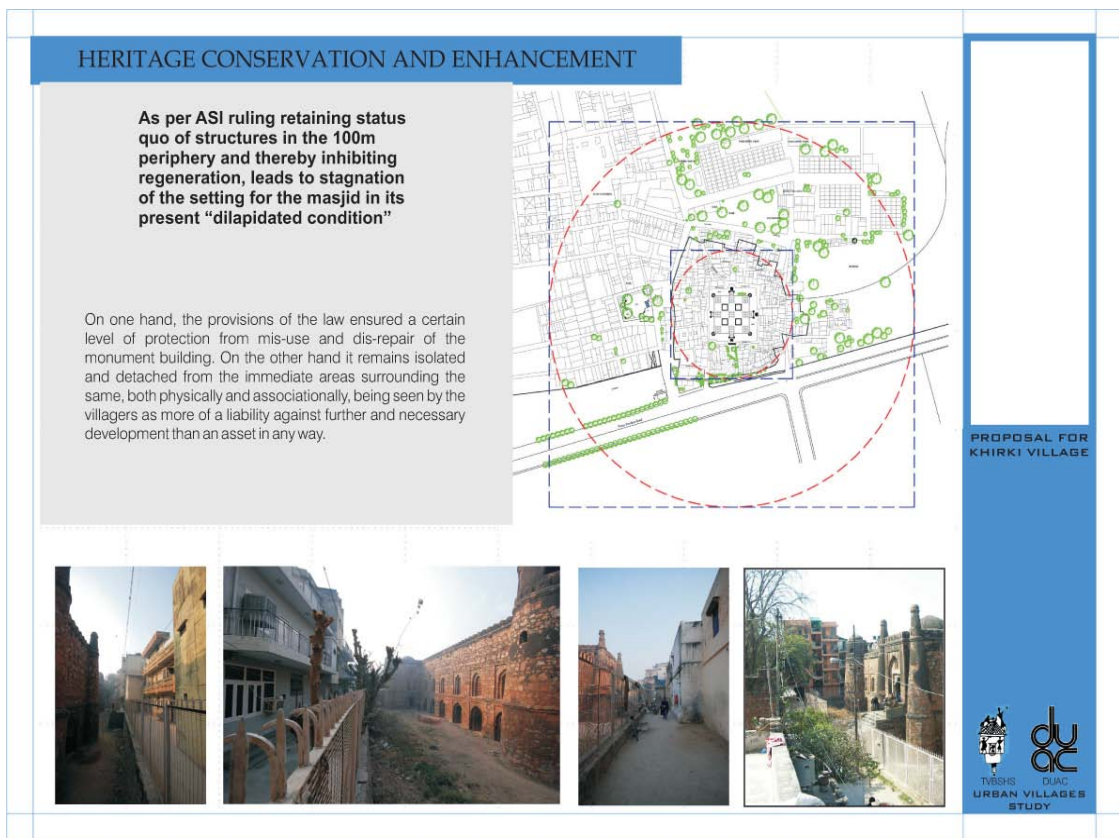


Figure 3.09: Heritage Conservation Proposal, design group TVB.
 Source: Courtesy of TVB School of Habitat Studies.

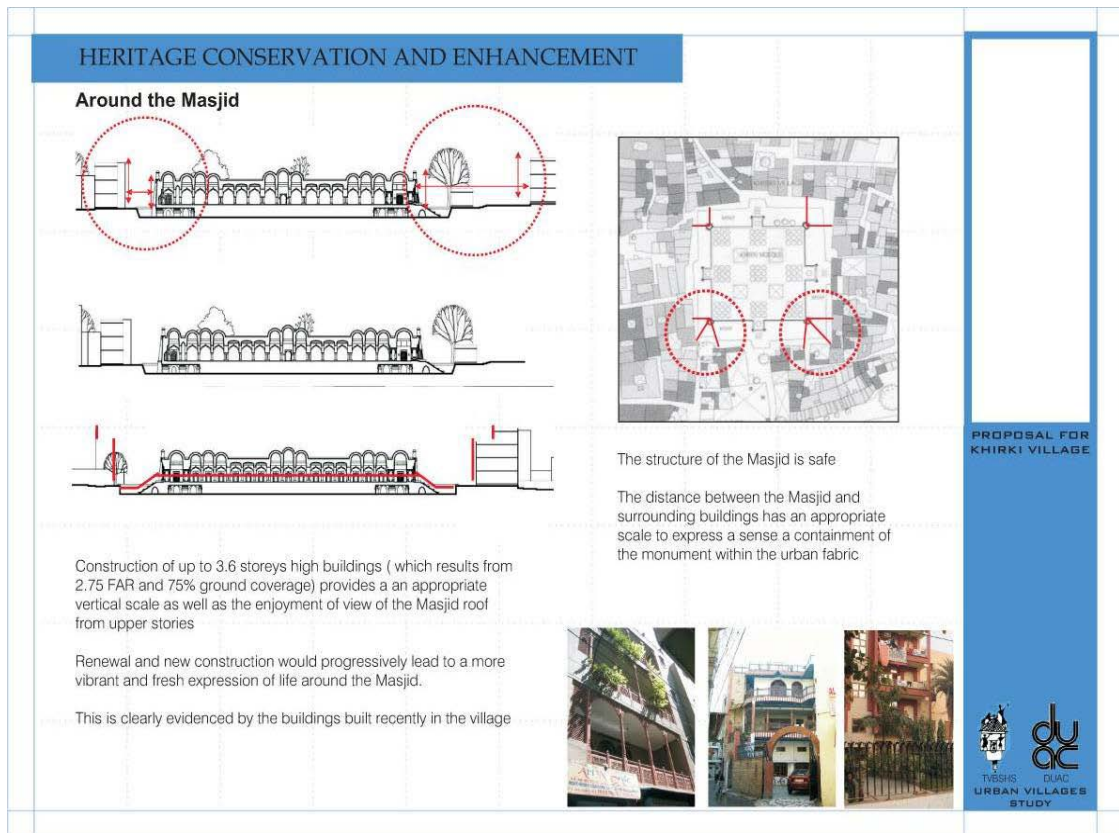


Figure 3.10: Heritage Conservation Proposal, design group TVB.
 Source: Courtesy of TVB School of Habitat Studies.

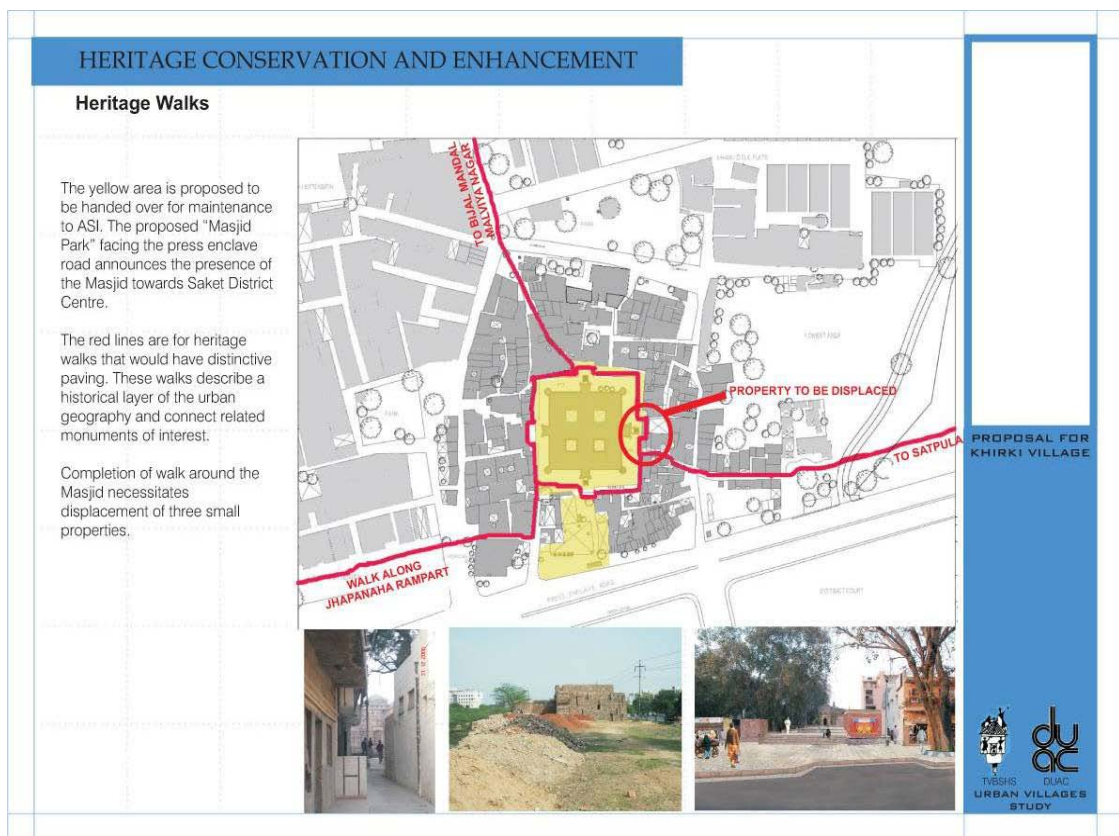


Figure 3.11: Heritage Conservation Proposal, design group TVB.
 Source: Courtesy of TVB School of Habitat Studies.

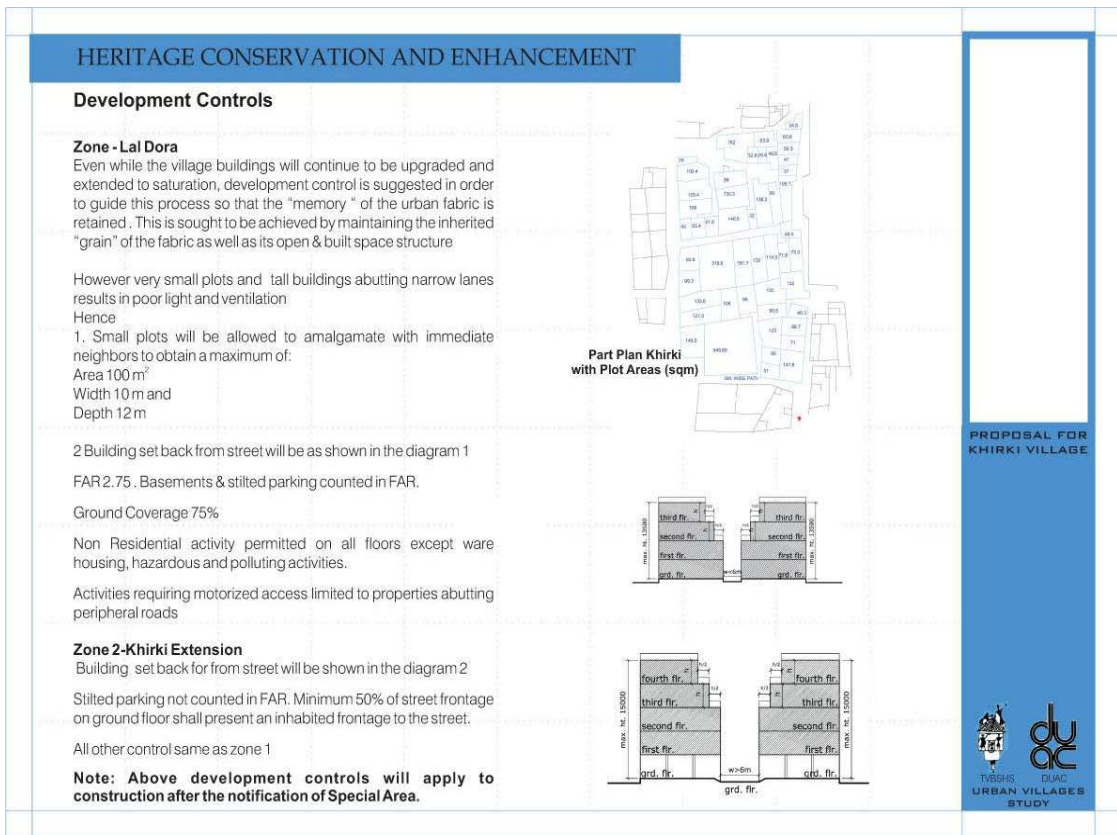


Figure 3.12: Proposed Building control around Lal Dora, Khirki, design group TVB.
 Source: Courtesy of TVB School of Habitat Studies.

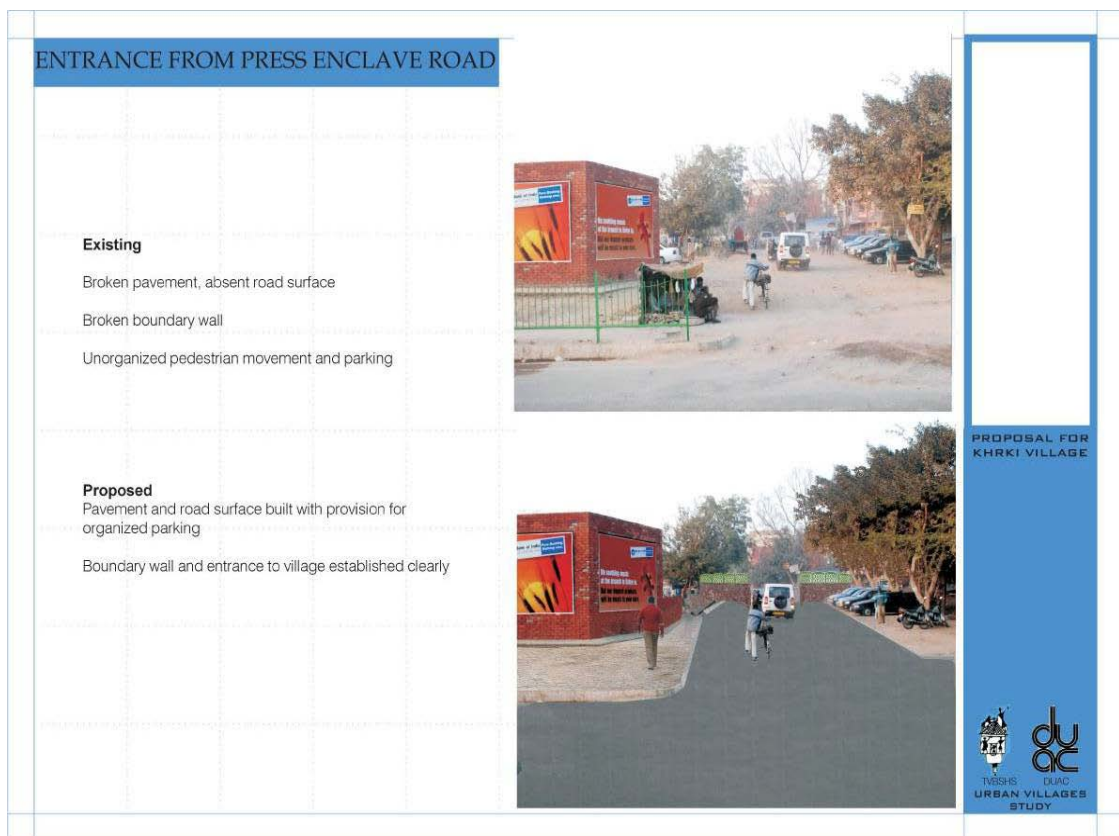


Figure 3.13: Edge Development Proposal, Khirki design group TVB.
Source: Courtesy of TVB School of Habitat Study.

got much praise from all quarters. The Lieutenant Governor of Delhi heralded it as a new stage in the urban planning and development of the country, a stage in which experts and people worked in close partnership. All agreed that it was the combined effort of the residents and the experts that had managed to turn a “negative” space within the city into a template and vision for development that could be followed not only in Delhi but perhaps in similar situations all over the country.

4.5 *Jugar Pe Duniya Kayam Hai* (*Jugar is What Makes the World Work*)

Such panegyric statements about the Khirki Village Project offered by the State, the representatives of Khirki Village, and indeed, us, the “architects/designers,” appear to justify all of design’s and architect’s sign(ificant) claims that we had looked at in the preceding chapters. They reiterate the claims of the architect being as a catalyst; a subject with (super)visionary powers who could see the “actual societal processes” that lay behind the “appearances” of Khirki and could thus ease them towards that which they were, “in any case” tending. Indeed, in the very framing of this project as a providing a “vision,” or a “template” for the (future) development of Khirki as well as other urban-villages that exist in the NCR, already invoked is the particular temporality of design that “presents” to all parties concerned the future that-will-be (design of Khirki). And finally, such statements of praise also thus serve to turn the Khirki Village Project into, what I would call following the cultural critic Homi Bhabha, a pedagogical moment par excellence. That is, it appears as a “textbook” moment of the “national coherent culture” of architecture in India that, as I have argued, the twin signs design and the architect constantly attempt to create.³⁷

³⁷ For an argument regarding the “pedagogical” and “performative” moments of culture, see Homi Bhabha, “Dissemination,” in *The Location of Culture* (London ; New York: Routledge, 2004). pp. 199-244. See also, Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1968)., Julia Kristeva and Toril Moi, *The Kristeva Reader* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986).

Thus, there is, at first, an identification of the existence of a “project”; the redevelopment of Khirki Village. The state takes the initiative and attends to it. A task force comprising all associated authorities and experts is created, and a higher authority, in this case the Delhi Urban Arts Commission (DUAC), is made in-charge to oversee the performance of the various agents involved. Additionally, in a departure from previous top-down planning processes, the residents of the locality are also included in the design decision making process. The design team visits the site; works with the RWA. It produces a design that synthesizes inputs from all different directions, the history of Khirki, the composition of its populace, the state of its infrastructure, the state of its buildings, roads, questions of Delhi’s heritage, indeed, the nations, and so on and so forth. This “plan” is submitted to the DUAC, which ratifies it and sends it back to the design team who finalize it. This “finished” design, Khirki’s (future) history (since the future-that will be, and is therefore already realized) is then shown to the residents and to the state authorities, who incorporate it into their “Master Plan,” which is, in any case, also a “finished” history (future) of Delhi itself. In this example par excellence then, each step of the design process, and one might add “histories,” seems to neatly dovetail into the earlier one. Each step proudly enunciates the claims of design, the architect, and architecture.

Take for instance, the very way the village and the project is framed within this “official” discourse.

With the rapid pace of urbanization in Delhi, many villages have got progressively severed from their traditional source of sustenance agriculture- as they got surrounded by urban growth. They have changed and grown in response to the pressures and opportunities of surrounding urban development...Khirkee³⁸ village is one such significant urban village.

³⁸ Both spellings are accepted

It has a long history. Having been established around Khirkee mosque, today, it is adjacent to intensive development (the Saket District Centre and the District Court). Additionally, much of its agricultural land has now a residential colony called Khirkee Extension...Initiated by DUAC to become a proposal for improving the civic condition of Khirkee Village and planning development of the peripheral areas in the context the Saket District Centre, and development proposals for around the Khirkee Mosque which is at the centre of the Village, has been finalized... Extensive work has been undertaken by DUAC for Khirkee Village and DDA is in process of working implementation. Based on experience from this, other villages in South Delhi Heritage value can be taken up e.g. Masjid Moth, Hauz Rani.³⁹

Apart from its developmental vision, to which I have already alluded, the above description provided by the Delhi Urban Arts Commission paints a neat picture in which the “history” of Khirki is a long and uninterrupted for the last thousand years. It is a picture in which Khirki is imagined as an idyllic village that has remained the same, “as urban growth surrounded it.” Furthermore, in the above description, the “history” of the project itself is also rather cleanly mentioned, which only seems to begin with its initiation by the DUAC itself.

But the on-ground story is a bit different. Indeed, Gone from this description about the former, that is, the history of Khirki, is the, perhaps, not unimportant, history that the present residents of the village are actually Hindu refugees from Pakistan, who were rehabilitated there by the Indian state, because the then subsisting Muslim residents had migrated to Pakistan. Gone is also the history that, for the most part, they hardly practiced extensive agriculture on the land around Khirki. Gone is the history that the present land-use patterns of Khirki are themselves a creation of the Delhi

³⁹ Commission, "Annual Report of the Delhi Urban Arts Commission."

Master Plan of 1962, which cut up the area haphazardly by evoking rights of eminent domain and acquiring massive tracts of land around the area.⁴⁰ Gone is the history, that if today Khirki finds itself surrounded by “opportunities and pressure of surrounding urban development,” it is not because this presents yet another history of either a steady or uneven development but because the land that the State had seized invoking its right were sold to private developers in the last five years following the changes of the Indian State’s policies from a state-sponsored capitalist system to free-market capitalism.⁴¹ So it could hardly have remained “the same.”

Also gone from this “history” is that much of what this project identifies as the “heritage value,” of the area, itself a telling term, if there was ever one, is actually a heritage created by the actions of the Archaeological Survey of India, which has been ever since its inception interested in creating a “heritage,” of (for) the “India.”⁴² Gone also is that today, this question of “heritage,” centered as it is, around a Mosque is hardly important for the Hindu community that now has a temple which forms the social, religious, and communal center of this “idyllic” village that seems to have remained the same!⁴³

In a similar vein, are also gone from the latter, that is the history of the project, are all the various concatenations of contingent events, which I had mentioned earlier, from the neo-liberal idioms of citizen(s) and state(s) being equal stakeholders in the

⁴⁰ Delhi Development Authority., *Draft Master Plan for Delhi*.

⁴¹ This is something I have seen growing up as I live around Khirki, in fact in Saket which flanks it to the south

⁴² For an argument of how the Archaeological Survey of India has been instrumental in creating a “history” of the nation through “national” artifacts, see Tapati Guha-Thakurta, *Monuments, Objects, Histories : Institutions of Art in Colonial and Postcolonial India*, Cultures of History (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004). See also, by the same author, "The Endangered Yakshi: Careers of an Ancient Art Object in Modern India," in *History and the Present*, ed. Anjan and Partha Chatterjee Ghosh (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2002).pp.71-107, and Bernard S. Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge : The British in India*, Princeton Studies in Culture/Power/History (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996).

⁴³ In the first letter that the Khirki RWA handed to the DUAC task group, out of the seven concerns listed not even one focused on the Khirki Mosque.

process of development, to the “demolition drive,” and finally to the chance interest of the certain higher officials in the proposals for Khirki at the exhibition, actually led to its present formulation. Gone is also the significant point that this “history” is itself an abridged version of the “history” of the village that was written by some of the students at TVB, from which, I might add, many “histories” had to be removed as there was “just so much ‘history’ that can be presented” in the presentation that was made to the state authorities and the residents.

Indeed, a further probing into the “on ground” situation reveals messiness all around. Take for example the strategizing that that unfolded in the interactions between the various groups involved in the project. Initially, the notion that residents of Khirki should be included in the design was a step welcomed by all. It was, as I mentioned earlier, seen as a democratization of the process of designing for the city; a process of collaboration. Yet right from outset, it became quite apparent that such “collaboration” meant completely different things for the various parties involved and a power struggle of sorts ensued between the representatives of the state and the members of the Khirki RWA, which continued all through the project. Indeed, this began right from when the task force met for the first time. K. C. Rana, the General Secretary of the Khirki RWA put forward a list of developmental suggestions that he claimed the residents wanted. This was quickly shut down by the representatives of the Delhi state who claimed that this was not a forum to air such suggestions! Of course, the members of RWA having learnt their lesson from this episode, started bringing all their points in writing and used to hand them out quietly at the beginning of all other such meetings.

There was strategizing at other levels of interaction too; between the members of the RWA and the design group, for example. Most of the “representatives,” as we learnt later were, in fact, major landholders of the village. Their interest thus lay in

steering our design interventions towards those areas of the locality that would directly benefit their land holdings. Indeed, this became clear in the very first meeting we had with them, when the same Mr. Rana categorically noted, “You [the design group] please do your work. I request you to not go around asking too many people what they want. Most people here are ignorant and villagers... If you go around asking, then hundred people will have hundred opinions and no work will get done...you interact with us. That is all.”⁴⁴ Now, behind this strategy, we learnt, was the politics of caste already existent within the village. These too played themselves out within our interactions.

Since roughly 80 percent of Khirki belonged to upper caste Hindu groups, and the village itself was sharply divided into *mohallas* (enclaves) along caste lines.⁴⁵ And since the RWA just comprised representatives from these upper castes, they constantly drew our attention, often not too subtly, towards also intervening in those areas where they lived.

A particularly telling incident involving such politics centered around a piece of land that abutted the main access lane to the Khirki Mosque, thus somewhat obstructing this access. This land belonged to a plumber who had shown great ingenuity and built his house quite creatively using broken pieces of household sanitary ware (see fig. no.). Given his rather unique house, all of us in the design team felt that instead of demolishing it and relocating the plumber, one could propose reroute the access and turn it into a “heritage walk” around the Mosque. When

⁴⁴ This information about most people being ignorant villager was not true by any means. As per a survey conducted by the design group, Khirki’s literacy rate was close to 90% much higher than the national average of 65%. Studies, “Proposal for Khirki Village.”

⁴⁵ There are three caste based *mohallas* (localities) within Khirki Village. The largest covering almost 50 percent of the houses belonged to the *Chauhan*’s who consider themselves to belong to the Khatriya (warrior) caste. The next belongs to the *Saini*’s who also claim to belong to the Kshatriya (warrior) caste. The smallest of the three belong to the *Jatav*’s, who belong to the *Chamars*, traditionally one of the “untouchable” castes. Ibid.

members of the RWA got to know of this, they were quite visibly upset and enquired as to our reasons for proposing such an alternate route. When told of the reason, the president of Khirki Extension which lay to the West of the village informed us that the man actually had no right to be there, since he was occupying the land illegally. To us, his statements were extremely ironical given that the entire of Khirki Extension of which he was the president was in fact an illegal extension off of Khirki Village. And that just a few days prior we had been discussing how to “regularize” his locality and provide adequate infrastructure to it.

In fact, it was only later we realized the real reason(s) why they wanted the plumber’s house removed from there. This had to do with the caste tensions in the village. The land in question fell within the boundaries of the *Saini Mohalla*, an upper-class enclave of the village. The plumber was a man who belonged to the *Jatav* caste, a lower caste and there had been an ongoing feud between him and his neighbors.

Adding to the politics of gender, caste, class, was the economical angle of this story. Since the plumber’s house also abutted the main arterial road that flanked Khirki, it was a piece of prime real estate, especially given that the new master plan was proposing a metro station on that road and that just across the road Asia’s largest shopping mall was being constructed (all this on the land that the State had seized right after independence in the name of the safe guarding it for the people). The upper caste contingent did not want to lose their “rights” to this piece of land.

Needless to say, that such strategizing by the members of the RWA put us [designers] in quite a perplexing situation. To sidestep, on the one hand, the RWA and interact with other residents of the locality would mean undermining the primary organization of the locality as well as undercut those whose cooperation we greatly needed. On the other hand, to not do so would be to limit our understanding and exchanges with the village to just what the elders told us. This would necessarily

hamper our ability to propose a viable plan for the locality. Thus right from the onset, we too “strategized.” And strategy after strategy followed on how to uncover “information” without offending anybody. Thus, for example, taking a leaf out of Debashish’s book we sent students to do most of the data gathering, since they would be far more inconspicuous than, let’s say, either Arunava, or myself. Sometimes we succeeded; other times we did not, for example, in the final design proposal, the plumber’s house is one of the houses proposed for the relocation.

Now one may point out that even though such “maneuvering(s)” permeated the interactions between the design group, the RWA, and the State, the “space” of design, the expertise of the architect was at least free from such “extra-ordinary” occurrences. However, this too was not the case. Indeed, our very first presentation to the DUAC was completely consigned to the dustbin by its chairperson. As the comments of Arunava who headed our team show, the rejection was not based on “pure” design decisions. That is, it was not based on a being witness to the societal processes as they are happening and therefore knowing where they were tending, but rather its opposite.

Look! for them [DUAC], it is basically a city beautification thing that they are interested in...but when it comes to the village... they realize there is no question of beautification...you are dealing with peoples’ lives...with legality of changes in uses and many things...then these guys wake up and say...we can’t do it alone...so what do they do...they use their so called good offices...to go through the Prime Minister’ through the Lieutenant Governor’s Office... they tell the Governor...that we are now going to give you a solution to this village....you better facilitate us to do so....they make the entire machinery become obedient to them...

In today’s this discussion he [Correa] very clearly said what he wants...that this place will be a market based development...they have already negated any

other alternative possible scenario...it is only a market scenario. Everyone is accepting that... so the fate of Khirki has been sealed and they have created a mechanism to seal it...

The only way to handle this is to sabotage the process in which this is being laid out...it has been laid out to validate and formalize what you have already laid out to be the *future* of this place...the decision making process is coming the other way round... which it has always been... so whether it is a DDA [Delhi Development Authority] cell proposing for the village and then letting the village know... or whether it is the DUAC cell sitting and creating the future of the village...there is no difference. DUAC will only say we are more sensitive than the DDA. Why? Because “we have sent the team of designers to go and walk into the streets of Khirki...which the DDA planner does not do...But the moment we come out with suggestions from the village and what they require ...immediately there is a problem ...we are not discussing concerns of residents here...so ideologically and conceptually we have already wiped out Khirki village...we have wiped them out...the only thing left is running a bulldozer... whether we do it together or we make builders come and do it...[emphasis added]

But what really took me by surprise was what unfolded in the next meeting between us and the group at DUAC. Given the crisis of the first meeting, and the subsequent decision to implement Arunava’s suggestion, if not in reality but in spirit, the next two weeks hardly saw any work being done by us. Yet when the time for the second presentation came, we knew something had to be done. So the night before the presentation, we decided that two changes were to be made to the presentation. First, we would rearrange the order of the slides to be presented. Second, since Arunava had distanced himself from the project, it was decided that Ashok Lall, the head of the

overall Task Force, and TVB's academic dean, himself a prominent architect, would make the presentation.

This time the result of the presentation was the exact opposite. We had a very "productive" discussion and the dignitaries present were extremely happy with the work done. The chairman of the DUAC lauded our progress claiming that we had indeed hit upon the crux of the problem of development in situations such as Khirki Village!

As we exited the conference room, the entire team felt extremely elated. We were doubly satisfied since we had not only evaded the fiasco of the last meeting but also pulled one over on the DUAC committee. Soon after, Mr. Lall turned to me and said, "See today... we did not get scolded. Why do you think that happened? What is your analysis? Confessing that I was quite baffled by the progress of the meeting, I turned the question(s) back on him. I asked him, why did he think we were not reprimanded? "Well," he said,

yeh jugar tha (This was *jugar*)... what happened... was before the meeting started.. .of course Aruanava had told me what had happened last time...so...before the meeting started... Jasbir told me...this is what happened last time... I had done a little bit of preparation on what I was going to say...but after Jasbir's telling me...at the time... I recast the whole thing along these lines...and I presented the thing as structural issues in policy and design initiative (laughs)... so what was seen as survey... became structural issues...right...because you get the survey in a particular set of words...the issues became generalized principles... rather than a description of one...thing....and then magically, the solution that seemed to be emerging from the village....became the potential construct that could be prototypical and adopted... at a city level... so it was the same thing recast...just recast...

[T]here were two ideas on the board. Ours in which we wanted to let the residents have a say in the direction of development for their village. Look the business of the administration and the planning process is the protection of civic life. But now these guys, the chairman and the administration have a different approach to development. They want the rate of growth to grow. Thus more incentive for more money to be made, with this in mind they want to invest in those areas which they feel will grow and produce more... I do not agree with this. Our ideas don't belong to that school of thought. We want to go about it differently. But I know him (the Chairman) for a long time. I know what he expects in a presentation. I know how to phrase it. Plus you all had also told me what had transpired in the previous meeting. What I did was to turn the whole thing around! We didn't have any real solutions or ideas. But then neither did he

4.6 The Temporality of *Jugar* and *Jugarus*.

To be quite honest, Lall's answer to my question was not something I did not expect. My throwing back his question at him was, if I may say so, a bit of an ethnographical *jugar* on my part. Indeed, having been intimately involved with the with all the strategizing, politicking, maneuvering, what I have called the "messiness," that was playing itself out in the project so far, had given me a bit of a hang on *jugar*. I say this not simply to reiterate the claim that *jugar* has much to do with strategizing and maneuvering. Debashish, as we saw, had already made that point. I say this because being involved in all the strategizing and maneuvering reveals that element of *jugar* which I had earlier called its central distinguishing feature with respect to the claims to design; its temporality. Let me explain.

If, as I have argued, that design's orientation is always towards a future that will be, then *jugar's* is towards the now; what do we do *now* that we find ourselves

here (I shall have more to say about this-finding-ourselves-here soon since it too is crucial in understanding *jugar*). And If design in its aim, to create this future-that-will-be turns the present under the horizon of the calendrical code of History, into units that are distinct from each other and unfolding one after the other (the True Present, mentioned in the last chapter), in *jugar* what gets erased are those distinctions in which time appears as discrete units. In the now of *jugar* what gets illuminated is the multiplicity of the present, the indistinctiveness of each moment from the next. It allows for the possibility that present time is always and already populated with other times. It signals, however “momentarily,” of the Bergsonian *duree*, or what Dipesh Chakrabarty has more recently called, following Heidegger, “the heterotemporality of the now.”⁴⁶ That is, a now, a present that, unlike the “True Present” of Modernity crucial to the architect-subject, is fundamentally not a “present” that is understood as a future-in-potentia, or even as a totality.

A quick look at Lall’s answer to me seems to confirm all of this. What is it that allows him to do what he claims is *jugar*? As he tells us, it is that, “I [Mr. Lall] have known him [the chairperson] *for a long time*...I know what he expects in a presentation” [emphasis added]. In other words, what Mr. Lall tells us is that, populating the now, the time of *jugar* is, in fact, another time; the “long time(s) of them knowing each other.” Yet, as we see, this is not the only (other) “time” that is present in the now of *jugar*. The “moment” of *jugar* also has with(in) it, the time of Lall talking to Jasbir. Thus the time of his “talking to Jasbir is” also present. Incidentally, since Jasbir talked about what happened the “last time,” even the “last time” is there with(in) the time of *jugar*. There is also with(in) this “time,” the “time”

⁴⁶ Henri Bergson and Frank Lubecki Pogson, *Time and Free Will; an Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness* (London, New York,: G. Allen & Unwin; Humanities Press, 1971). See also, Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe : Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, Princeton Studies in Culture/Power/History (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000)., Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (New York,: Harper, 1962).

of his talking to Arunava, who also told him about “last time.” I could go on indefinitely. But the point here is that already we see the “heterotemporal now,” that is a now which is neither a totality nor a singularity. It has the distant “past,” recent “past,” mediated “past,” memories, etc. all rolled into one, all bleeding into each other. In many ways then, the claims to *jugar* and *jugaru*, as a claim to being [with(in)] this (heterotemporal) time, is not unlike, what the sociologist Loic Wacquant says of boxers (being) in the ring boxing, which

“...erases the scholastic distinction between the intentional, the rational and the emotional, the corporeal and the mental...[whose action] stamped by the responsiveness and who he notes, make, “synoptic judgments, stamped by responsiveness and flexibility, *made in and for the moment*, informed by an embodied pugilistic sensitivity...” [Emphasis Added].⁴⁷

It is also not unlike “bricolage” and the “bricoleur,” Levi-Strauss talks about in terms of myths and mythical thought, where the latter

“...builds up structured sets, not directly with other structured sets but by using the remains and debris of events: in French ‘*des bribe et des morceaux*’, or odds and ends in

English...by using things that may always come in handy...”⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Loïc J. D. Wacquant, *Body & Soul : Notebooks of an Apprentice Boxer* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), p.45. Hugh Brody makes a similar claim about the activity of hunting performed by the Athabaskan Eskimos of the Canadian Northwest. Of the hunters he says, “To make a good, wise, sensitive hunting choice is to accept the interconnectedness of all possible factors, and avoids the mistake of seeking rationally to focus on any one consideration that is held as primary. What is more the decision is taken in the doing; there is no step or pause between theory and practice. As a consequence, the decision---like the action from which it is inseparable---is always alterable (and therefore may not properly even be termed a decision).” See, Hugh Brody, *Maps and Dreams* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982).

⁴⁸ Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), pg, 22. However there is an important way my articulation of *jugar* differs from Levi-Strauss’ formulation of bricolage. According to Levi-Strauss, “bricolage” represents, and is, a parallel to the mode of thinking that we know as science and technological thinking. The problem with such a formulation is two-folded. On the one hand, it leaves the impression that the trajectory of scientific thinking has developed autonomously. On the other hand, then bricolage and such like are left to occupy position or

Indeed, we saw Badri making, almost verbatim, the same observation in our discussion about his toys when I mention that he is good with m-seal.. As he replies he is “handy” with a lot of things. Furthermore, he also tells us, these things, that he is handy with, they are “basically junk,” a coconut shell he has found lying about, peanut shells that would otherwise be tossed into the garbage, thumb pins moth balls; all “debris’ and remains of events.

There is also something else that Badri says in the discussion that reveals a further distinction between claims to *jugar and jugarus*, and the claims to design and architect; a distinction that is not unrelated to this issue of being [with(in)] this (heterotemporal) time. Unlike the architect whose claims to design the way he does because it is he who is witness to what is happening, that is, he claims himself as the source of design, the source of his *jugar*, as Badri informs, is that drawer in which he keeps all the junk, or his friend Dhruvajyoti who had, incredibly, been thinking of the “just same thing” as Badri was pondering over how to solve the riddle of the retracting legs of the tortoise. In placing the “source” of creativity “outside” of the *jugaru*, the temporality of *jugar* also pulls into question the distinction between the self and others. Indeed, it question the claims of the architect to be a catalyst, which as the word tellingly implies, means that it is the architect who is the active agent whereas the rest of the world is merely inert until such time (the True Present, one might add) that the architect comes along to activate it.

In locating the source of creativity in a drawer, what Badri seems to be telling us about the now of *jugar* is that (with)in it, everything is interconnected. That the *jugaru* is not some unified singular subjectivity who is at a remove from the world but always already a hybrid entity where there are not distinctions between an “inanimate”

autochthony and or ab-originality. As should be apparent from my reading, *jugar* is what often makes science occur, makes design happen.

drawer and an “animate” *jugaru*. In this sense, Badri also seems to also telling us that the world, unlike in the claims of the architect, is not inert but always and already meaningful, or as he puts it, “mysterious” and that what the *jugaru* does is attempt at uncovering/ disclosing the some of these mysteries.

Something similar was also claimed by Ganju in the same conversation where he was telling me about the 1:1:1 experiment at TVB,

Christopher Alexander has written this magnum opus...what does he call it...I can't remember because it's all wrong...he calls it...the nature of order... and I wish to tell him... that what I am going to write...subtitle it... "the order of nature" ... *nature has an incredible order*... you have to decipher it...if you do that... the entire secrets of the universe are unlocked...what is the universe...it is only nature... if you discover the order...you do not give it order...it has its own order...*you are part of that order (laughs)*... *how can one write the nature of order*...order for him is guiding principle... and it will have a nature ... nature is borne out of order...*what rubbish*... *nature is nature*... and if you as a human being can discover order in that nature...then you are talking... rest is just fooling...*he [human being] is never at the center.*

In reading the above comments by Ganju, I would just substitute “order” by “meaning.”

Indeed, such a world, which is already meaningful prior to the architect, a world where the architect is also always and already enmeshed in meanings that exceed him, or a world in which the meanings produced by architects is just one of the many possible meanings was something that was also made clear to me during two others moments (of *jugar*) during my fieldwork. The first was when I met up with Lall, some six months after the Khirki Village project had been concluded. As we travelled the newly made Delhi Metro together, I casually asked him how was the

project going, were we ready to begin working. He candidly replied, "...nothing at all, look that was merely an exercise...there is a huge gap between what we think will happen and what happens.... It's not so simple... there are just too many things that happen simultaneously... too many interests and parties' involved when even one action in a small part of a city is concerned."

The second moment was one of our first interactions with the RWA. After preliminary introductions and a first round of talks in which the residents put forward their concerns regarding the state of development of Khirki, the talks turned to the incredulous building bye-laws of Delhi and earlier experiences of dealing with architects. It was at this time, that Rana, a great *jugaru*, if there was ever one, told us this following story,

Kuch saal pehle ki baat hai...aisa hua ki gaon mein kuch kaam chal raha tha...mein bhi usme involve tha...kisi ne jakar DDA ke architect se complain kar diya...jisne hume phoran notice bhej diya...hum subko... kuch chaubis log the...hum turant ja pahuche DDA ke durbar mein...chaubiso...architect sahib, ek Mr. Chaturvedi the...jub unhone humari toli dekhi...voh chadh padhe...kehne lage, 'tum sub ke ghar tor diye jatyenge' ...humne kaha kyu...humare ghar kyun thore jayenge...humne kya gunah kiya hai...koi notice nahi tha..kuch nahi tha. Veh bole, 'sub kuch humare file mein hai.' Lekin hum sub hile nahin , to unhone kahan accha baad mein aana.

Us shaam mein apne ek dost se mila jo architect sahab ko jaana tha and usko yeh baat samjhae...mera dost meri taraf dekhta hai...aur bola... 'kya tum yeh suit pahan kar milne gaye the' ...maine kahan haan. Voh hasne lag gaya...mein samajh gaya. Agli baar jub mein architect sahib ke paas gaya, mein ek phata pura kurta pehen kar pahuch gaya... pehle wala suit nahi pehna tha maine. Aur jaise hi maine unko dekha, mein haath jodh kar khara hogaya, aur

bola... Chaturvedi sahib chaabi aapke haath mein hai... aap humare annadaata ho... sub kuch ho... maaro... peeto... jo jee mein aaye kar lo... lekin itna yaad rakho... aap rakshak ho... aur jo rakshak hota hai... voh kabhi bhakshak nahi ho sakta hai. Yeh baat uske samajh mein aagayi... aur usne bola theek hai...

(A few years ago what happened was that some people in the village were doing some construction... at that time I was also affected. Someone complained to the architect of the DDA who sent a notice to everyone... all twenty four of us... immediately we reached the *darbar* (court) of DDA... all of us... the architect was one Mr. Chaturvedi... he was handling our case. When he saw our band of people he got extremely angry... he immediately said... 'all your houses will be demolished'... I said... why... why will our houses be demolished... what crime have we committed... there was no notice... nothing. He replied saying everything is in our files... Yet we refused to budge. So he said well come back later.

Later that evening... I met a friend of mine... who knew this architect and explained the situation to him... my friend asked me... did you wear this suit and meet him.. I said yes... I did... so he said... oh ok... and smiled... I immediately understood. When I met the architect the next time... I wore a torn suit... I did not wear the earlier suit... I wore a torn Kurta Pyajama⁴⁹ and went. And as soon as I saw the architect I folded my hands and said, Mr Chaturvedi... you are the person who holds the key... you are our *annadata* (provider of food)... you are our everything... hit us... scold us... do whatever you want... but do remember you are a *rakshak* (protector)... and one who is a *rakshak*... he can never be a *bhakshak* (devourer)... this he understood and he said fine...

⁴⁹ A kurta and pyajama is a traditional garment common to northern India.

Rana's story is interesting at several levels. But mainly, I wish to interpret it as giving us a glimpse into a world where the architect is enmeshed in a web of meanings that far exceeds those sanctioned by the discourse of design and architect, and those that exist prior to the architect being the subject who gives meaning. His story, as I see it, is itself divided into two parts. In the first part, Rana's interaction with Chaturvedi, the representative of the state and architectural expert seems to be guided through the idioms of design, of architect, of citizen-subject within a liberal democratic order, and of modernity. That is to say Rana approaches the latter together with all the rights, obligations, and expectations that seem to undergird a political order in which the citizen, expert and state are to engage in free exchange with each other. Much to his chagrin he realizes that this does not work.

In the second part of the story, the situation is completely changed. Rana no longer has the suit. And this time his presence in front of the state and the expert is guided by a completely different idiom. Right at the outset he folds his hands and calls the architect, his *annadaata*. Though literally translated as provider of food, the term *annadaata* is usually used to refer to either god, the ultimate provider or to the "father" who provides for one's family. To drive home this point, Mr. Rana now beseeches his *annadaata*, saying, "[h]it us or scold us, but do remember that you are a protector and one who is a protector cannot be a destroyer..." As Rana tells us this finally makes sense to Chaturvedi. What I wish to highlight here is that in the second idiom through which both Mr. Rana and the expert make sense to each other has none of the obligations rights and duties characteristic of a liberal democratic order. To be sure the exchange is still unequal but it is routed through a completely different idiom in which neither the expertise of the architect nor the trapping of citizen-subject as envisaged by advanced liberal forms of governance exist.

There is also another issue that needs to be underscored here; this being the context within which Rana tells the story. To whom does Rana tell this story? As I mentioned earlier, he tells this story not to anybody but rather to a team of architect-experts who have come Khirki Village. And as “architects” they have come to “redevelop” the village, act as “catalysts” that will “animate” this village that has putatively remained “inert” for a thousand years. What made this story and its telling at that time fascinating was that though we walked in with precisely such “presuppositions,” I do remember us walking out feeling slightly different; not so much as “experts” who give Khirki its meaning(s) but as people who found themselves ensnared within its meanings. This was also pointed out to me by Lall, as we took a walk around the village after this meeting,

There is not much we can do here is it...I mean look at these houses...do you see how they have made them...all quite beautiful...yes it may seem jarring to “our” eyes...but it works doesn’t it...works quite well I would say...

4.7 The Liminality of *Jugar*.

Oh my God! Why do you keep asking us about expertise...we are not experts Jaideep...

Chandkiran Nath, final year student TVB.

I had begun this moment with two questions in mind. The first interested in querying the meanings of what they do, of (them)self, and of others that emerge in the articulations of the claims to *jugar* and being a *jugaru*. As I have tried to show, these pronouncements are quite antithetical to those that emerge in the claims to design and the architect. This is not surprising; as we have seen *jugar* invokes a temporality that in its orientation is radically different from that of design and architect. However, in highlighting this antithetical orientation, I hope, I have not inadvertently made a claim that the assertions to *jugar* signify a space which is distinct from the space of design

and the architect, or that the articulation of *jugar* are restricted to one group of architects and not another. In that case, *jugar*, would lie, as it were, outside of the space of a putative national architectural culture in India⁵⁰ To make such a claim would not only be to reify this cultural space but also, more importantly, belie the claims to *jugar* where what seems to get articulated is precisely the absence of such totalizing categories, such as inside and outside, self and others, and so on.

To the contrary, though the claims to *jugar* force us to reckon, in the articulations of “difference,” the limits, an “outside,” as it were, of a “coherent national architectural culture” that the terms architects and design continually attempt to engender, they also compels us to reckon, that this, “outside,” is also simultaneously an “inside.” Recall here all the heterogeneous tensions which constitute how architects view *jugar*. The point to note, as I had mentioned, is that in spite of the heterogeneity of sentiments, it is after all “architects” who are making such comments. Such “outside-insiderness” is even evident from the fact that it was Tapan who, in the last chapter, was claiming about the architect being a catalyst and it was Tapan who also claims that all of design and design studio is about *jugar*. The same goes for Menon who blamed *jugar* and the *jugaru* attitude for much of what is problematic of the “culture” of architecture in India, and who categorically refused the “History” of architecture, the narrative of architect and design as a western master narrative which attempts to subsume the Indian architect and architecture into it continuously. This is also true of Ganju who, though so committed to the bringing in another idiom into the space of design and architect, when I asked him if architects were supposed to be thinkers also said,

⁵⁰ For a claim of this kind, that is, in which the space of craftiness, skillfulness, *métier* lies “outside” the space of design thinking see, Scott, *Seeing Like a State : How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. pp. 309-340. I see my reading of *jugar* as a critique of Scott’s argument.

Yes... you see because you say the architect of the nation...*he is not a mistry (artisan) of the nation...* this is the difference... there is a difference... I am talking about artisans *mistry*... so of course... that's very important... what else do we do [other than thinking]... so you know... you have architects of a particular situation...not of a building only... architects for anything... in the software industry...we have the architecture of a software...[Emphasis added].

Indeed, when I started my fieldwork such “contradictions,” that seemed to manifest themselves in all architects I met, frustrated me to no end. I would see it, as it is wont in much of the social sciences, as an ideological ploy, false consciousness, at best or just plain ineptness, at worst. To be sure there is a bit of that. Yet, as time passed, what I also realized was that perhaps the issue was not so much them but rather my continually trying to fit them within a whole. For it is only when one has a “projections” of a whole can contradictions (within the whole) appear. Indeed, this fitting them into a whole then also signals my bringing a temporality that continually places me ahead of the place from where architects and design pronounce the future that will be. In other words, it returns me to the temporality of design. That, however, is something which, as we have seen, the articulations of the claims to *jugar* caution against doing.

It is also here then within the articulations of *jugar* one can then begin to sense an outline of the second questions I asked; what do these articulations of *jugar* imply for the meanings about what they do, about (them)self, and about others, as articulated in their claims to design and being an architect. What it implies is a split in the very being of architects in India, their expertise and “culture.” *Jugar* implies liminality, not so much in the sense of a transitional space.⁵¹

⁵¹ See, Victor Turner, "Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period in *Rites De Passage*," in *The Forest of Symbols* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967). pp. 93-111. According to Turner, liminality is an “interstructural situation,” that is if society is understood as “structure of position” then liminality is the

It is a liminality that is present within “stable” spaces and thus always turning that stability, or articulations of stability, whether this be that of a nationally coherent architecture-culture, or of design, inside out, outside in. It implies, in the last analysis, that not only *jugar and jugarus* but also architects and design cannot be seen through a singular lens; whether this be history, modernity, that is, any singularity.

space that occupies the space of transition between those structural position. As should be clear from my argument, my use of liminality is a critique of the Turnerian argument of liminality. It draws more Homi bhabha's reformulation of the notion of liminality, see for example, Bhabha, "Dissemination." pp. 199-244.

5.0 CONCLUSION

This work began with a simple question; what does it mean to be an architect in postcolonial India. As it has demonstrated through a (re)presentation of three moments, this question of the meaning of the being of architects in India today permits no easy answers. At one moment, this is a meaning whose horizon is coterminous with the domain of the Architects Act. And, as we have seen this domain is itself a “project” that projects ahead of all “architects” in India an imagination of the architect-self, and of architecture in which the architect is known to be an entity who is “different” yet more totalizing and primordial than the engineer and planner in terms of the vision, scope and expertise, s/he brings to the nation. Furthermore, as we also saw, this is an imagination that emerges through careful (re)grafting of the “natural” affinities between the discourse of Modernism in architecture as well as the Nehruvian state-centered developmentalist discourse of independent India.

At another moment, the question of the meaning of the being of architects in India today reveals the being of architects in their self-proclaimed expertise design. Through an analysis of the architectural jury, architectural representation as well as their everyday stories that architects tell about themselves, the study demonstrated how this Moment of Design, is always orientated towards a linear temporality, which (re)produces the “world” in its image. Concurrently, what we see is the (re)production of the architect self as subject endowed with a historical consciousness who continually projects and creates a future-that-will-be, through a super visionary ability to see the present, the “now.” As this work also demonstrated there is much dialogical interface between this meaning of design and the meaning of the architect within that “project” of the Architects Act. This is not altogether surprising, since, as we had seen

in the moment of the architect, the essence of this domain is beforehand projected through the figure of the architect.

Yet, as this work has consistently suggested, these two moments of meaning(s) of the question of being of architects in India today are never without unintended and unforeseen consequences. That these meaning(s) are never really autonomous. That, the figure of the architect finds itself continually affected by the very projections that seek to create its autonomy. Consequently there is a great deal of ambivalence that the social agents, who embody these meaning(s), and whose activities project these meanings, have towards these very moments of the meanings of being of architects.

It is precisely one such moment of ambivalent meaning which the study (re)presents in the third moment of the meaning of being of architects.¹ In this sense, if the two earlier moments traced what can be called the space of a putatively coherent national architectural culture in India today through the agency of certain social agents who claim and produce for themselves the title architect and the expertise, design, this moment then pursued (an)other sign on which these agents lay a claim, and through which they articulate themselves, their expertise and their field. This is the Hindi-Urdu word *jugar*, which roughly speaking, translates as, a way (out), a device, to assess, and to maneuver. Being from Delhi myself, I was very much aware that *jugar* and its synonyms, *tarkeeb*, *upay* (strategy, strategic), *thor* (to break), are words that have much currency in Delhi, and the northern parts of India. Yet what grabbed my attention is the special affinity many “architects” claim they have for this word, so much so, that they would constantly assert that *jugar* is what architects are experts at

¹ I must stress that *jugar* is only one such moment of ambivalence. There are many others this work could have emphasized, such as *vastu shastra* and *sthpalya kala* both of which exist simultaneous to “architecture” as “traditional” knowledge(s) of building in India. Indeed, the question of *sthpalya kala* is integrally tied to the question of architects in India as the Hindi version of the Architects Act is called *Sthapatya Kala Vidhayak* (legislation). And what is ironical is that that practitioners of “sthpalya kala” are not allowed to register under this Act. My reason to focus on *jugar*, as mentioned earlier, is that *jugar*, unlike the other two, is an “otherness” that architects themselves claim as part of their being.

and that architects are the greatest *jugarus* (those who do *jugar*). It is these claim(s) that the moment traced.

As this work argued in the Moment of *Jugar*, the claims to *jugar* and being *jugaru* reveal, as it were, radically different imaginations of selfhood, of expertise and the world of those agents who claim that they are architects. Through this the work argued, that this moment presents, as it were, a limit to this “nationally coherent culture of architecture and architects” that the two earlier moments attempt to continually produce. Yet as the work also argued this limit, is not an “outside” but rather an inside, as it is fundamentally the same agents who claim that they are architects who also claim that they are *jugarus* and that what they are “experts” at is *jugar*. Thus, the moment of *jugar*, this study argued overturns the two earlier moments of the meaning of being an architect by splitting the subjectivity, the expertise, and the imagination of (about) architects in India and denying any singular answer to the question of the meaning of being of architects.

This multiple, fragmentary meaning of the being of architects, a doubling of itself upon itself, if you will, has many implications for the, broadly identified, larger concerns that motivate this work. Indeed, throughout the chapters, they have remained very much the (back)ground from wherein this work has worked to show the processual, fragmented, negotiated, (re)produced and (re)presented meaning of the being of architects in postcolonial India. Here I want to briefly lay out the implications for three such interrelated domains which concern this work directly. These are the question of educating architects in India today, the question of expertise, expert-identity and nationalism in non-western postcolonial nations and finally the question of writing history(s) of architecture. Let me begin with the first.

As would be evident from the discussions in this work, especially in the Moment of Design and the section outlining the workshop architectural education in

the Moment of the Architect, the emphasis of the official education of architects in India today remains firmly grounded within the historicist discourse of design and concomitant figure of the architect. Indeed, this entrenchment remains in spite of the best efforts of an institute such as TVB or even the rapidly changing contexts of practice in India.² Consequently, a place like TVB has found itself, over the two decades of its existence, continually attacked by the Council of Architecture and also succumbing, internally, to this normative notion of the architect.³ In fact, prior to my leaving the field Menon circulated amongst the faculty members a particular position paper in which he not only articulated how according to him TVB's core mission had, in fact, regressed but also urged the present faculty to articulate in their own words how they would like to revive the engagement, through their teaching, with alternative modalities of the identity of architects in India.

In one way the vice-like grip of design is not surprising. As I have elaborated in this work and elsewhere, the historicism underpinning design far outstrips the specific domain of architects in India.⁴ In fact, it also undergirds ideals of planning, progress and development all of which have become, so to speak, what Gramsci calls the 'common-sense' of a society.⁵ That is, these principles are at once an indelible part

² For example, the General Agreement for Trade in Services (GATS) which now allows much greater exchange in terms of architectural services between nations.

³ TVB had to shut its door in June of 2007. The immediate reason for this closure was that it was built on land which had been deemed according to the Delhi Master Plan as agricultural land. Given the executive order by the Supreme Court of India to demolish all such violating properties, TVB decided to shut down its operations. However, as I was told by the grapevine, this was just the official reason. The 'real' reason why TVB was especially targeted was that certain powerful interests which had been gunning for its closure since the early nineties had finally managed to find this loophole and used this opportune time to bring to the notice of the Delhi Municipal Authorities that TVB was a violator of the Court's Orders. Indeed, what is ironical is that subsequently the Delhi Government did manage to procure a stay order against the directive of the Supreme Court in case of educational institutions, but by then it was too late. TVB had already closed down.

⁴ Jaideep Chatterjee, "Best Laid Plan(s) of Mice and Men": Modernity and Design(s) in (Post)Colonial Times," in *Modern Makeovers: The Oxford Handbook of Modernity in South Asia*, ed. Saurabh Dube and Ishita Bannerjee-Dube (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, Forthcoming).

⁵ Antonio Gramsci, Quintin Hoare, and Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci* (New York: International Publishers, 1999). Gramsci uses the term common sense to mean the uncritical and largely unconscious way of perceiving and understanding the world that has

of the “worldview” *and* integral to the external and internal constitution of the modern Indian nation, its subjects, and its claims to modernity, to the constitution of the national self. Architects in India, as I have shown, negotiated this space rather skillfully, and fashioned, within it, a domain for themselves and their work, thus their continued subject(ion) to it is hardly surprising. Moreover, there is also perhaps something to be said for claims made by architects on behalf of design that it as a form of knowledge enables one to see, have a vision, for a “future.” And that, in this sense, design is that central idea from which springs forth the formal manifestations of things.

Yet at the same time this acute emphasis on design, which banishes, at least from the official discourse and the education of architects “other” parallel and existent idioms such as *jugar*, has had much detrimental effect. It has not only not recognized, as one architect, and friend remarked, that the brilliance of architects is that they are the greatest *jugarus* (those who do *jugar*) but also failed to see that in spite of claims to universality, scientificity, rigor and formality, attending design (whether as idea, a form of knowledge, or design-on-paper or design-as-built) at every instance is *jugar*; in other words design’s “Other.” It has, I will argue, fundamentally misunderstood design itself and continues to limit the horizon of possibilities of architects in India.

It is also this issue of the presence of multiple idioms within questions of expert identity and expertise that brings me to the second domain concerning this work; the questions of expertise, expert-identity, nationalism and the state within postcolonial nations. Scholarly investigation in this domain has primarily elaborated

become “common” in any given epoch. This understanding of “common” sense corresponds quite fittingly to what this paper argues is the status of design within certain sections of Indian populace. For these sections, mostly urban, well to do and educated in private schools, design is at once associated with rationality and with good taste. Planning, (a synonym of design) thanks to India’s “Five Year Plan” style of development is far more in common usage, and has covered much more ground.

itself along two related trajectories. On the one hand, it is argued how the Indian state, prior to independence and immediately after, was brought about in the services of universalized knowledge. As the social theorist Ashis Nandy has eloquently argued, Science (and technology) *was* a reason for state.⁶ A somewhat similar claim also undergirds Partha Chatterjee's arguments about interrelationships between planning as a modality of knowledge, nationalists as intellectuals and the Indian state which we encountered earlier (see chapter two). As Chatterjee argues, for the nationalist elite, the true value of the sovereign state of India was that it was a *historically necessary condition* for the *development* of the nation. And that,

“...a developmental ideology then was a constituent part of the self-definition of the postcolonial state. The state was connected to the people-nation not simply through procedural forms of representative government, it also acquired its representativeness by directing a programme of economic development on behalf of the nation.”⁷

On the other hand, developing Foucauldian ideas of governmentality, scholars have more recently claimed that the postcolonial Indian state itself performs as an expert organization.⁸ That is, that state functions as an expert body in processes of recognition, certification and accreditation of various categories, tribes, castes etc.⁹

⁶ Ashis Nandy, *Science, Hegemony and Violence : A Requiem for Modernity*, Oxford India Paperbacks (Tokyo, Japan Delhi: United Nations University; Oxford University Press, 1990).p. 4. See also S. Irfan Habib and Dhruv Raina, *Social History of Science in Colonial India*, Oxford in India Readings. Themes in Indian History (New Delhi ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007)., and Dhruv Raina, *Images and Contexts : The Historiography of Science and Modernity in India* (New Delhi New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).

⁷ Partha Chatterjee, "Development Planning and Indian State," in *The State and Development Planning in India*, ed. T. J. Byres (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994).pp.51-72. See also, Sudipta Kaviraj, *The Unhappy Consciousness : Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay and the Formation of Nationalist Discourse in India*, Soas Studies in South Asia (Delhi ; New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

⁸ For the concept of governmentality see Michel Foucault et al., *The Foucault Effect : Studies in Governmentality : With Two Lectures by and an Interview with Michael Foucault* (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991).

⁹ Nicholas B. Dirks, *Castes of Mind : Colonialism and the Making of Modern India* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001). See also Townsend C. Middleton, "Anthropo-Logics: Paradigms of Modern Identity.," in *Modern Makeovers: The Oxford Handbook of Modernity in South Asia*, ed.

And that this role of the state has only accelerated in the past two decades within the opening up the Indian economy, where the state as an expert organization and a possessor of expert knowledge is in services global economic formations and capital.

Both, as this work shows, are true to a certain degree are far as architects in India are concerned. At one level, as I have argued the main reason why architects in India were able to get recognition for themselves was because their demand was itself couched in a language of global and universal ideas of history, progress, development, and expertise that the Indian state itself espoused. In this sense architects in India can be seen as belonging to the line of nationalist intellectuals/statesmen of India for whom the state was a reason for universalized ideas of knowledge which would bring about social justice and equality. Indeed, architects themselves fashioned and often took on such a mantle. Recall here their demands to Mehr Chand Khanna to be included in the Planning Commission of India, or recall Bhalla's pride at Nehru being called the *architect* of Modern India.

At another level, as I have also shown, the formation of the Council of Architecture itself signaled a kind of hybrid entity in which the architect became, as it were, an arm of the state. Indeed, much of the day to day activities of the Council is a kind of a bureaucratic policing of its constituent-subjects; architects. Recall here how Vijay Sohoni, the president of the Council reacted when someone announced that the Indian Institute of Planners was threatening legal action against the Council in lieu of the latter's predatory tendencies. Or when someone suggested that the Council should limit itself to broad and generic guidelines only and not present such detailed and restrictive recommendations in the minimum standards for architectural education. In both cases what is noteworthy is that his answers emphasized how the Council, *being*

Saurabh and Ishita Bannerjee-Dube Dube (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, Forthcoming); Bernard S. Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge : The British in India*, Princeton Studies in Culture/Power/History (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996).

a statutory body, has to act. Undergirding such a sensibility is precisely the fluid and overlapping boundaries, indeed the hybridity, of architects and the postcolonial state.

Furthermore, with the “liberalization, privatization and globalization” of the Indian economy, architects as we have seen very much functioned as expert agents of the state in the services of a neoliberal agenda. What else was the Khirki Village project if not such an exercise? Recall here the entire language and discourse of the project. How it centered on urban villages as being places defined by a lack; a lack of sanitation, lack of development, lack of image worth of the twenty-first century India which is now a player in global politics and economics. Recall here also this project itself was a part of the Bhagidari Scheme which sought to recast citizens as equal partners in the enterprise of remaking one’s environs.

Yet there is also something else which this work says in terms of the questions of expertise, expert-identity, nationalism and the state within postcolonial nations. Pertinent though these two related trajectories of analyzing the interfaces of expertise, experts and nation-states have been, they make few assumptions which this study argues against. These are firstly, that expertise and experts are homogenized entities, and secondly, that the fundamental idiom governing the relationship between experts and expertise is one of utility. That is, expertise stands as a fully formed tool which experts (whether individually or collectively) summon at will.

In terms of the former, as is clearly shown by the deliberations between the design group working in situ at Khirki and the group of experts at the DUAC, there is much difference, indeed discord, between experts as to what comprises expertise and its politics. Recall here Arunava’s exasperation at what transpired in the first meeting between us and the members of the DUAC. According to him, they had already decided what Khirki should be, they had decided its future and that the entire exercise was a mere smokescreen for an exercise of power. He, and even Lall, did not

subscribe to such an idea of expertise as an authoritative pronouncement or experts as authors. Arunava even removed himself from the project for this very reason.

The latter issue, that is, the assumption the governing idiom between experts and expertise is one of utility, I will argue, fundamentally mischaracterizes the relation between experts and the world in which they exist. It assumes that expertise is somehow brought to bear upon a world that has been encountered prior to expertise which an expert has. Yet as I argued in third chapter, this is not the case. The distinction of the moment of design is that in the moment of elaboration of design as a form of expertise (within the jury) is also precisely that moment in which the world comes to be in a particular manner and it is in that moment of the coming to be of the world in a particular manner that one also comes to be an architect. It is as the philosopher Martin Heidegger has argued in terms of the act of interpretation,

In interpreting, we do not, so to speak through a ‘signification’ over some naked thing which is present-at-hand, we do not stick a value over it; but when something within-the-world is encountered as such, the thing in question already has an involvement which is disclosed in our understanding of the world, and this involvement is one which gets laid out by interpretation.¹⁰

I would just replace the pronoun “we” and “our” in the above paragraph by “experts” and “their” respectively.

This question of interpretation and expertise also brings me to a domain indeed, to one which performs as my own domain of expertise; the issue of writing histories of architecture, which as I outlined in the introduction was a central to this work.

The term architecture, in the phrase, history of architecture, has a very curious status. It serves, in this placement, on the one hand, as a predicative term which

¹⁰ Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (New York,: Harper, 1962).p. 190.

qualifies the subject history. Thus, in this sense, what we mean when we say architecture is a qualification as to what kind of history we have in mind when we use the phrase history of architecture. Yet on the other hand, insofar as it does so, that is, insofar, as the term architecture qualifies the kind of history we are looking at, it simultaneously assumes, and becomes, as it were, subjectivity, a subject, “architecture” *of which* one is now telling a/the history.

This particular indeterminacy to the term architecture, as both predicate *and* subject is neither co-incidental nor unique. In fact, one could argue that this is a generality present amongst all disciplines today, in which history, often as historiography, is what enables, (re)produces, propagates, and sustains disciplinary identity.¹¹ Yet there exists, within such an exercise, always a problem. How does one come to write a history that a) either progressively formative of the identity of a subject, b) or tells the history (as past) of a subject, if one does not already presuppose identity of the subject in one fashion or the other.

As I argued in the introduction, in case of architecture and architecture, the way out of this conundrum is supplied by a particular code of history itself, a historicist code which already contains within it, although veiled and veiling, a concept of identity (in this case of architects and architecture). Yet as this work has demonstrated throughout, there is nothing about the meaning of the being of architects and architecture that is already contained in the notion of history of architects and architecture (of India), if this history be understood as a linear unfolding of a singular meaning of the being of architects and architecture. Indeed, this is precisely the reason why the emphases on moments, which I will argue, exist simultaneously, neither as parts of some larger momentary whole, nor as side by side, or one after the other, as sequentially discrete units. Such a view of the moments would entail a return to the

¹¹ Robert S. Nelson, "The Map of Art History," *The Art Bulletin* 79, no. 1 (March 1997).

historicist attitude. Indeed, the moments that this study puts forth exist much like the heterotemporal now of *jugar* itself. They exist *all together all at once* and they do not add up to a whole.

To argue for this simultaneity and interpenetration of moments is not to relapse into some highly relativistic universe in which there is no possibility of knowledge of the meaning of being of architects and architecture. Clearly that is not the intention. It would render this work pointless. In the same vein it is not to call for a radical debunking of all historiographical inquiry into architects and architecture, whether in India or elsewhere. In that sense, it is not to proclaim the demise of history and (of)architecture. As sign(s), history and architects are both, like many other sign(s) pointed out by scholars writing from within and about postcoloniality have argued, quite essential to a secular and universal vision of the human, a vision that has been powerful in its effects to provide a strong base from which to erect critiques of socially unjust practices or avoid marginalization.¹²

This is especially true of architects and architecture in India. As we saw in the Moment of Architect, it is precisely this vision of equality (to engineers and planners) that is at work when we saw architects “project” an ontological singularity, that is their social difference (from engineers and planners), of the meaning of their being in the image of the universal architect. And, as we also saw, it is this vision, both enabled by, and enabling a historicist consciousness, that is at work when architects claimed, in the Moment of Design, to be able to penetrate through the everyday to see the

¹² See for example, the category of the “political” in Ranajit Guha’s *Dominance without hegemony*. Ranajit Guha, *Dominance without Hegemony : History and Power in Colonial India* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997). See also, the argument regarding “*divyadhristi*,” and its relation to imagination made by Dipesh Chakrabarty. Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe : Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, Princeton Studies in Culture/Power/History (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000),pp. 149-179.

“actual” processes that make up society, and thus reiterate their claims to an “identity” that is distinct from the “others.”

Yet, at the same time, what is also noteworthy, as the architects in this work show us, is that engaging such a vision also simultaneously and necessarily demands its own critique, and indeed, the critique of one’s own vision. This is especially so because accepting this historicist vision in toto, that is completely conflating the question of the meaning of the being of architect in India today with this historicist vision would also mean, ironically, giving up a distinctive identity of architects in India. Consequently they [the architects] continually articulate *jugar* as a limit to the articulation of the moment of the architect and the moment of design, as both beyond and within the knowledge of the meaning of being of “architects” in India today.

“History of architecture” I would argue has much to learn from such a double move. On the one hand, it too cannot give up its historiographical impetus, its secularizing mission, and its aspirations to a kind of universalism. At the same time however, the question of writing “history of architecture” also cannot fail to articulate the limits of its code by ignoring the liminality, both of its “objects,” and most importantly, of its “self.” For, to ignore this is not only to risk obliterating those it “studies” but also perhaps itself.

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