Aydelott Travel Award 2024

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MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE,
ART AND DESIGN

Te Wharehou o Waikaremoana by Tennent Brown Architects in Gisborne, New Zealand

Cholets by Freddy Mamani in La Paz, Bolivia

Sami Parliament Building by Stein Halvorsen, Christian Sunby in Karasjok, Norway

Okinawa Prefectural Museum by Ishimoto Architectural & Engineering Firm in Naha, Okinawa, Japan

Yuria Sloane is a first-generation Okinawan American from Charleston, South Carolina. She is currently a fourth-year architecture student at Mississippi State University. During her undergraduate career, she has been lucky enough to work with fellow Hispanic students on the Latinx Architecture exhibition, a yearly collaborative effort that highlights Latinx architects and architecture all over the world. Her architectural path at MSU has led her to pursue research into vernacular architecture, focusing on the process of creating non-performative, culturally effective architecture that uplifts the communities in which they reside. At the end of her third year at MSU she received the Aydelott Travel Award as well as the Third-Year Faculty Book award. Yuria is also a member of the Alpha Rho Chi fraternity and resides on the executive board. She has had the opportunity to intern for two Summers at the McMillan Pazdan Smith, one of the larger commercial firms in Charleston, SC. After obtaining her bachelor's degree, Yuria hopes to work in designing productive, culturally specific, community spaces and continuing her research into indigenous methods and forms. She would like to focus her work into uplifting fellow indigenous architects.

“Disruptive Architecture:

The role of architecture in the liberation of

Indigenous communities around the world.”

“Colonialism” is not a term unknown to the general public, but the lens through which colonialism is discussed can vary dependent on the speaker. For some, colonialism is defined as “an act of transferring the population to a new place and living there as they used to live in their original place, preserving their culture of origin and obedience”.[1] With this definition, it seems that the people who are most affected by the colonization itself are removed from the narrative. In the context of this research, colonialism will be defined as the act of transferring a population to a presently inhabited place and attempting to live as they used to in their original place, directly contributing to the forced assimilation of the current population. This architectural research explores the effects of colonialism that continue to affect the indigenous communities of today, whether they are classified as post- colonial[2] or otherwise. Concurrent to this line of thinking is the role of architecture in colonialism. Exploring the ways that colonial architecture is effectively an expression of power, wealth, and status.[3] When we think of colonial oppression, we are presented with how many indigenous people are killed, but this essay is also focused on the affects to the living. There is nothing that governs so essentially the way that people live as architecture. With this in mind, we ask, how did the fundamental transformation of the spaces/

environments in which people were allowed to live contribute to the decline of indigenous groups? On the other hand, it is important to also analyze how architecture could serve as a tool of liberation, how do we use contemporary architecture to empower indigenous communities and disrupt modern colonialism? The following four case studies are exemplifying the power of architecture to disrupt oppressive colonial legacies in Indigenous communities around the world:

1. The first case study is **Te Wharehou o Waikaremoana**, built by Tennent Brown Architects, replacing the former Māori Architect designed visitor center of Lake Waikaremoana.

2. The second case study is the **Cholets**, designed and built by Freddy Mamani, housing the new growing middle class of the indigenous Aymara in El Alto, Bolivia.
3. The third case study is the **Sami Parliament building**, built in collaboration with the government of Norway to create a permanent governmental presence for Sami people across the Sápmi.
4. The fourth and final case study is the **Okinawa Prefectural Museum**, creating a space to display the history and art of Okinawans following the devastating effects of WWII.

To begin to understand these buildings we must anatomize the circumstances of their creation as well as the intentions of their design regarding form, program, organization, material, etc. These can be explored both politically and socially. The social influences of these buildings are especially important due to the nature of the circumstances in which we are discussing them.

A critical component of this research is the social interaction between building and the community that uses it. The significance of a building to the culture and community of a group cannot be examined through photographs alone. It must be experienced and documented first-hand to deeply analyze the opportunities it creates as well as obstacles it faces when attempting to integrate Indigenous culture with modern forms of aesthetics and construction techniques. The true effects of oppressions are also not able to be grasped through statistics and photographic analysis, but through immersive interaction and connection. The site of each of these buildings is also crucial to informing the design decisions that led to the final product of each building. Information accessibility is another prevalent obstacle that arose during my remote research of these buildings. Even in disregarding language barriers that often deter some from learning in depth about foreign topics, subject matter involving indigenous groups are often overlooked or dismissed. The opportunity to highlight marginalized communities must be done thoroughly and respectfully, especially when it is one of few representations available.

[1] Fauziya Isa et al., "The Architecture of Colonialism," *Civil Engineering and Architecture* 10, no. 3A (May 2022): 118–25, https://doi.org/10.13189/cea.2022.101315. 118.

[2] "The elimination of colonial administrations amounted to the decolonization of the world." Anders Burman, "Colonialism in Context An Aymara Reassessment of 'Colonialism', 'Coloniality' and the 'Postcolonial World' ," essay, in Kult..A.Postcolonial.Special.Issues.Series, vol. 6, Epistemologies of Transformation: The Latin American Decolonial Option and Its Ramifications (Berkley, CA: University of Gothenburg, 2009), 117–29, https://www.academia.edu/6828794/Colonialism_in_Context_An_Aymara_Reassessment_of_Colonialism_Coloniality_and_the_Postcolonial_World_.

[3] Fauziya Isa et al., "The Architecture of Colonialism,". 118.

Māori Land and Architecture

The history of the Māori people is not unlike many others. European settlers "discovered" the islands that are now known as New Zealand and took over its native people, sparking century long conflicts within both Māori tribes and between tribes and settlers. But to begin the history of a culture at its lowest point does a disservice to us as well as the Māori people. We must start at the beginning.

Māori History

Kupe is the legendary Polynesian explorer who discovered and named the islands of Aotearoa. Historically, the Polynesian people have shown to be vast explorers of the Pacific, connecting people from Hawaii to Samoa, including New Zealand. The exact dates and events of Kupe's discovery varies among different tribes and sources, but he is generally said to have arrived in Aotearoa around 1000 years ago. His discovery led to a mass migration of his people from Hawaiki, the origins of the ancestral Māori.[1] Upon arrival to the islands, Polynesian explorers began with settlements along the coasts or rivers, eventually moving further inland as agricultural technologies advanced. Hunting differed based on where tribes were located, some heavily dependent on shellfish while others went after moa, large flightless birds. Trade was a major element of inter and intra tribal interactions. Oral history was how culture was passed from generation to generation. Community was also a primary value across all Māori tribes. An effect on one of the groups was an effect on the whole. In pre-colonial Māori culture, architecture

could be described as a distinctly different realm of creation than what is created by European settlers, and what we may understand today as architecture. For the Māori people, buildings are not something that is just spoken about, but spoken to. They are participants in the rituals and day to day practices of the tribe. They are seen not as objects we create to represent or honor ancestors, but as the ancestors themselves.[2]

Figure 1: Marae in Auckland NZ. *Source: Author*

This deeply connected, emotionally explosive approach to architecture is a concept that the European colonizers were not able to grasp. For Māori communities, architecture they create are people. The carvings and colors, the placement of posts and walls, all of these are pieces of their ancestors. It is a completely different view of functionality from how we are taught from the Eurocentric perspective.

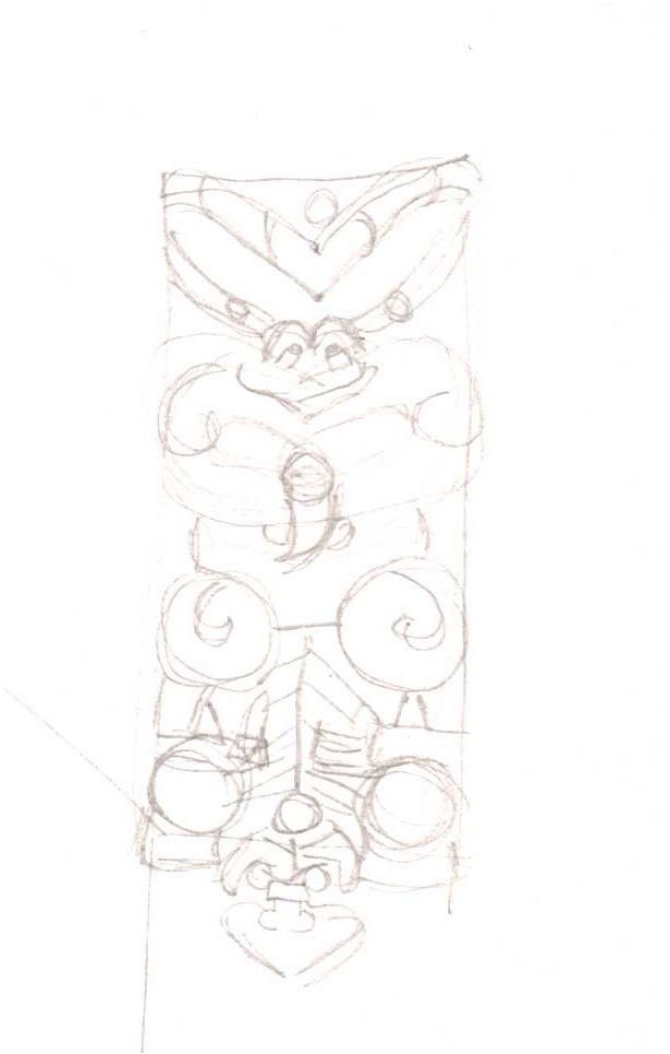

Figure 2: Marae (Pou Pou) Pencil Sketch. *Source: Author*[3]

Western understanding of functionality is created only to incorporate the people of the living, physical realm. This creates a

disconnect between generations of people. We see this in the modern western architecture, as described by Michael Linzey,

> "… the principle of functionality is no longer seen as a positive and sufficient attribute of modern architecture but is felt instead in terms of an absence or a lamentable loss, a setting aside of the traditional mytho-poetic dimensions" (50).[4]

Unlike Māori architecture, where buildings represent humans, in the modern western cannon there is a void of ancestral tradition and connection to the people that they host.

Marae

The most well-known building type that most clearly represents this idea of architecture as a person is the Marae. A Marae is a fenced complex of carved buildings that belongs to the community in which they reside (Fig 3). Meetings, celebrations, funerals and other important tribal events are held in and around the Marae.[5] They provide power and preserve history of whakapapa (genealogy).[6]

Figure 3: Huria Marae, Tauranga, New Zealand[7]*.* *Source: Author*

The functionality of each architectural element of a Marae is to contribute to the whole of an ancestor. At the foremost plane of a Marae is the Koruru, a carving, at the apex of the gable, of the ancestor connection in the building.

Figure 4: Sketch of Marae Carving, Color Pencil. *Source: Author*

On the same plane is the Raparapa, an extension of the gable past the walls are the of the ancestor, the outstretched arms and fingers welcoming those who approach. On the actual plane of entrance into the Marae are the door and window, the mouth and eye

of the ancestor respectively. Moving to the interior, the ridge beam and rafters, the spine and ribs of the ancestor, are wrapped in colorful carvings of humanistic or mythological forms or painted with swirling traditional patterns. The central interior post is the hearth or heart of the ancestor, around which tribe members will gather.[8] The interior walls are lined with Pou Pou, intricately carved boards depicting the ancestor and their stories.[9] All of these elements are as essential to the building's personhood as an arm, leg, or head is to a human. Marae have been adapted during the time of colonization, mainly regarding materiality, but the essential personhood and intent of the building has stayed the same. Although this perseverance is notable, the Marae, and all Māori architecture of the contemporary age in Aotearoa has been touched by the effects of colonization.

Age of Colonization

The British arrived in Aotearoa at what is now known as the city of Tauranga, North Island on October 9, 1769. The information gathered by British explorer James Cook was taken back to his homeland and dispersed among the English elite, eager to learn of faraway lands during their revered age of enlightenment. This sparked further interest in Aotearoa and led to its eventual colonization. Cooks first accounts of the Māori people described them as "strong, rawboned, well-made, active people" going on to say, "they seem to enjoy a good state of health, and many of them live to a good old age".[10] This objectifying praise foreshadows the view of the Māori people as a threat as well as a usable resource.

Christian missionary work in Aotearoa began in 1814. Schools and mission stations were established throughout the islands to spread Christian ideals and message to the polytheistic Māori. Initially many Māori were interested in the benefits that learning to read and write from missionaries provided. Some Māori children had to travel long distances to attend these schools, opting to create their own in their communities. The evolution of these schools eventually led to the involvement of the Crown. Māori children began to be restricted from speaking the Māori language, contributing to their forced assimilation.[11] The treaty of Waitangi was a treaty between some Māori tribes and the Crown. This incited a period of violent interwars between neighboring Māori tribes. Fueled by new weapons technology and modes of transport brought by the British.[12]

Musket Wars

The musket wars were a result of the introduction of muskets to the Māori people. Intertribal violence escalated and the survival of a tribe could depend solely on the acquisition of these European weapons. Tens of thousands of Māori were killed in these wars during the 1810s-1830s. Land boundaries were drastically changed during this time of major tribal overturn. Newly deserted lands also freed up space for white settlers, leaving complicated discussions of land ownership. Land was often put under the control of the Crown who then sold it to settlers at a large profit.[13]

The Treaty of Waitangi was signed in 1840 by representatives of Queen Victoria and over 500 Māori chiefs representing tribes

throughout the country. It was meant to bring an end to the intertribal wars and establish the British law and government in Aotearoa. The major problem with the treaty of Waitangi is a debated inconsistency between the English and Māori translations of the document. It is believed that the English translation of the treaty states that sovereignty was surrendered to queen Victoria and her crown. The Māori translation is said to uphold the chiefship of Aotearoa to the Māori. In the Mid 1840s violence broke out between the Māori and their settlers known as Pakeha over the authority and ownership of large amounts of land. In the 1860's conflict grew as British settlers continued their efforts to grow their population and control over these lands. In the end, the Māori population as a whole lost millions of acres of land as a result of confiscation and influence from new government institutions like the "Native land court", which was created to facilitate the sale of land by assigning land to named individuals.[14]

Post Treaty of Waitangi

From the 1840s to the 1870s, there was a major effort by European settlers to take control of more land on the North Island to accommodate the rapidly growing population. During this time many Māori people died resisting this expansion. Many fought to contest the resulting aftermath of the signing the Treaty of Waitangi with many who still had control of their land losing interest in selling land to the British.[15]

New Zealand Wars

This series of wars began in the mid-1840s. The major cause of these disputes was land sovereignty between British settlers and Māori tribes. Major battles happened in Kororareka, Bay of islands, wellington, and Whanganui. In the 1860s the longest and most widespread conflict occurred between the British government and the Kīngitanga (the Māori king movement). During the 1870s the major fighting parties were the British government and their Māori allies against followers of prophetic Māori leaders. After these prolonged periods of conflict, there was major land confiscation by the British powers leading to prolonged tensions and peaceful protests by the previously mentioned prophetic Māori leaders. In the 1890s, some of the last major confrontations of these wars occurred. Members of the Ngai Tuhoe were arrested for opposing the surveying of Te Urewera in what Māori politician, Apirana Ngati, described as a small war. In 1916, two Tuhoe men were killed by New Zealand police in a conflict caused by the arrest of Rua Kenana[16], a prophetic leader in Te Urewera.[17]

Māori people were heavily affected by disease brought by the European settlers. In the early 1900's, the total Maori population fell to an estimated fewer than 50,000 people. From this period of threatened extinction, some of the greatest Māori leaders were produced.[18]

As white settlers invaded the lands that the Māori guarded, colonial settlements were built. With them they brought European architecture. Dwellings and government buildings were copy and pasted

to recreate the familiar conditions of their homeland.[19] Some Māori people were interested in these building techniques, taking them to apply to their own homes and religious buildings, as seen in the previously mentioned Marae.

What is Contemporary Māori architecture?

The integration of indigenous architecture is often superficial. Plastering symbols and elements onto buildings constructed, approached, and spatially organized in the western cannon. The standardization of creating these so-called indigenous representations reveals a lack of understanding of the values of who the buildings are created for. In the case of the contemporary Māori, cursory recreations of the Marae, Māori meeting houses, are often heavily referenced. In doing this, their begins to be a homogenization of what is considered Māori architecture, stunting exploration into spaces and symbols that would genuinely connect to the Māori people.[20]

Land plays a substantial role in the physical and spiritual customs of Māori culture. The landscape is treated as an ancestor. It is seen as a type of creator from which a Māori person is able to identify and explore their history and origins. The landscape is an encompassment of who a people are, it is 'all'.[21]

Figure 5: Model Recreation of traditional Māori Village. Source: Author

In opposition to what is typically understood as a western ideal, Māori culture heavily emphasizes the concept of community. Within this concept is the significance of the manner in which the people of a location interact with the land itself. They are understood as protectors of the space they inhabit. Beginning much earlier, the non-monetary value of land to the Māori is similar to the introduction of national parks in the United States, although

not controlled by a large governing body.[22]

What is difficult in the discussion today of creating genuine Māori architecture is the integration of these holistic traditional land values into a setting that now contains a deep history of development by the colonizing power. These colonizing groups containing people who were not consciously active in the oppression of the minority Māori population but still collaterally benefited from the injustice Māori faced. To begin a process of healing and reparations there must first be a movement of education to inform what cross cultural application could be and how it must be approached to ensure it is done correctly. Only after that middle ground is reached can we truly reflect on a respectful exploration of Māori architecture that does not infantilize its deep, cultural history.[23]

Māori architecture is also acutely tied to spirituality. We are able to examine the relevance of land and its spiritual links through the Māori creation story.[24]

In the Māori culture, the creation of the world and the Māori people begins with Ranginui, the sky father, and Papataunuku, the earth mother. Rangi and Papa were known as lovers in an embrace but their children forced them apart to create space and light for the creation of the world.[25] [26]

Tribal identification through land is then the origins of lineage and knowledge. Māori knowledge of the land and its workings provides a vast understanding of what can and should be done in reference to site and climate and material. The disregard by colonial

powers is rooted in racism and superiority, hindering the creation of efficient and effective building in Aotearoa. Pride is the downfall of sustainability and longevity.[27]

Māori Land Court/ Native Land Act

The most apparent manifestations of British colonial power in Aotearoa are the Native Land acts and the subsequent Māori Land Court. After the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, British powers began buying Māori land for low prices, offering the prospect of higher land value through the settlement of Europeans and selling them for multiples of what they paid to wealthy European settlers. When accusations of injustice were brought up, the judge, jury, executioner, and defendant were all under the same organization or were the organization itself. In 1862, objections to this system eventually became overwhelming and the first iteration of the Native Land Act was created. This act enacted a major assimilative event. The goal was to create a culture of individuality that fundamentally opposes traditional Māori society. This application of British governmental values was meant to create a system of efficiency that is heavily tied to western societal ideals. If created a system that more easily defined what British colonizers viewed as wasted land that could then be sold for profit. In 1865, the second Native Land Act was implemented. This act was even more unmistakable as being introduced to force/ encourage Māori to abandon their customs and absorb the values of the Crown. During the next five years, warfare ensued, and with it came the conversion of almost all Māori land

practices. The community values of Māori society were seen as the major obstruction keeping them from achieving civilization. Created in 1865, the Māori Land court was tasked with quickly and quietly depriving Māori of their land. Within the Court, a system was created that assigned Māori advisors to the European judges who presided over all land proceedings. These advisors were often not used in practice. Along with the 1865 Native land act and the forced individualization of Māori land ownership, a rule was put into place limiting the ownership of a land to only 10 people, who were not trustees of the land but absolute owners. This led to some tribes having leaders who used this to exploit many in their tribe in the hopes of gaining riches. Court proceedings also began to take a financial toll on Māori who had no choice but to contest stolen land, request to have their surveyed, or wanted to do anything through this newly made system. Many Māori were forced into selling land and taking loans just to use the system imposed upon them. Either that or face legal consequences. In the 1873 Native Land Act, it acknowledged the inability of many Māori to afford surveys of their land in pursuit of a land title while also refusing to pay for surveys done by the government that were not conducted up to standard. Māori land fragmentation continued into the late 1800’s but it was not seen as holistically negative in the eyes of some Māori. Because the land organization procedural process created by the European government was successful in its tedium, it’s also slowed the ability of the British to comprehensively alienate the

Māori people.[28] A small consolation in the ongoing injustice.

Figure 6: Map of New Zealand *Source: First Light Travel*

Into the contemporary era, there have been many attempts of reconciliation between the New Zealand government and the whole of the Māori people. In 2014, a historic win by the Tuhoe tribe has set a precedent for the return of land all over New Zealand. Te Urewera was formerly a national park, under the ownership of the New Zealand government. It is known for its camping, walking trails, and Lake Waikaremoana. For the Tuhoe nation, the return of this land is incredibly important. Similarly to the Māori concept of architecture being a not representative as people but people themselves, the Tuhoe nation views Te Urewera as entity of itself. In return of Te Urewera, personhood was granted to the land. Not only is it a win for the Māori people politically, it is the return of a family member, not one who was not only physically stolen but spiritually.[29]

Te Wharehou o Waikaremoana Analysis

Te Wharehou o Waikaremoana is a project designed by Wellington based firm Tennent Brown Architects.

Figure 7: Ext. Te Wharehou o Waikaremoana. Source: Author

It is a collaboration between the local Maori tribe, Ngai Tuhoe, and the Gisborne Department of Conservation. The building is located in Te Urewera. Te Urewera is an example of land recently returned to Māori protection. In 2014, through negation with the Crown, Te Urewera was released from its title as a National Park and recognized as an entity with its own identity and personhood under the guardianship of the Tuhoe people.

Figure 8: Lake Waikaremoana *Source: Author*

Nestled in the mountains of Te Urewera, Te Wharehou o Waikaremoana was built to create a dual function administrative space for the Ngai Tuhoe as well as a visitor center for the Great Walk, a series of camping and hiking trails.

Figure 9: Te Wharehou o Waikaremoana Site Plan Source: architectureNZ

One of the larger cities closest to Te Wharehou o Waikaremoana is the city of Gisborne. From Gisborne the drive is about two hours, passing through large pastures of cows and sheep. Highways signs are written in Te reo Māori, giving the names of the land as the Māori know them. As the mountains approach, the roads become narrow and winding. Tree breaks reveal steep drops and views of the trees far below. Pavement becomes dirt, service becomes sparse.

Figure 10: Cow *Source: Author*

Te Wharehou is not widely advertised in the efforts of the Tuhoe to preserve the land. The approach to the building on the site is limited, partially as a result of vegetation but also due to the intentionality of the architects in the design.

Figure 11: Model of Te Wharehou o Waikaremoana *Source: Author*

Formally, Te Wharehou references the sandstone of the nearby Onepoto Bay. The bowed roof is indicative of this, speaking to emphasize the horizontality of the building. This bowing is also a representative continuum of the basin in which the lake resides. Precast rectangular elements act as visual posts, holding up the roof basin. These post figures are over-clad with burnt timber. This creates a stark black against the light gray pre-cast concrete and metallic wayfinding elements. This cladding is also repeated throughout the design, at times wrapping the walls of the central form.

Figure 12: Burnt Timber Cladding *Source: Author*

Figure 13: Exterior Burnt Timber Cladding Source: Author

The burning of the timber is representative of the ‘ahi ka’, or the home fires of occupation. The Ahi Ka is a traditional Māori practice of laying claim to by way of occupation. This reference to Ahi Ka symbolizes the Tuhoe taking back guardianship of Te Urewera from its Pakeha subjugators. From the roof, exposed cables collect falling rainwater. Following the rainfall down the cables draws the viewers eyes to the stones from Lake Waikaremoana and to the adjacent lake. Emphasizing the connection between land and structure. The rain seen on the cables also give reference to a name given to Te Urewera, “land of the mist”.

Figure 14: Water Collecting Steel Cables *Source: Author*

The extended roof and large windows on the North, East, and West sides create a transitional space, blending the barriers between the outside and inside. This is another method of connecting the building

inhabitants to nature in which they reside.

Figure 15: Exterior Walkway *Source: Author*

Figure 16: Exterior Patio *Source: Author*

Large amounts of light are able to illuminate the main open area of the building, due to the floor to ceiling windows. A small fireplace is used to heat the building during the mild winters. Behind the fireplace is a wall constructed using earthen bricks from the local tribe. The structure of the building is a majority mass timber pillars.

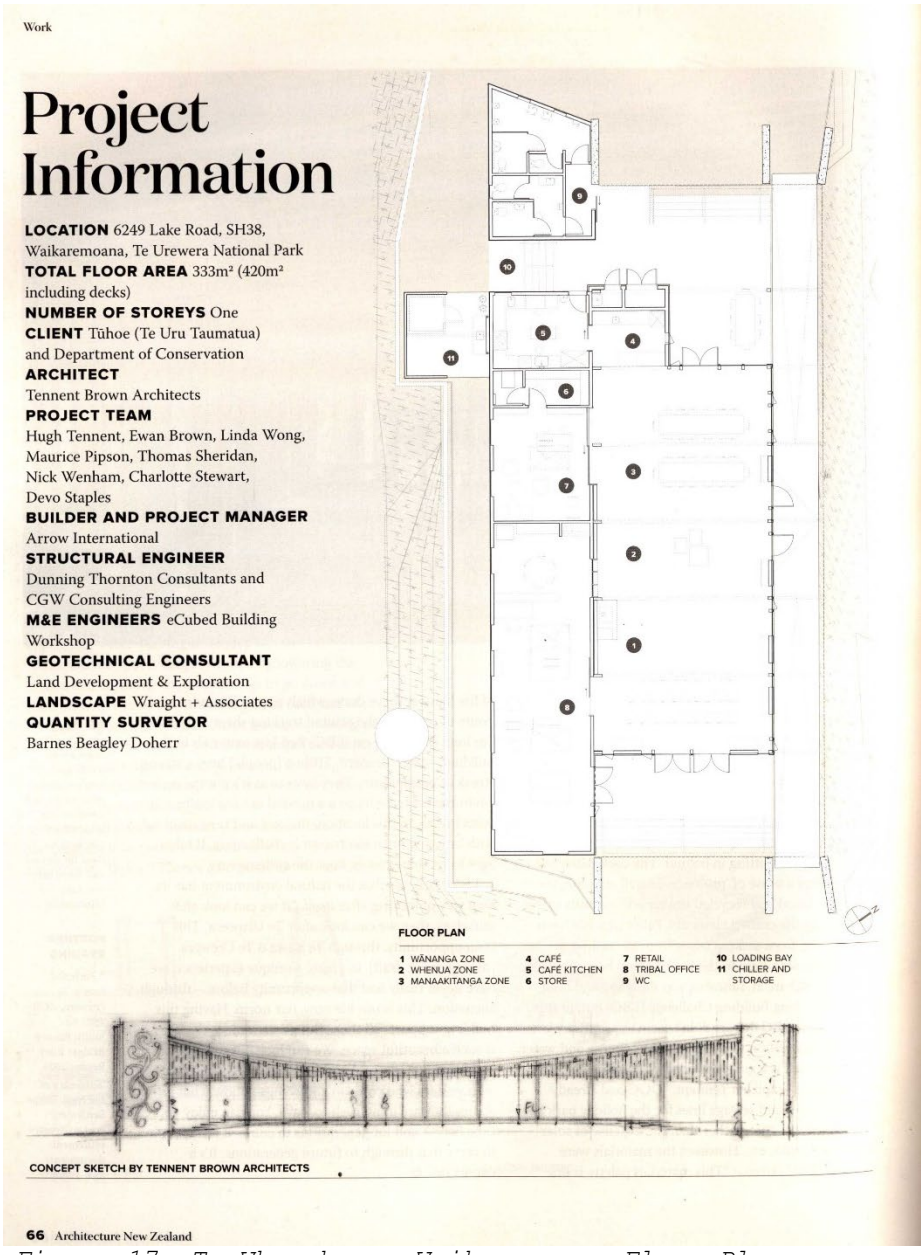

Figure 17: Te Wharehou o Waikaremoana Floor Plan

Source: architectureNZ

Figure 18: Interior *Source: Author*

Figure 19: Interior *Source: Author*

When looking at Te Wharehou o Waikaremoana through the lens of architecture as a person with its elements being functional and ornamental at the same time, it is interesting to explore its successes, failures, and intent. In this instance, the typical Marae will be used as a "pure" representation of traditional Māori architecture. Both Te Wharehou and Marae are places for a tribe to gather and discuss matters of tribal administration. Although Te Wharehou has another use as well. Its service as a welcome center for all visitors of the Great Walk in Te Urewera portrays the communal comportment that is so engrained in the culture of the Māori people, while representing the looming presence of the colonizers in Aotearoa in stride. As discussed previously, a major point of contention between the Māori people and European colonizers is the guardianship of land, ownership in the eyes of the Crown. The Marae is also used frequently in welcoming and accepting guests, but entirely on the terms of the reigning Iwi (tribe). The level of control of the land that the Māori guard is the glaring difference between the intent and effect of these two buildings.

It seems that the climate of the contemporary architectural profession has leaned so far into westernization and universalization that one could never return to a pure traditional state of architecture that solely serves the culture of the Māori people. While this sentiment may be disheartening, what matters is looking forward to developing a new concept of Māori architecture that serves the growing Māori of today. At the point of development in Aotearoa, without some major event, it is not possible to fully extract the

effects of colonization of the Māori people and cultures. What IS possible is to return the favor of exploitation done by European colonizers by using their developed technologies and resources to build up the Māori people across Aotearoa.

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[1] New Zealand Ministry for Culture and Heritage Te Manatu Taonga, "Pre-European Society," Te Ara Encyclopedia of New Zealand – Te Ara Encyclopedia of New Zealand, March 13, 2023, https://teara.govt.nz/en/maori/page-2.

[2] Michael Linzey, "Speaking To and Talking About: Māori architecture". 49.

[3] Marae from the Auckland Museum in Auckland Museum. Photos are not permitted within Marae without explicit permission.

[4] Linzey. "Māori Architecture".50.

[5] "Māori Bulidings: The Marae," Māori Education, accessed December 15, 2024, https://maorieducation.co.nz/marae.

[6] Mulholland, Malcom, and Robyn Bargh, *Marae*, 52.

[7] Taken with permission from Sylvia Willison, Chief Executive Officer of Huria Management Trust.

[8] Yuria Sloane and Guide, Wharekarewa Maori Village Tour, personal, June 8, 2024.

[9] Linzey. "Māori Architecture". 51.

[10] Barnes and McCreanor, Colonisation, 20-22.

[11] New Zealand Ministry for Culture and Heritage Te Manatu Taonga, "The Native Schools System, 1867 to 1969," Te Ara Encyclopedia of New Zealand – Te Ara Encyclopedia of New Zealand, September 18, 2021, https://teara.govt.nz/en/maori-education-matauranga/page-3.

[12] Barnes and McCreanor, Colonisation, 20-22.

[13] "New Zealand's 19th-Century Wars"

[14] "Wellington and Whanganui Wars, 1846–1848"

[15] "New Zealand's 19th-Century Wars"

[16] "New Zealand Wars overview"

[17] "Rua Kēnana Hepetipa: Biography"

[18] "The Arrival of Europeans"

[19] Barnes and McCreanor, Colonisation, 20-22.

[20] Akiwa Ngati, "Te Anga Horanuku" (Masters of Landscape architecture School of Architecture and Design, Victoria Universitry of Wellington, 2021), .30

[21] Akiwa Ngati, "Te Anga Horanuku".31.

[22] Akiwa Ngati, "Te Anga Horanuku".32.

[23] Akiwa Ngati, "Te Anga Horanuku".32.

[24] Akiwa Ngati, "Te Anga Horanuku".31.

[25] Mulholland, Malcom, and Robyn Bargh, *Marae*, 48. Papataunuku is characterized as the earth, an ancient fertile woman who gives life and is life itself. There is not a separation between the creation that is land and the creation that is the Māori people. It is all of the same origin.

[26] Akiwa Ngati, "Te Anga Horanuku".33.

[27] Akiwa Ngati, "Te Anga Horanuku".34.

[28] 1. Bryan D. Gilling, "The Maori Land Court in New Zealand: An Historical Overview," *The Maori Land Court in New Zealand: An Historical Overview* (1993).

[29] Natalie Middleton, "Meet Te Urewera, the New Zealand Rainforest That Has Legal Personhood - Orion Magazine," Orion: Nature and Culture, February 14, 2024, https://orionmagazine.org/article/te-urewera-rainforest-new-zealand-legal-entity/.

Building Aymaran Contemporary Architecture

The Aymara people find themselves in a situation familiar to nearly every other colonized population of the modern world. A position within a so-called “post-colonial world”. Referencing the sentiments of Anders Burman[1] in his text *Colonialism in Context: An Aymara Reassessment of 'Colonialism', 'Coloniality' and the 'Postcolonial World’*, that the Aymara population is not in a post-colonial modern environment in the way that the term is normally used in contemporary times. The Aymara are still in the presence of their colonizers in the form of descendants of colonial settlers who liberated themselves from the peninsular Spain, not for the benefit of all people in the colonized land but because they believed it was their own right to exploit the indigenous peoples. In the present, the presence of colonialism is apparent in the continued separation of class that goes hand in hand with the separation of race. Beyond the social class divisions lies the profound influence of Spanish religion[2] that has permeated the majority of Latin America. But even through the rampant workings of the Spanish colonizers to suppress the Aymara culture and spirit, the Aymaran people have shown great resiliency from the early 1400’s, beginning with Incan occupation, into the contemporary period.

Figure 1: View of La Paz from Teleférico. *Source: Author*

Bolivia is considered one of the most "indigenous" modern countries in Latin America. The country is decidedly heterogenous with a minority of the population being Spanish monolingual.[3] Many pre-colonial languages are spoken, the most common being Aymara. Even some lesser-known pre-Incan languages are spoken today. Bolivia's current culture and way of living is an indivisible mixture of postcolonial and indigenous lifestyles.

The arrival of man in the Andean region is said to date back 12,000 years. In those settlements, populations were typically seminomadic with hunter and gatherer tendencies.[4] The two major civilizations of the Andean highlands were centralized to two cities

known as Wari and Tiwanaku.[5] While both employed highly skilled techniques of terrace farming into their respective societies, in the end, neither could overcome the extreme lengths of dry weather they ended up facing. While not developed to the extents of the well-known Aztec empire, they left behind cities with complex organization and infrastructure.[6] It is difficult to know to exact extents of the people and society of these ancient communities because of a lack of traditional written historic texts, but we are still able to infer through architectural ruins as well as physical artifacts.[7] Some Andean people used textiles as a way of conveying historical context and textiles are still important to the Aymara people of today.

Figure 2: Photo of Tiahuanaco. *Source: Library of Congress*

The fall of the Tiahuanaco civilization around 1000 BCE is the most immediate predecessor to the Aymara kingdoms, whose development

marks a significant period in the history of Bolivia, the beginning of the existence of historic records.[8] The Aymara kingdom dominated the central highlands of Bolivia from the late 1200's up until the arrival of Spanish conquistadors in the 1500's. A drastic distinction brought upon by this new civilization was the distinction of sophistication between Aymara settlements comparatively to those of the Tiahuanaco.[9] There were seven Aymara nations, each typically being divided into two kingdoms with their own leader. These pre-Hispanic kingdoms had a complex amalgamation of corporate and class structures. There was a distinction between royal and commoner classes distributed based on family kinship and occupation.[10]

> "the whole system of vertical integration of micro ecological systems, based on the production of different crops and bound into a non-market economy through elaborate systems of kinship, exchange, and labor obligations, was fundamental in maintaining a powerful and economically vital society on the altiplano."[11]

The success of this civilization was so prevalent that entire gold and silver colonies were maintained by the people of the highlands, making the Aymara the leading producers of these precious metals in the Andes.[12] The Aymara were not alone on the altiplano.[13] A people known as the Uru also inhabited this Andean region. Even before the Incan and Spanish colonization. The relationship between the Uru and the Aymara is not precisely defined but it is speculated the Uru might have been part of a bigger civilization predating the Aymara, now falling under the rule of the Aymara kingdoms.[14]

Due to their economic prosperity and warlike aggression, the Aymara kingdoms continued to expand during the 1300's and 1400's. Eventually

the Aymara and Quechua, later known as the Inca, civilizations began to be in direct competition. During the mid-1460's the Inca were able to penetrate the Aymara kingdoms due to their inability to unite. If met with acceptance, the Inca did little to change the social, economic, and cultural way of life for the Aymara.[15] Some towns were destroyed entirely when showing resistance to these new rulers.[16] As one of many newly amassed civilizations under the umbrella of the Incan Empire, the Aymaran people were able to maintain a life fairly similar to pre-acquirement with the added benefits of extensive highway and warehouse systems.[17] New towns were built closer to the Incan Road system as well as a number of temples and storehouses.[18] These systems stored cloths and nonperishables to be distributed to nearby communities when needed. Although this newly built Incan architecture was derived from the preceding Wari and Tiwanaku cities, using some local materials and techniques, the Incans also worked to develop a distinct style of their own with a style of masonry familiarly known from Machu Picchu.[19] The intricate maze of roads built during this time allowed access from all parts of the empire to Cuzco, the Incas central city. The Incan empire, under which the Aymara remained, was able to develop greatly within the span of its couple hundred years of existence.

In the early 1530's, Spanish conquistadors arrived, seeming to the indigenous populations as just another overtaking entity, not dissimilar to the Incans who had just recently imposed their power. The allowance by the Incans for many acquired indigenous civilizations to keep their customs, languages, and religions, while humane in

nature, prevented a real sense of unity under the power of the empire. This separation allowed for internal tribes of the Incan Empire to be relatively easy to overthrow. Some tribes were promised the same treatment provided under the Incans to continue under the Spanish and willingly joined to avoid conflict. With the accompaniment of horses, metal weapons, and horses, the Spanish easily overtook attacking indigenous armies.[20] In some cases the Spaniards used their indigenous allies to create inter-tribal warfare, preventing many deaths of Spaniards at the hands of indigenous people.[21] When it became clear that the Spanish colonizers did not intend to treat the indigenous tribes fairly, there became a more unified antiwhite front, but by then it was too late.[22] Initially not of interest to the Spaniards, the antiplatino was eventually conquered in 1548, allowing for the establishment of the city of La Paz. La Paz became a center of commercial, shipment, and agricultural trades, and continues to be today.[23] The Law of the Indies is incredibly important to the intentions behind the Spanish colonization of much of the Americas.[24] Architecturally, this set of rules laid out an urban organization that was essentially replicated across Spanish America. The Spanish used grid like layouts vastly different from the traditional Aymara land distribution to control the Aymara people. Due to topographical difficulties in some Andean cities, the grids created distinct formal organization to adapt to the steep terrains.[25]

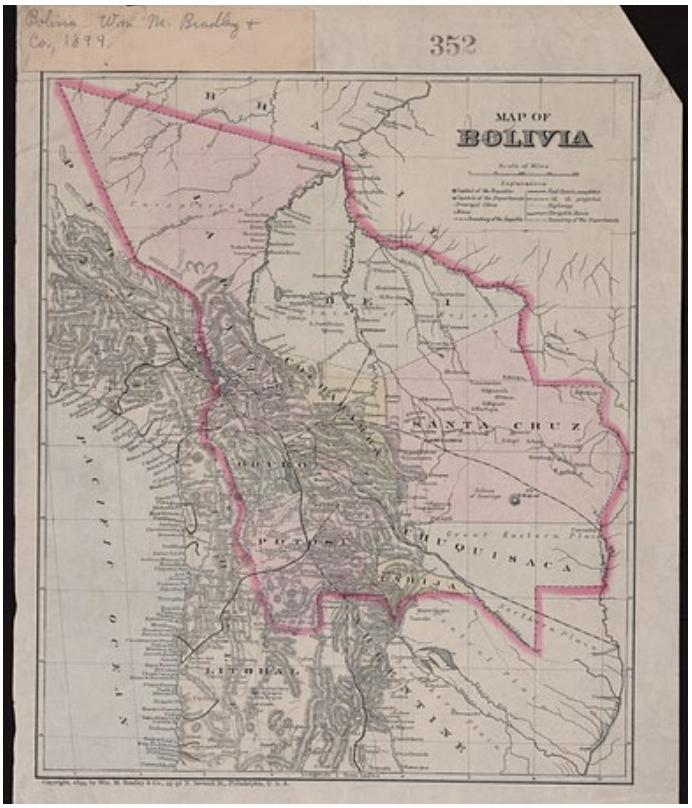

Figure 3: Map of Bolivia 1894. *Source: Public Domain*

The Laws also set rules and regulations meant to keep settlers from mistreating the indigenous people they encountered, stating that the Spanish transplants were required to ensure their physical and spiritual safety as well as use them in an economically efficient way.[26] This was an idealized version sent from the Spanish crown, feeding their mission to save the uncivilized indigenous peoples of the "New world". While obviously unpopular with the actual Spanish settlers, spiritual saving of the indigenous people was enforced by building churches and Cathedrals to encourage conversion to Catholicism.[27] Continuing into the 1570's, the Spanish began to become more established, requiring systems to be put into place to control the indigenous populations. The laws and customs of the indigenous peoples began to be fundamentally disrupted to serve the Spanish, with

the challenge of considering the decimation caused by Spanish brought diseases.[28] Eventually, fixed villages were founded with no regard to already established Allyu that distinguished the Andean people into groups. Ayllu are groups defined by kinship. They have continued into contemporary times, still prevalent but not limited to direct blood relation.[29] Allyu were forced to dissolve and reform into communities called *comunidad indigena*, rural Indigenous "suburbs", to be more easily taxed and controlled.[30] Many of these settlements were abandoned, with people fighting to stay with their Allyu.

Moving into the early 1600's the evangelization of the indigenous peoples was in full swing. Missionaries were working to translate texts of the Catholic church into indigenous languages, Aymara being one of them. With these efforts came the creation of Aymara grammar books and dictionaries.[31] Religious buildings and organizations began to be established in the altiplano to further the religious onslaught.[32] Although the evangelization of communities was widespread at a municipal scale, many local Aymara people scarcely saw the priests, allowing communities to maintain their traditional religious practices. Some indigenous populations even adopting the Virgin Mary as a symbol to call upon during conflicts against the Spaniards.[33] Continuing into the 1600's, secure frontier towns were created to prevent indigenous peoples from settling unwantedly. Creating a system of indirect rule among those not already in fully formed settlements.[34] The mid 1650's harbored a boom in the Aymara communities. Peasants from the highlands expanded, settling in the lowlands and continuing a

trend of racial mixing with African slaves brought by the Spanish. A population of monolingual black Aymara even appeared.[35]

Figure 4: Comunidad Educativa Sagrados Corazones, 1883.[36]

Source: Author

Figure 5: Centro Cultural Museo San Francisco, 1758.[37]

Source: Author

Major cities including La Paz experienced a financial boom in the late 1600's due to the production of foodstuffs and successful mining industries. This led to the construction of massive churches and cathedrals in these areas.[38] The architectural ideals brought by the Spaniards back in the early 1500's was heavily inspired by the Renaissance, looking to European techniques and standards of work. Over time, indigenous and mestizo[39], mixed race, artisans rose to challenge those artistic influences brought by the Spanish. These styles and techniques were able to develop because of the close nature in which the indigenous and cholo classes worked with the actual construction of these cathedrals of grandeur.[40] Because of the long period in which it took for one standard church to be created, Spanish architects would often start a project then move to another, leaving it under the management of an indigenous assistant, allowing for the creation and integration of the crillo style.[41] By the mid-1700's, La Paz had continued to grow, surpassing other major settlements due to a high population of indigenous peoples and their local market and production economies.[42] While many settlements were growing in these Spanish colonies, what was still pertinent was loyalty to the Crown of Spain. The burden of taxation became more apparent due to the increased growth in the population in rural areas, the reduced exploitation of indigenous groups, as well as the extension of taxes to all indigenous males no matter their land possession.[43] There was also the forced consumer interaction orchestrated by the Crown between Indigenous peoples and Spaniards to create more tax revenue to be sent to Spain. The indigenous groups, while submitting to these

transactions, grew their resentment for the Spanish colonizers and their rule of the land.[44] These resentments soon grew to a series of rebellions and attacks of the governing bodies in the America's during the late 1700's.[45] While not totally successful, the rebellions did significant damage to Spanish and their allied tribes.[46]

In the 1800's came the rise of revolutions around the world. Many colonies of Europe wished to be free of their rulers from across the world and beginning in North American, the American declaration of independence created a domino effect of English, French, and Spanish revolutions.[47] In 1809, the local authorities of La Paz were overtaken by the creole elite, declaring independence from Spain. While not initially echoed, this call for separation from the motherland set off what is to be known as the American Wars of Independence spanning from 1809 to 1825.[48] In mid-1825, the nation-state of Bolivia was officially declared, named after Simon Bolivar, a statesman who led revolts against the Spanish.[49] Many cities were affected by the fighting during the wars.[50] Post-"independence", the Bolivia economy and population were in a major depression. Populations were forced to return to much more rural conditions than when under Spanish colonial control. In reality, the separation of these lands into independent countries led to pervasive economic challenges plaguing many of these new countries for decades.[51] Within these new countries, those of indigenous descent, not included in the ideals of newly "freed" Spanish settlers, were often still pushed to the edges of cities. Aymaran communities returned to the familiarity of rural settlements. With the decline of national capital, local native populations found prosperity, growing

in population. La Paz became one of the most populous cities in Bolivia, containing a large population of Aymara people and focusing on farm communities.[52] While export markets declined, Native income began to grow. The Bolivian government eventually could not ignore the importance of the native people, including Aymara men in taxation groups. A dependency formed on the taxation of the Aymara people, bringing to attention their importance in Bolivian society.[53] In 1880, invasion by the nation of Chile as well as a dramatic shift to a seemingly viable republican government marked a new era of political normalcy until the early 1900s.[54] Following this era, power shifted back to the colonial descendants and land was once again split up and taken from the local farming communities.[55] In the 1920s, there were a series of revolts by the indigenous people of the area, leading to reconsiderations of native, labor, and women's rights among the stirrings of the introduction of Marxism into Bolivia.[56] In the mid-1900s, a revolution overthrowing the leading military regime led to universal increased rights of the Bolivian people and increased education for the indigenous peoples.[57] Throughout the rest of the 1900's Bolivia's government was thrown into turmoil, experiencing a series of short-lived coups and dealing with US interference.[58] The 1970's and 1980's saw a significant rise in collaboration between indigenous communities to find political power through labor union organizations.[59] Indigenous Bolivians continued to fight for political representation leading to the eventual election of the first indigenous President, Evo Morales.[60]

Contemporary discussions of architecture

Figure 6: View of soccer field from Teleférico. *Source: Author*

Figure 7: Shop Front in El Alto. *Source: Author*

Figure 8: Street View in El Alto. *Source: Author*

Figure 9: Shop Front in El Alto. *Source: Author*

Figure 10: View of La Paz from Teleférico. *Source: Author*

As the architectural communities of artistic superpowers like the USA, France and Germany grew more established in the late 1800's – early 1900's, exploration into historicism and indigenous architecture began to emerge into a more mainstream space. Some architects, notably Frank Llyod Wright, began to integrate the use of forms and symbols referencing indigenous motifs into his house projects. In the 1920's and 1930's, John Gaw Meem worked to approach indigenous architecture with an air of authenticity, striving for a truer representation of indigeneity. This is apparent when looking at his works on the campus of the University of New Mexico.[61] Architects in places with larger indigenous populations like Mexico and Peru worked with the revisitation to indigenous forms and cultures as a profoundly political step. This led to a rise in nationalist ideals, sometimes

based on romanticized depictions of these ancient civilizations. This movement was known as "indigenismo".[62] Continuing into the contemporary era, sentiments like those of Robin Wall Kimmerer, an American Patawatomi[63] environmentalist, are received as a calling path towards to future. Referenced in Fernando Lara's book of spatial theories, Kimmerer says,

> "The story of our relationship to the earth is written more truthfully on the land than on the page… Stories are among our most potent tools for restoring the land as well as our relationship to the land. We need to unearth the old stories that live in a place and begin to create new ones, for we are the story makers, not just storytellers."[64]

Stories we look to for answers on how to restore our relationship to the land we inhabit are not only important to see what was done right but was also done wrong. The emphasis on the importance of looking back on our ancestors is an valuable practice but it is important to take into account context of their conditions and look to apply our own contemporary context.

Figure 11: Indigenous Inspired Event Advertisement. *Source: Author*

Some direct descendent communities did not take interest in this movement because of the movement's roots in elitist idealism. While inaction was prevalent, some members of the indigenismo movement did work for social progression of many indigenous groups.[65] Another instance of the appropriative nature of some indigenismo architects were assertions that the assimilation of indigenous styles into universalism were necessary as a path to truly represent the nations.[66] This situation is incredibly nuanced. Because of the deeply intertwined nature of the contemporary communities that vary from country to country, city to city, a generalized approach cannot be applied. There is merit in looking at other cultures and drawing from modern advancements in technology, materiality, and even urban organization but I reject the notion that assimilation is necessary for advancement and progress. From that sentiment it must be discussed, what is advancement in a community regarding architecture? Is it based on production efficiency? Economic growth? Tourism? It seems contradictory to claim indigeneity as a source of exclusivity while simultaneously adhering to the mainstream ideals of the Western architecture community.

Figure 12: View of La Paz From Teleférico. *Source: Author*

Cholets Analysis:

Freddy Mamani's Cholets are a series of buildings designed and built by Mamani for the rising middle class of El Alto, Bolivia. He is the only architect of the four chosen buildings of this collection of essays[67] to represent indigenous architecture who is himself indigenous to the people for which he is designing. For this reason, it is important to look as deeply at who he is as an architect as we do his work. There is a connection that does not exist between the other architects and their buildings that is so deeply intertwined with the community it serves. Almost all indigenous cultures have an emphasis on connection to their ancestors and the people who built the space in which they inhabit. When an outside person makes an attempt to recreate this spiritual connection, no matter the amount of research,

community engagement, and good intentions, the same connection is not there. This is not to express that no designer should attempt to design for a culture that is not their own, or that great, efficient, emotionally powerful buildings have not been designed extra culturally, but there is a bond that come with indigeneity that cannot be created artificially.

Figure 13: Cholet Façade. *Source: Author*

Figure 14: Cholet Exterior, 2024. *Source: Author*

Figure 15: Cholet Façade. 2024. *Source: Author*

Freddy Mamani is an Aymaran civil engineer and self-taught architect. He was born to a father who was a bricklayer, in a house that his family built, in a rural piece of land near the growing city of El Alto. El Alto was formerly a suburb of Bolivia's capital city of La Paz. Now its own growing city center, it marks its significance as being highly populated by people of indigenous descent, mainly Aymaran. Architecturally, El Alto is slightly less dense than La Paz but continues the pattern of mostly rectangular red brick buildings.

Figure 16: Freddy Mamani Façade with Geometric overlay. *Source: Author*

His childhood was spent building little houses with simply shaped, colorful blocks. His family moved into El Alto like many rural Aymarans do and eventually went to school for civil engineering. In the early 2000s he began work on his first of over 60 buildings that would eventually reside in El Alto. The buildings were given the name "Cholets", a mixture of the French "Chalet" and "Cholo". Each building

is designed and built by Mamani and a small crew, with Mamani drawing plans on the walls as they build. The Cholets are all different, being directly designed in relation to the business of the people for who they are built, but like any style have elements that are seen throughout the series. The street facades are brightly colored with geometric patterns. These bright colors are references to vivid woven fabric traditionally created by Aymara women and used for celebrations. The geometric patterns incorporate motifs of the architectural ruins left by the people of the Tiahuanaco civilization. This revisiting of his indigeneity is especially important when we look at the time in which he began designing his buildings. Evo Morales, the first Aymara president of Bolivia had not yet been elected. Being indigenous was still seen in the mainstream as inferior and deserving of suppression. The facades are also characterized by their high reliefs and large windows, reflecting the mountains surrounding the city.

Figure 16: Cholet Façade, 2024. *Source: Author*

In large American cities, like New York for example, it is typical to create tall buildings with the expectation that there will be space in between it and buildings in the future. Mamani is planning for the growth of the future city in his current designs. Many have unfinished side walls to account for what may show up next to it.

Figure 18: Cholet Replica Façade, 2024. *Source: Author*

Figure 19: Cholet Interior Balcony View, 2024. *Source: Author*

Figure 20: Cholet Interior Salon, 2024. *Source: Author*

Inside of the Cholets are no different. The event salons are extremely vivid and bright, creating spaces that are meant to be used often and don't really need additional decoration. Each building can contain 5,000 to 7,000 lightbulbs.

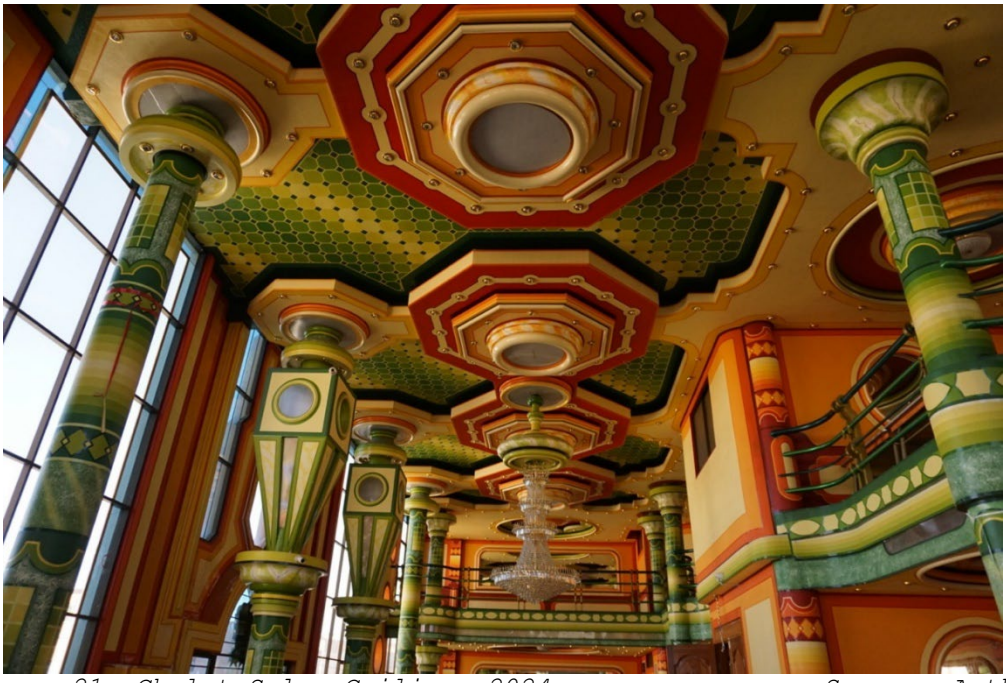

Figure 21: Cholet Salon Ceiling, 2024. *Source: Author*

Figure 21: Cholet Salon Interior Window, 2024. *Source: Author*

Figure 23: Cholet Interior Kitchenette, 2024. *Source: Author*

The general layout of all of the Cholets are similar with space for businesses to rent out of the bottom floor, one to two levels of event salons, one to two levels of rentable apartment spaces, and a chalet on top of the building, often with two stories. The Cholets are also split into three bigger sections. In the Aymara culture there are said to be three realms, the underworld, the world of the living, and essentially heaven. The Cholets can be separated into these with the bottom business being the underworld, the apartments and salons being the world of the living, and the chalet at the top being heaven. Mamani has explained that the Chalet is where the family lives with the apartments on the next floor below supposed to be a place for the children of the building overs to live until they are able to become

independent on their own.[68] Beyond its bright colors and lights, Mamani's Cholets are truly buildings of the community. They incorporate the multigenerational housing practices that many communities in Latin America follow. This strong sense of family can be seen as a connection to traditional indigenous practices of community within a family unit until children leave to create the next generation. There is also a connection to traditional land practices. The ability to generate income from the space in which you live while being able to pass down that revenue source to future generations.

There is some discussion by academics about if Mamani is really an architect. Without a license and following the formal academic path of studying at western schools of prestige, does he truly rise to the title. This discourse is interesting because so many "great" western architects have also chosen to remain unlicensed. This brings up the question, what is an architect in the modern universal practice? How would we create a standardized qualification of an architect and does the notion itself suppress the creativity and innovation that is so coveted by the architectural community? Another discussion of Mamani's work is if it can really be called indigenous architecture. Mamani's Neo-Andean style does not have a glaring link traditional Aymaran architecture but the elements that makes a piece of architecture indigenous could be a whole other discussion on its own. It may be different by each indigenous group, but it seems that indigenous architecture for the Aymara people is one that represents the people and their values and uplifts them and the community. Often indigenous architecture is put into a stylistic box that stagnates their

development by applying a filter of exoticism onto it. This is a western lens through which to look at indigeneity, emphasizing the "otherness" of a group through veiled acceptance while expecting a level of historical reference. I believe that Freddy Mamani's work is exceptionally representational of modern indigenous architecture. If we look to the Aymara calendar, we can see Mamani's distinct cultural integration of Aymara culture into the new city life that has been required to adapt to. Previously Aymara families would live on rural pieces of land with their closest neighbors living miles away. Interaction between families was restricted to when communities would gather for events. These events marked their calendar more significantly than the western notion of days and months. Creating a space that still allows for this event of gathering while in a growing city that is economically and politically assimilating into the western controlled world of today is an incredible feat and act of resistance. Each Cholet becomes a representation of a family's piece of land, organized spatially to allow for their children to grow and progress within the building while providing the tools for the owner to continue to grow their wealth and status. This resistance and strength of the Aymara people is seen continuously throughout the history of the people.

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[1] 1. Anders Burman, "Colonialism in Context An Aymara Reassessment of 'Colonialism', 'Coloniality' and the 'Postcolonial World' ," essay, in *Kult – A Postcolonial Special Issues Series*, vol. 6, Epistemologies of Transformation: The Latin American Decolonial Option and Its Ramifications (Berkley, CA: University of Gothenburg, 2009), 117–29, https://www.academia.edu/6828794/Colonialism_in_Context_An_Aymara_Reassessment_of_Colonialism_Coloniality_and_the_Postcolonial_World_.

[2] The Spanish religion referenced here is Catholicism. Across Latin America, religious syncretism is very important to understanding the blend of colonial Catholicism and the religions of the indigenous peoples of an area. While typically very strict in the belief and practice of the Catholic religion, missionaries in Latin America had to become more lenient to the integration of some indigenous practices in an attempt to unite the people under one religion. (Ramón Luzárraga , "Syncretism: Why Latin American and Caribbean Theologians Want to Replace a 'Fighting Word' in Theology," *Journal of Moral Theology* 2, no. 2 (2013): 89–108, https://doi.org/file:///C:/Users/yuria/Downloads/11222-syncretism-why-latin-american-and-caribbean-theologians-want-to-replace-a-fighting-world-in-theology.pdf.)
[3] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).xi.
[4] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia.* 10.
[5] Clare Cardinal-Pett, *A History of Architecture and Urbanism in the Americas* (New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2016). 76.
[6] Clare Cardinal-Pett, *Urbanism in the Americas*. 76.
[7] Clare Cardinal-Pett, *Urbanism in the Americas*. 127.
[8] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 12.
[9] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 13.
[10] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 14.
[11] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 14.
[12] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 15.
[13] The altiplano is a region of intermontane basins stretching from Southeastern Peru to the Southwestern corner of Bolivia. These basins sit at about 12,000ft above sea-level. "Altiplano," Encyclopædia Britannica, November 30, 2024, https://www.britannica.com/place/Altiplano.
[14] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 16.
[15] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 18.
[16] Clare Cardinal-Pett, *Urbanism in the Americas*. 119.
[17] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 18.
[18] Clare Cardinal-Pett, *Urbanism in the Americas*. 119.
[19] Clare Cardinal-Pett, *Urbanism in the Americas*. 119.
[20] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 29
[21] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 30.
[22] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 30.
[23] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 32.
[24] Clare Cardinal-Pett, *Urbanism in the Americas* . 141.
[25] Clare Cardinal-Pett, *Urbanism in the Americas* . 199.
[26] Clare Cardinal-Pett, *Urbanism in the Americas* .140.
[27] Clare Cardinal-Pett, *Urbanism in the Americas* . 141.
[28] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 35.
[29] "Aymara," eHRAF World Cultures, accessed December 9, 2024, https://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/cultures/sf05/summary.
[30] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 26.
[31] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 44.
[32] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 45.
[33] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 46.
[34] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 47.
[35] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 52.
[36] The Sacred Hearts Educational School was established as a private Catholic school in the city of La Paz. It demonstrates the cultural integration of Catholicism into Bolivian life.

[37] Formerly the Basilica of San Francisco, the church is part of a convent complex. It is built in the "mestizo baroque" style. "Fe, Magia y Leyenda En El Atrio y La Bas," Diario Pagina Siete, May 9, 2018, https://web.archive.org/web/20180906014106/https://www.paginasiete.bo/gente/2016/7/8/magia-leyenda-atrio-basilica-francisco-102104.html#!
[38] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 55.
[39] The word mestizo is used here in lieu of the word "cholo", the word used in the original reference text. "Cholo" was most often used as a derogatory term for people of mixed blood heritage in the Spanish Empire, as well as today.
[40] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 56.
[41] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 57.
[42] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 63.
[43] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 71.
[44] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 63.
[45] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 74.
[46] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 78.
[47] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 90.
[48] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 92.
[49] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 100.
[50] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 98.
[51] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 102.
[52] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 104.
[53] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 105.
[54] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 144.
[55] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 167.
[56] "Bolivia Profile - Timeline," BBC News, January 10, 2018, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-18727510.
[57] "Bolivia Profile - Timeline,"
[58] Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia*. 243.
[59] "Bolivia Profile – Timeline"
[60] Clare Cardinal-Pett, *Urbanism in the Americas*. 422.
[61] Clare Cardinal-Pett, *Urbanism in the Americas.* 423.
[62] Clare Cardinal-Pett, *Urbanism in the Americas.* 423.
[63] The Potawatomi Nation is an American indigenous group currently residing in the area around the Great Lakes. "Citizen Potawatomi Nation," CPN Cultural Heritage Center Home Comments, accessed December 18, 2024, https://www.potawatomiheritage.com/.
[64] Fernando Luiz Lara, "Introduction," essay, in *Spatial Theories for the Americas Counterweights to Five Centuries of Eurocentrism* (Pittsburg , Pennsylvania: University of Pittsburg Press, 2024), 12–15.
[65] Clare Cardinal-Pett, *Urbanism in the Americas.* 425.
[66] Clare Cardinal-Pett, *Urbanism in the Americas.* 425.
[67] Four buildings were chosen for the Aydelott Travel Award. One for each essay.
[68] *Cholet: The Work of Freddy Mamani* (SCREEN FILMS, IS CREATIVE STUDIO), accessed August 8, 2024, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_KjPQPQTgZo.

Sami Architecture of a Cultural Future

The people of the Sami nations hold a unique position, as they often do not align with stereotypical images of what a western educated person may think of when discussing an indigenous person. Often indigenous people are imagined as people of color, taken over by Europeans traveling far distances for resources like crops and gold. But the lack of warfare and rampant racism should not be mischaracterized as a lack of struggle and discrimination. The Sami people are an indigenous group of people who inhabit the Sápmi. The Sápmi is a vast land spanning parts of northern Norway, Finland, Sweden, and Russia. The Sami people are split into groups, north, south, east, and west, each having variations of the Sami language but sharing overall cultural ties and ways of life. When the listed countries began to define their political borders, it was devastating for the Sami way of life. This essay focuses on the Sami of Northern Norway and their oppression and working liberation from the 18th century to the present.[1]

To understand why Norwegian colonization was so detrimental to the Sami and their culture, we must first understand who the Sami people are. The roots of the Sami have been connected to the prehistoric hunters and gatherers of the Sápmi.[2] Dwellings and settlements have been found from up to 9,000 years ago. Traditional Sami living patterns have largely been based on their profession. Grouping them loosely into reindeer herding Sami and farmer/ fisherman Sami. Reindeer herding lead to a more nomadic habits, similar to

indigenous groups of the Americas who moved following food and resources.[3] Farming and fisherman Sami could be nomadic as well depending on resources availability in an area, but to a less frequent degree. The Sami traditional building types include the goahti, lavvu, and stavgamme, with branching subtypes of each created by different uses and materials per site. Many of these building types fell out of use due to Norwegianization during the 1800's to the contemporary era.

Figure 1: Sami Traditional Aiti *Source: Author*

Figure 2: Sami Traditional Goahti Source: Author

Figure 3: Sami Lavvu *Source: Author*

Sami traditions in living

Traditionally, an organized Sami community was referred to as a Siida. A Siida is an area near a source of water, typically a fjord or some type of watercourse. Siida refers to the entirety of a community including the people as well as the nature in which the site of the Siida provides. A Siida would contain all of the resources to sustain its human and animal inhabitants. Within a Siida, people would move dwellings if needed seasonally or if resources became scarce.[4] Sami living is about dwellings. Dwellings are more than a place of living, it includes working, gathering, community, information sharing and more. It contains many smaller structures compared to one big structure. Outdoor spaces are integral to the success of the dwelling. Dwellings are ever changing, never static. This applies to both nomadic and settled communities. These attributes are what create the connection between the dwelling and the user as well as across users in a community.[5] Structures were organized heavily based on landscape, climate, water sources, and weather conditions.[6]

Norwegianization (post WWII): Cultural Identity and the Built Environment

After the German occupation of northern Norway followed by the devastating scorched earth policy, Norway was looking rebuild its strength by creating a unified, uniform country. A nationwide reconstruction effort was put into place, including areas containing burnt down Sami settlements. This destruction of Sami structures is especially devastating due to its physical erasure of a lot of

cultural, architectural Sami history.[7] Gjenreising or 'reconstruction buildings' were standardized buildings built to provide living spaces. Eventually some had adaptations to better inhabit families reliant on farming as a lifestyle.[8] In the eyes of the Norwegian Government, postwar reconstruction was a effort put forth by the whole country to help rebuild the "countrymen of the north". A noble cause if not for the disregard of the 1/3 non ethnically Norwegian population of the areas affected by the destruction of the war.[9]

To understand the sinister underlying intents behind these choices, we must first look back to the mid 1800's. Norwegianization was the overall goal of the Norwegian government. The assimilation efforts were widespread with an emphasis being put on the education system. Schools were created to teach Sami and Kven children, a Finish minority group in Norway, Norwegian customs and language as soon as possible.[10] All of these efforts were made to make them feel 'themselves to be Norwegian'. Despite their grand reach, they had little success, especially leading into the 1900s due to Laestadianism. Laestadianism was a Christian revival movement that united the Sami and Kvens in rejection of the Norwegian society surrounding them. This solidarity allowed for both groups to focus on preserving their cultural traditions and languages. In the early to mid 1900's, a labour movement grew following this Laestadian period. While spirituality was an effective in improving social qualities for the Sami and Kven, a large obstacle still remained.[11] Economically is how the Norwegian government was able to directly control the Sami. Due to a multi-year spell of unfruitful spring-cod harvest, many

people began to accumulate large debts and having to rely on local Norwegian traders to feed their families. In 1935 the Labour Party campaigned for election with a list of solutions for the country's crisis as well as the appealing slogan "work for all". The application of the 1938 Fisheries Act, an act setting a minimum selling price for cod, and interest free agricultural loans and subsidies allowed for many people to pay off their debts and end their reliance on local traders. These factors, among others, raised mainstream awareness about the welfare of all people in the country.[12]

This socialist approach to society emphasized economic equality no matter their ethnic, economic, or social background. This is again a noble concept, but it is important to look deeper at the intentions.[13] This society of equality was not meant for equality of all types of people, it was created for equality of the modern Norwegian people. While this seems contradictory to the assertion that ethnicity is not a factor in who benefits from these systems, we must understand that the cultures of the Sami and the Kven were seen as events of the past. The path to the future was barred by the condition that the Sami and Kven people shed their rudimentary ways of a bygone era. This was the growing attitude of many in Northern Norway leading into WWII.

During the German occupation of Norway, many opportunities for financial gain were created. Fisheries had a spike in demand due to food shortages, allowing them to steadily grow. Opportunities in construction were also widely and consistently available. Both of

these things contributed to the dwindling debt crisis in Norway.[14] The end of WWII and Germany's scorched earth policy could be seen as an unintentional continuation of the labour movement, placing everyone on the same starting plane. This would allow the Norwegian government a clean slate to implement another mass assimilation attempt on the Sami and Kven people under the guise of equality.

The labour movement post WWII was a continuation of its previous efforts with a new, stronger emphasis on national identity. Sami and Kven assimilation continued, now moving their focus from schools and shifting to the ability to grow economically. They were free to apply themselves to matters of economics and politics but expected to use Norwegian customs and language.[15] This was the major motivator for many Sami and Kven to become a part of the "national community". Due to pre war policies this ideology was already sewn deep into the ideology of the country and it was not widely questioned why they must realign themselves to have the right to not only survive but grow.

Reconstruction

The Finnmark Reconstruction Office was put in place to facilitate the reconstruction of Northern Norway. The office was in charge of sending people from the south to manage reconstruction in the north. Many of them had little to no experience with the local conditions of the north. Many Sami and Kven also had little experience interacting with southern Norwegians, choosing to avoid involvement in the working of the government. Because of the destruction left by the Germans, it became much more difficult to continue doing so. Their ability to grow

their business or economic standing was determined on their ability to navigate the governmental bureaucracy.[16] All post war governmental policies were for the ethnic Norwegian majority, except for one. This exception was the Klemet House. The Klemet house was one of the standardized building models that was "adapted to the need of Sami with nomadic lifestyles".[17] This was an effort by some southern reconstruction architects, in the 1950's, who were trying to "neutralize these conflicts (between ethnic groups) who did not completely trust each other".[18] While these were again, seemingly noble intentions, administration buildings were built in northern Norway to bridge the gap between ethnic groups while the Norwegian language was solely used in all guidelines, forms, and policies.[19] The Sami and Kven were expected to be open and eager to adapt to the Norwegian costumes in exchange for the generous and necessary assistance from the Norwegian government. The responsibility was put onto the ethnic minority to help themselves by doing things in the specific way the government set up. These policies made it clear that the future of Norway was monocultural and the Sami and Kven did not fit into their visions for the future. These cultures were a part of the past and would be treated as such.[20] Following this national realization, standardized models created the most homogenous housing Norway had ever had. The self-expression realized in the process of creating one's own dwelling space was now discarded along with many Sami and Kven people's sense of non-Norwegian cultural identities. With the erasure of the physical symbolism that architecture conveyed and the failure to rebuild it in lieu of a nationalized Norwegian

architecture, many Sami and Kven people say no other path but to assimilate and leave behind the culture of the past.[21]

In the last 30's years, a concerted effort has been put into preserving Sami buildings, but defining what is or isn't Sami architecture in contemporary times can be difficult.[22] When we look at modern architecture that resides in the Sápmi it is hard to find elemental signs that are recognizably Sami. With the push to view one united Norway as the way of the future and ethnic diversity as the way of the past, the notion that there is little point in discussing Sami architecture had risen.[23] The Norwegian Cultural Heritage act of 2018 has become a proponent in shifting these views. In 2017, the Sami Parliament completed the Registrering av samske hus (Register of Sami Dwellings), a complied list detailing 855 protected Sami buildings. In the process of identifying buildings that were over 100 years old, the minimum age of a Sami cultural asset that required protection, the question of what was defined as a Sami building became more and more apparent.[24]

Due to the circumstances that led to investigations into what Sami architecture is, its definition was outlined in a way that differs from many other types of architecture. The criteria for Sami architecture are heavily based on the use of the building. There are five criteria used to determine whether a building is Sami or not: 1) structures historical and culture associations; 2)function; 3)environmental context; 4)architectural tradition; and 5)ownership/ local community. Environmental Context and links to Sami culture and

history being the most important.[25] Sami dwellings are a majority of Sami buildings. For the Sami, a dwelling is much more than just a house, they are a complex that facilitates the entire livelihood of its inhabitants. Smaller structures and outbuildings of various sizes and uses contribute to what is defined as the dwelling. The nature of the dwelling is continuously active, adapting in stride with the seasons, the needs of the users, the environment in which it interacts. The dwelling is not defined only by the physical but the social as well. It does not exist without its users and the users do not exist without it.[26]

Within defining indigenous architecture there is chronic endeavor to assign easily identifiable aesthetic elements to restrict indigenous buildings to. This is seen within Sami architectural identification with the constant reference to the Lavvu and Goahti as the highlight and extent of what Sami architecture can be. This leads to an exoticization and alienation of indigenous peoples.[27]

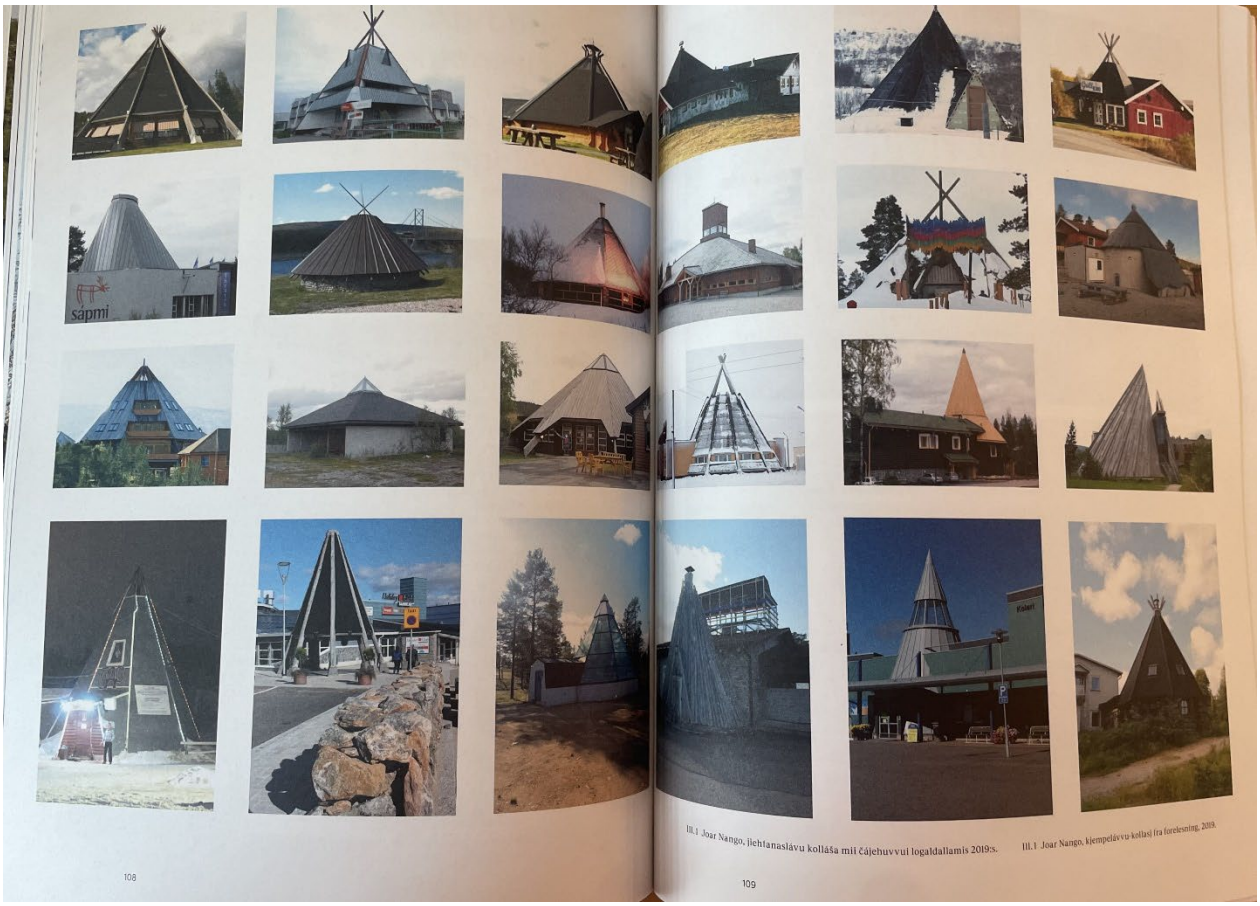

Figure 4: Collection of Contemporary Sami Buildings Source: Author

The Sameting Building

The Sameting building was built in the year 2000, designed by Stein Halvorsen and Christian Sundby as the result of a national design competition. The goal of this building initiative was to facilitate a space for the Sami people to have the opportunity to officially govern themselves across the entire Sápmi. The building was a collaboration with the Norwegian government as a reparative action, representing the acknowledgement of the Sami people as one of two peoples in the nation of Norway.[28] Located in Karasjok, Norway, the Sameting building blends into its natural, fairly rural landscape.

Figure 5: Sami Parliament Building Exterior *Source: Author*

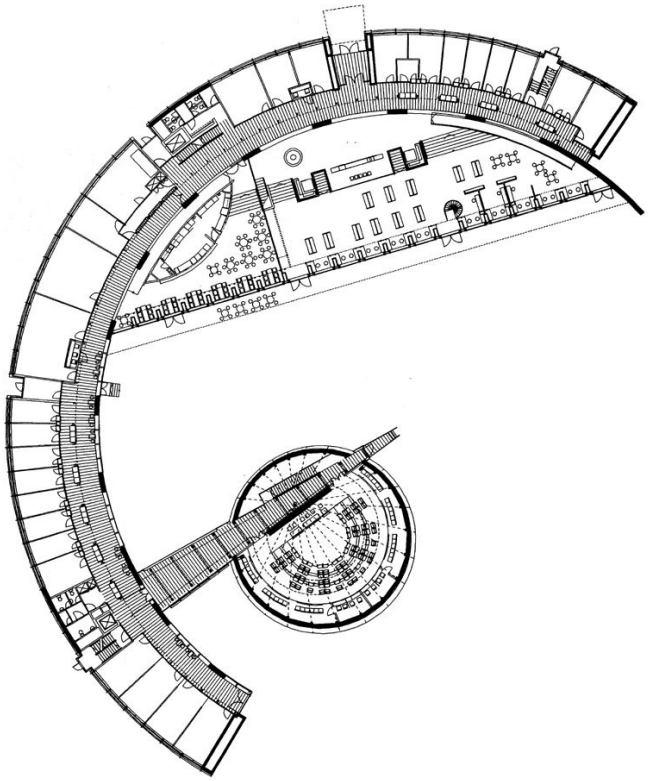

Figure 6: Sami Parliament Building Floor Plan

Source: Stein Halvorsen and Christian Sunby

There are two major forms to the building. The library and administrative spaces are located in the large semi-circular section. The form is representative of a reindeer enclosure, gathering the Sami nation together. The interior of this space contains decorative elements such as hanging lights that represent twinkling night stars. Bannisters lining the balcony of the second story stagger thin planks of wood to represent the Aurora Borealis, a phenomenon that northern Norway is famous for.

Figure 7: Sami Parliament Building Interior Library Source: Author

Sami artifacts and art line the hallways that lead from the library at the entrance to the parliament chambers. The Sami library is an extensive collection of books of all Sami languages as well as Norwegian and English. In the entire library, there is one book that explores architecture in the Sami culture, the Huksendáidda. The other

major form of the Sameting is a cone shaped structure that heavily references the traditional Lavvu Sami building typology.

Figure 8: Sami Parliament Building Exterior *Source: Author*

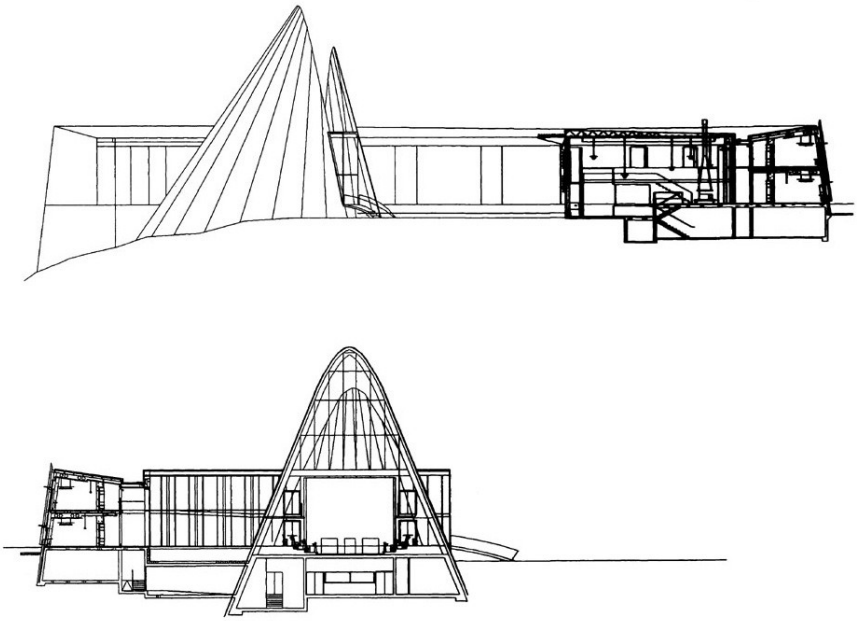

Figure 9: Sami Parliament Building Elevation

Source: Stein Halvorsen and Christian Sunby

Figure 10: Sami Parliament Chambers Mural *Source: Author*

Figure 11: Sami Parliament Chambers Interior *Source: Author*

Within the cone-shaped structure are the chambers where representatives from all Sami nations meet to discuss political policies and decisions regarding the Sami people. A focal point of the circular room is a mural, designed by a local Sami artist, that resides behind the seat of the speaker of the parliament. Structural timber lining the walls draws the eye to the clerestory, the only source of natural light in the space. There is also a balcony, allowing the public to attend parliament meetings.

The exterior of the building is primarily clad with gray larch wood paneling with finished concrete accenting the grounding edge.[29] The larch wood works to camouflage the parliament into the landscape and woods that surround it. Alternating orientation of the wood panels helps to create variation in both tone and texture on the façade of the building.

Figure 12: Sami Parliament Exterior *Source: Author*

Figure 13: Sami Parliament Exterior *Source: Author*

Figure 14: Sami Parliament Wood Cladding Detail *Source: Author*

As discussed previously, the classification of a "Sami Building" is something that has not been defined since very recent in contemporary times. The community focused on Sami architecture is very small and relatively new, but it is growing.

A major player in this community is Sami artist and architect, Joar Nango. Nango is a Northern Sami architect, artist, and filmmaker.[30] His focus is on site specific architecture and contemporary Sami buildings. Much of the information gathered for this research has stemmed from the efforts of Nango to expand research into Sami architecture.[31] In recent years, attempts have been made by the Norwegian government to acknowledge the Sami people. Many Sami institutions have been built but there is an evident lack of input from Sami people themselves regarding the design of the spaces. Nango noticed, during his time at Trondheim Technical University, the lack of Sami architectural representation in classes discussing the history of architecture in Norway. The few times that Sami architecture is discussed there is an attitude of mysticism and folklore attached to the Sami culture.[32]

When Sami related buildings are created by designers who are uneducated in Sami culture, it is common for them to cling to strong ethnic forms in lieu of investigating the materiality, customs, and spatial organization of Sami dwellings. This results in a phenomenon coined by Nango called "Giant Lavvu Syndrome".[33] His compilation of contemporary Sami buildings highlights the explorational laziness of their designers. It speaks to the continued view of the architectural

community that the Sami people are not of the contemporary era but a totem of the past to look back on with nostalgia. This mindset infantilizes and stagnates the very real Sami people of today who exist in a growing, developing culture. One could put forward an explanation that there is a lack of available Sami designers due to their small population, but it does not omit the lack of expansion past one architectural form. Joar Nango is one of less than ten Sami architects in the world.[34] Without resources provided by the academic institutions of Norway, he was able to do what dozens of western, prestigiously trained architects could not. He looked past the form of traditional Sami structures and into the reasoning behind them. Working to create spaces that aligned with the values and traditions of the Sami people.

While the Sami Parliament building is a large step in the right direction regarding the recognition of Sami people and their sovereignty over their own community, it should not be looked to as the peak of what Sami architecture can be. True restitution of the Sami culture is the acknowledgement that the Sami people can create their own spaces that serve needs unrelated to the needs of the Norwegian government.

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[1] Sjolie, Randi. *Huksendáidda: Arkitektuvra sámis = Arkitektur I sápmi = architecture in sápmi*. Stamsund, Oslo: Orkana forlag ; Nasjonalmuseet, 2022. 174.

[2] Sjolie, Randi. *Huksendáidda.* 174.
[3] Sjolie, Randi. *Huksendáidda.* 174.
[4] Sjolie, Randi. *Huksendáidda.* 175.

[5] Skaines, Sunniva. *Huksendáidda: Arkitektuvra sámis = Arkitektur I sápmi = architecture in sápmi*. Stamsund, Oslo: Orkana forlag ; Nasjonalmuseet, 2022. 181.
[6] Sjolie, Randi. *Huksendáidda*. 175.
[7] Sjolie, Randi. *Huksendáidda*. 178.
[8] Sjolie, Randi. *Huksendáidda*. 175.
[9] Bjorklund, Ivar. *Huksendáidda: Arkitektuvra sámis = Arkitektur I sápmi = architecture in sápmi*. Stamsund, Oslo: Orkana forlag ; Nasjonalmuseet, 2022. 177.
[10] Bjorklund, Ivar. *Huksendáidda*. 177.
[11] Bjorklund, Ivar. *Huksendáidda*. 177.
[12] Bjorklund, Ivar. *Huksendáidda*. 177.
[13] Bjorklund, Ivar. *Huksendáidda*. 178.
[14] Bjorklund, Ivar. *Huksendáidda*. 178.
[15] Bjorklund, Ivar. *Huksendáidda*. 178.
[16] Bjorklund, Ivar. *Huksendáidda*. 179.
[17] Bjorklund, Ivar. *Huksendáidda*. 179.
[18] Bjorklund, Ivar. *Huksendáidda*. 180.
[19] Bjorklund, Ivar. *Huksendáidda*. 179.
[20] Bjorklund, Ivar. *Huksendáidda*. 179.
[21] Bjorklund, Ivar. *Huksendáidda*. 180.
[22] Sjolie, Randi. *Huksendáidda*. 175.
[23] Skaines, Sunniva. *Huksendáidda*. 181.
[24] Sjolie, Randi. *Huksendáidda*. 175.
[25] Sjolie, Randi. *Huksendáidda*. 175.
[26] Skaines, Sunniva. *Huksendáidda*. 184.
[27] Skaines, Sunniva. *Huksendáidda*. 185.
[28] Åse M. P. Pulk, "About the Sámi Parliament," Sametinget, accessed October 20, 2024, https://sametinget.no/about-the-sami-parliament/.
[29] Åse M. P. Pulk, "About the Sámi Parliament".

[30] Zohra Khan, "Sámi Architect Joar Nango on Autonomy, Nomadism and Escaping Cliches," STIRworld, September 19, 2024, https://www.stirworld.com/inspire-people-sami-architect-joar-nango-on-autonomy-nomadism-and-escaping-cliches.

[31] "Mimi Zeiger," INTERVIEW: JOAR NANGO ON INDIGENOUS ARCHITECTURES AND SLIPPERY IDENTITIES | Mimi Zeiger, August 1, 2020, https://mimizeiger.com/interview-joar-nango-on-indigenous-architectures-and-slippery-identities/.

[32] "Mimi Zeiger," INTERVIEW: JOAR.
[33] "Mimi Zeiger," INTERVIEW: JOAR NANGO.

[34] "Joar Nango's most famous piece of work is the Girjegumpi, a blend of Sami cultural elements that exhibits the nomadic and community focused elements of the Sami people. The Girjegumpi is a traveling library that grows with every site it visits, adapting to new climates, materials, and people."

Rebuilding Ryukyu Architecture

Figure 1: Settlement Model. *Source: Author*

History and Cultural Transformations

Being a small island in the Pacific Ocean, surrounded by other islands and large land masses, there were a lot of cross-cultural influences between the cultures that resided in those areas. According to Hiroshi Kakazu's[1] Okinawa's history has three major cultural transformations with Kirstie R.H.U. Maeshiro-Takiguchi[2] adding a fourth. These cultural transformations go as follows: 1) The merging of Northern and Southern Ryukyu cultures; 2) Ryukyu Kingdom's Tributary Relationship; 3) Annexation of the Ryukyu Kingdom and Japanese Assimilation; 4) Post War U.S. Occupation.

The Merging of Northern and Southern Ryukyu Cultures

The first was the merging of the Northern and Southern cultures during the neolithic period. The lifestyle of the people of the Ryukyu islands was closely related and what it provided them. Their food consisted of mostly the easily accessible fish and shellfish from the adjacent ocean as well as wild boar from the mountain forests.[3] During this period, two distinct cultures emerged, the Northern and

Figure 2: Settlement Model. *Source: Author*

Southern Ryukyu. The Northern Ryukyu lived on what is contemporarily known as the islands of Okinawa and Amami. There is evidence of regular interaction with mainland Japan, seen through the presence of artifacts old as 14,500 BCE. The Southern Ryukyu inhabited what is contemporarily known as the Miyako and Ishigaki islands. This group has evidence of interacting with many South Asian islands such as Taiwan and Malaysia, dating back to 1000 BCE. These islands also show evidence of interacting with modern day China. This plethora of cultures influenced Okinawan culture and were influenced by Okinawa themselves. Around 2,000 years ago, the further development of tools and ship technology led to the beginning of these two distinct cultures merging.[4] After this merging period, the Ryukyu islands began to create a presence in the East Asian trade world. This contributed even more to the cultural exchange between these.[5] Approaching the 9th and 10th centuries, cultivation began and dependency on the hunter/ gatherer lifestyle began to decline. These developments led into the Gusuku period, the unification of the Ryukyu cultures.

Ryukyu Kingdom's Tributary Relationship

Around the 13th century, a powerful kingdom in the Ryukyu islands began taking over neighboring lands, still within the bounds of the islands. This kingdom was divided into three main domains. Soon after this unification, political unrest rose in the neighboring land of Japan and China began to implement a system of Confucianism. Trading restrictions were also administered by the Chinese government due to an increase in pirates. The new Confucianist system also brought about

a tribute system, asking neighboring countries to pledge their loyalty to China. Ryukyu was one of the nations that pledged their loyalty to maintain their ability to trade in the adjacent ocean.[6] Through this system, the amount of trade vessels for each country was heavily controlled by the Chinese government, but the Ryukyu kingdom was given much more leeway than countries like Korea. Ryukyu became increasingly important in Chinese trading, with a major port being built in modern-day Naha. In the late 1300's, Chinese emperor Hongwu sent 36 families to settle on the Ryukyu islands. As the trade between Ryukyu, China, Japan, and Korea continued, the intermingling of the cultures persisted. Soon after, there was a shift in Ryukyuan political power. The successor of the King from this political shift was highly regarded by the Chinese emperor. This led to the holistic unification of the Ryukyu Kingdom in the early 1400s.[7] Under this unified rule, poor living standards across the island led to a culture of mutual aid and sharing of resources among Okinawans that is still prevalent today. Chinese influence continued to rise in the Ryukyu kingdom in the form of architecture, textiles, agricultural techniques and governmental systems. In the mid to late 1400's, the Ryukyu Kingdom experienced a period of financial prosperity and internal peace. This rise in financial success was enticing to the Japanese empire. The emperor of this period, Sho Shin, also restricted the ability to use and carry weapons, drastically lowering fighting among common subjects of the Ryukyuan Empire. Sho Shin promoted focus on architectural

developments, ordering temples, paved roads, bridges, and highways, all heavily influenced by Chinese building techniques.[8]

Figure 3: Chinese Lantern Festival in Okinawa. *Source: Author*

Figure 4: Shisa (Guardian Dog) sculpture at Lantern Festival.

Source: Author

Beautifying the kingdom was prioritized, pressing for organized planting, creating parks, and popularizing stone and wooden carvings for shrines and temples. This period of intense artistic expression and learning led to Ryukyuan people becoming increasingly interested in their own history, culture, and traditions. One of the most famous compilations of this culture was called the Omoro-Soshi, containing literary works such as recorded ballads, chants, and poems.[9]

The Ryukyu Kingdoms first interaction with Europeans was in the early 1500's through trade. Europeans were seen as difficult to interact with due to their aggressive colonial mindsets. This did however introduce firearms to the Ryukyu people. The introduction of firearms into the Asian trade world would end direct trade between China and Japan. Japan's plan to acquire more power over Ryukyu transferred the societal unrest in Japan to affect the Ryukyu Kingdom, reintroducing a surge of pirating.[10] This pirating surge caused China to close their ports to Japan, leaving the Ryukyu kingdom as their only access to Chinese goods. As Japan began in their colonial efforts against Korea, a dependency was put on the Ryukyu people to provide supplies and revenue from their trade efforts. This decreased the amount of trade revenue going into the Ryukyu economy, forcing a shift to agriculture in the early 1600's. Sweet potato and sugar cane became very important crops, the effects of which are still seen in modern day Okinawa. Looking back on the dwindling of this era of major Chinese partnership, it is undeniable the influence that Chinese culture, traditions, and architecture had on the cultivation of the Okinawan culture.[11] Today, Japanese systems have worked to

governmentally eradicated this image of Chinese culture, but it is entirely intertwined in the people of Okinawa themselves, becoming something that is their own.

Annexation of the Ryukyu Kingdom and Japanese Assimilation

In 1609, Japanese emperor Satsuma invaded the Ryukyu Kingdom, taking control of the islands but allowing the monarchy to remain. The Ryukyu islands became a semi-colony of Japan. There was the necessity for Ryukyu to appear independent to China while being controlled by Japan to allow Japan to reap the benefits of Ryukyus trade with China. By 1635, Japan was entirely closed off to the world and used Ryukyu again for access to Chinese and Dutch trade. Social and systematic influence increased in Ryukyu with the application of strict Japanese class systems and emphasis on genealogy.[12] Into the 17 and 1800's Ryukyu sought to increase education. Public schools were built across the islands, teaching Japanese history and culture. In the mid 1800's, the end of Japanese isolation brought a new age of enlightenment in Japan. Japan's new exposure to the outside world led to suspicion surrounding the sovereignty of Ryukyu as a nation.[13] To prevent action by China to take control of the Ryukyu Islands, Japan converted their semi-colonial state to be fully integrated into a Japanese colony. This incited the beginning of the disposition of the Ryukyu people. After its acquisition, Ryukyu was now referred to as Okinawa. The Japanese government declared the end of the Ryukyu monarchy and the implementation of an entirely new system of living and governing to the Okinawan people. In 1894, China claimed its right to the Ryukyu

islands due to their history of trade, bringing about the first Sino-Japanese war in which Japan won.[14] With the full acquisition of Ryukyu, Japan initiated assimilation programs across the islands to make the people more Japanese. Okinawans were seen entirely as second class to the people of Japan.

The changes that Japan implemented caused a disruption in many longstanding Okinawan traditions. Former Okinawan elites were dismantled from their position of power, replacing that with delegates from Japan who would train for a time and then be sent back to Japan to work. This resulted in constant turnover in government positions. The distribution of workable land was taken under government control, assigning plots to individual farmers, unsettling the communal village traditions of the farmland that occupied 75% of the islands.[15]

The late 1800s into the early 1900's contained massive shifts in population, economics, and society in Okinawa. Full economic assimilation was marked by the introduction of Japan yen and outlaw of Okinawan money. Increased migration of Japanese people to Okinawa caused overpopulation on the small islands, forcing Okinawans to move to smaller islands on the outskirts of the archipelago. Okinawan workers were discriminated against by Japanese employers beginning businesses in Okinawa.[16] Many were unable to find work and resorted to emigrating, first to Hawai'i and then other places in North America, South American, and Southeast Asian countries. In these places they once again faced harsh discrimination while sending money back to their families in Okinawa whenever they could. Emigration became so

prevalent that a training center was built in the capital city of Naha to prepare Okinawans for emigration.[17]

The only options for growing socially for Okinawans was education, and the only option for education was through Japan. Further assimilation of Okinawans targeted early education with the Okinawan language and traditions being left out of schools. Japanese and English were the only languages taught in schools and children were encouraged to look to the Emperor and Empress of Japan as akin to sacred beings. This new generation of Okinawan children grew to align themselves more with Japanese nationalist views, seeing the Okinawan society as something of the past.

Christianity and Shintoism, the major religions of Japan in the early 1900's, were used to attempt to replace indigenous Okinawan religions.[18] Shrines were confiscated around to islands to further these efforts and bring about religious uniformity. In this time, Okinawans began to be constricted into the Japanese military. In 1931, Japan developed spiritual programs that encouraged members of the military to be willing to go to extraordinary lengths to sacrificed themselves in the name of the emperor. This is extremely important to the upcoming events of WWII.

Post War U.S. Occupation

Post WWII, control of Okinawa was given to the US Navy. It was intended to be used as a military stronghold. Okinawans were released from US internment camps and returned to villages that were either completely devastated or occupied by American soldiers. Homes,

temples, shrines, and more were destroyed by bombing and attacks by the US army that now occupied the remains of these spaces.[19] Okinawans had to rebuild their culture and society. Surviving artifacts began to be collected and compiled. A couple of museums were created to house these artifacts. One of these museums was the Okinawa Prefectural Museum, originally located in Shuri and later moved to its present location in Omoromachi. In the 1950s a movement to restore architectural monuments in Okinawa began. The US government pushed for the interaction of Americans and Okinawans in newly constructed cultural halls.[20] Once again, Okinawa integrated pieces of other cultures into their own.

In the continued occupation of Okinawa, the US government wanted to buy land from Okinawan farmers to build military institutions. Many farmers refused the severe undercut of the lands value, leading to the US attempting to forcefully confiscate land. Large protests and rallies by the Okinawan people led to the US government creating a new rental plan of acquiring Okinawan land.[21]

Because of the cultural invasion of the US and extraordinary destruction caused during WWII, the Okinawan economy was now almost entirely dependent on the 39 bases built across the islands and revenue American soldiers brought in. Even today, after the return of Okinawa to Japan in terms of governmental control, American bases continue to occupy much of Okinawa’s land mass and directly affect Okinawans’ day to day lives. Tourism is now deeply important to Okinawa and its economic prosperity. Many Okinawan businesses around

bases are catered to American population to be able to make their livings.[22]

Traditional Okinawan Architecture

Traditional Okinawan architecture is almost entirely dependent on adapting to the harsh tropical climate in which it resides. Traditional houses are always one-story wooden structures. The major identifiable characteristics include the red tile roofs, limestone walls, windbreaking trees, room arrangements and general application of fengshui.[23] Many of these traditional structures were destroyed by American bombardments during WWII, with only a couple surviving. Post WWII, a study of an Okinawan village discovered 58 out of 60 buildings were built post war. Traditional Okinawan castles, or Gusuku, showcase

Figure 5: Gusuku Model (Okinawa Prefectural Museum). Source: Author

the influences of foreign countries on Okinawa while emphasizing Okinawa's distinct cultural elements. Gusuku were built with widely available limestone and coral rock from the local areas.[24] While taking from natural resources, the contrast of stone against the lush tropical greenery made the Gusuku stand out.

These buildings were used as operational hubs for villages, overlooking trade routes, economic activity and harbors dependent on their location.[25] One of the most famous Okinawan structures is Shuri Castle.

Figure 6: Shuri Castle (2013). *Source: Author*

With this fame comes an exemplification of how the Japanese government has worked to assimilate the culture of Okinawa into their own. It brings to light their attempt to, if not erase the history of the colonization of Okinawa, frame their acquirement of the islands as

an act of kindness, necessary for the preservation of the people's history. The Shuri Castle complex has a massive footprint on the island of Okinawa, taking up 11.6 acres of land.[26] High stone walls section off the complex into paths of travel and courtyards edged with vermillion buildings. The main castle itself is also a bright vermillion color with terraced roofs clad with matching tiles. White accents the walls and roof ridges with gold ornaments remaining around the main entrance. Sculptures of Shisa dogs, Okinawan roof statues meant to ward off evil spirits, and dragons adorn the roof. The entrance courtyard is also patterned with red tiles. All of these elements together help to create this unique and important Okinawan monument. In the Japanese recognition of this piece of Okinawan representation, they have attempted to commandeer the historical achievements of the Ryukyu Kingdom as just another faction of the ancient Japanese empire. This solicitation of ownership over the preservation of Shuri Castle can be interpreted as the necessity of the acquirement of Okinawa. In 1925, the Japanese government designated Shuri Castle as a national treasure of Japan.[27] This action not only homogenized the Okinawan fixture into the umbrella of Japanese history but required it to be designated as a place of worship under the religious ideals of Japan to receive federal aid post WWII.[28]

The colonization of the Okinawan people continues into the contemporary with the addition of the United States as an offending power. Persistent exclusion of the Okinawan people and elected officials display the attitude of the US and Japan. US colonization

began with the acquirement of Okinawa as a result of WWII. The US saw the geographical advantages of Okinawa in monitoring Asia. Military bases were built at such a rate that they eventually occupied at least 20% of Okinawa's entire land mass. This 20% contains 40% of all arable land, directly affecting the agricultural abilities of the Okinawan people.[29] Okinawan populations have engaged in numerous protests against the presence of the US military since before the return of Okinawa to the Japanese government in 1971.[30] These protests were not only in response to the dispossession of their land but the abuse of the local Okinawan civilians as well. All of these factors together lead to the architectural conditions we see in Okinawa today.

Contemporary Okinawan Architecture

Figure 7: Concrete building. *Source: Author*

Figure 8: Concrete Residence, Naha, Okinawa, (2023). Source: Author

Figure 9: Concrete building , Naha, Okinawa, (2023). Source: Author

Figure 10: Concrete building, Naha, Okinawa, (2023). Source: Author

Figure 11: Concrete building, Naha, Okinawa, (2023). Source: Author

Driving through the cities of Okinawa, one material becomes more prominent than any other, concrete. This material is completely foreign to the traditional architecture of the area. Houses, stores, businesses and schools are all built with this strong, easy to construct, typhoon resistant material. Bright colors are also utilized, mirroring the tropical flowers that appear all around the island. This raises the questions, what is considered contemporary Okinawan architecture? What are the implications of almost every traditional building being destroyed in almost an instant? And, how does this fit into the broader discussion of indigenous architecture?

Figure 12: Okinawa Prefectural Museum Exterior View. Source: Traveloka

Some things that have made the precise discussion of indigenous Okinawan architecture difficult is the successful efforts of Japanese assimilation of Okinawa in the eyes of the general architectural world. Seen as an extension of Japanese architecture and hindered by language barriers, it is nearly impossible to find available

discussions and analysis specifically focused on Okinawan contemporary architecture. The acknowledgement of the indigeneity of Okinawan people by the Japanese government would be a monumental step in the development of a distinct architectural community in Okinawa.

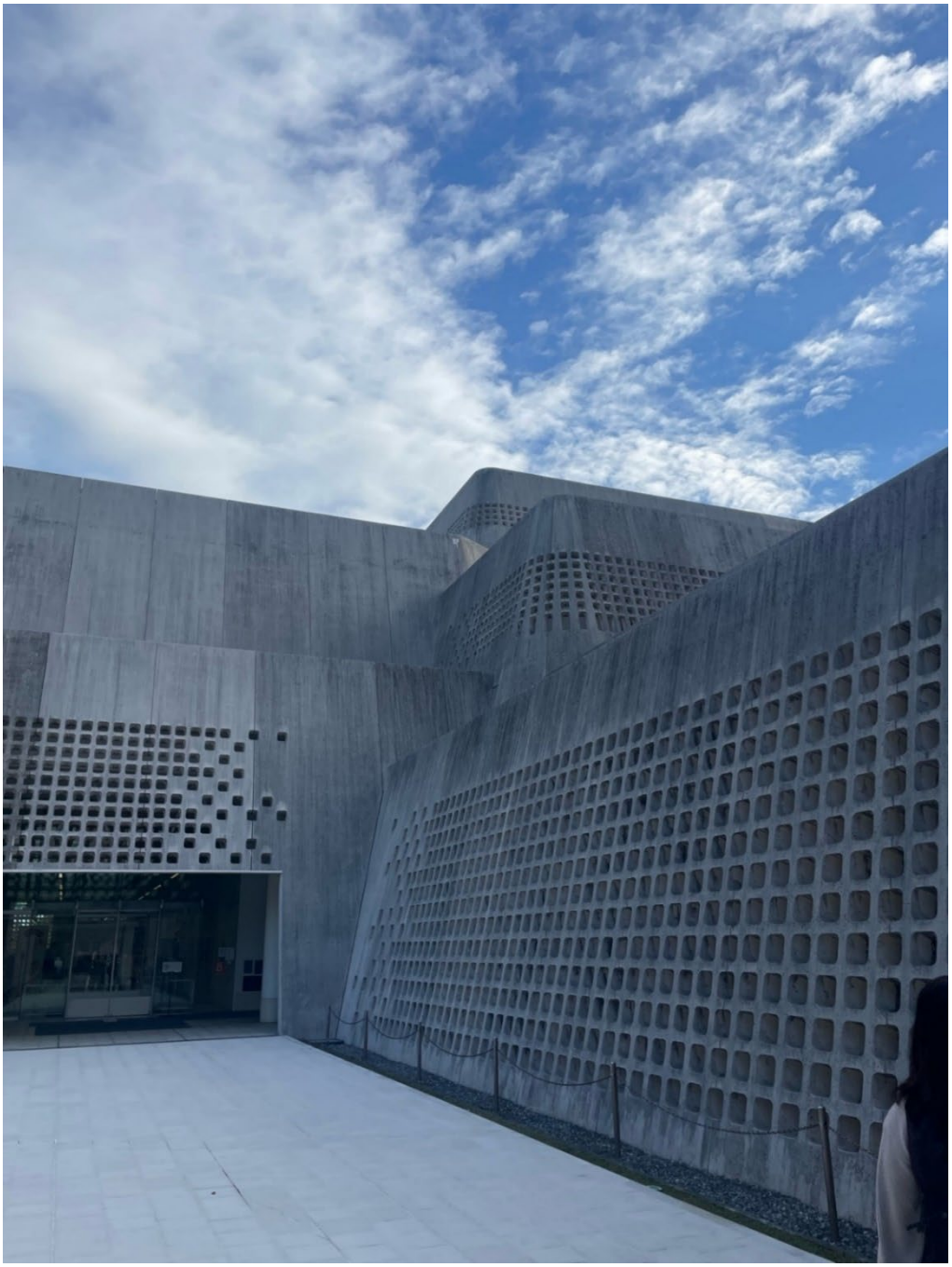

Figure 13: Okinawa Prefectural Museum Exterior View, (2024). Source: Author

Similarly to the Sami people of northern Europe, discussions of the Ryukyu culture as continuously growing, opposed to an existing state of nostalgic stasis, will allow for the reparative assertions of a contemporary architectural style. What is currently available is the examination of public institutions in Okinawa created not by Okinawan architects but for Okinawan people.

Figure 14: Okinawa Prefectural Museum Skin Interior,(2024).

Source: Author

Figure 15: Okinawa Prefectural Museum Sculpture Garden, (2024).

Source: Author

Figure 16: Okinawa Prefectural Museum Sculpture Garden, (2024)

Source: Author

Figure 17: Okinawa Prefectural Museum Interior, (2024)

Source: Author

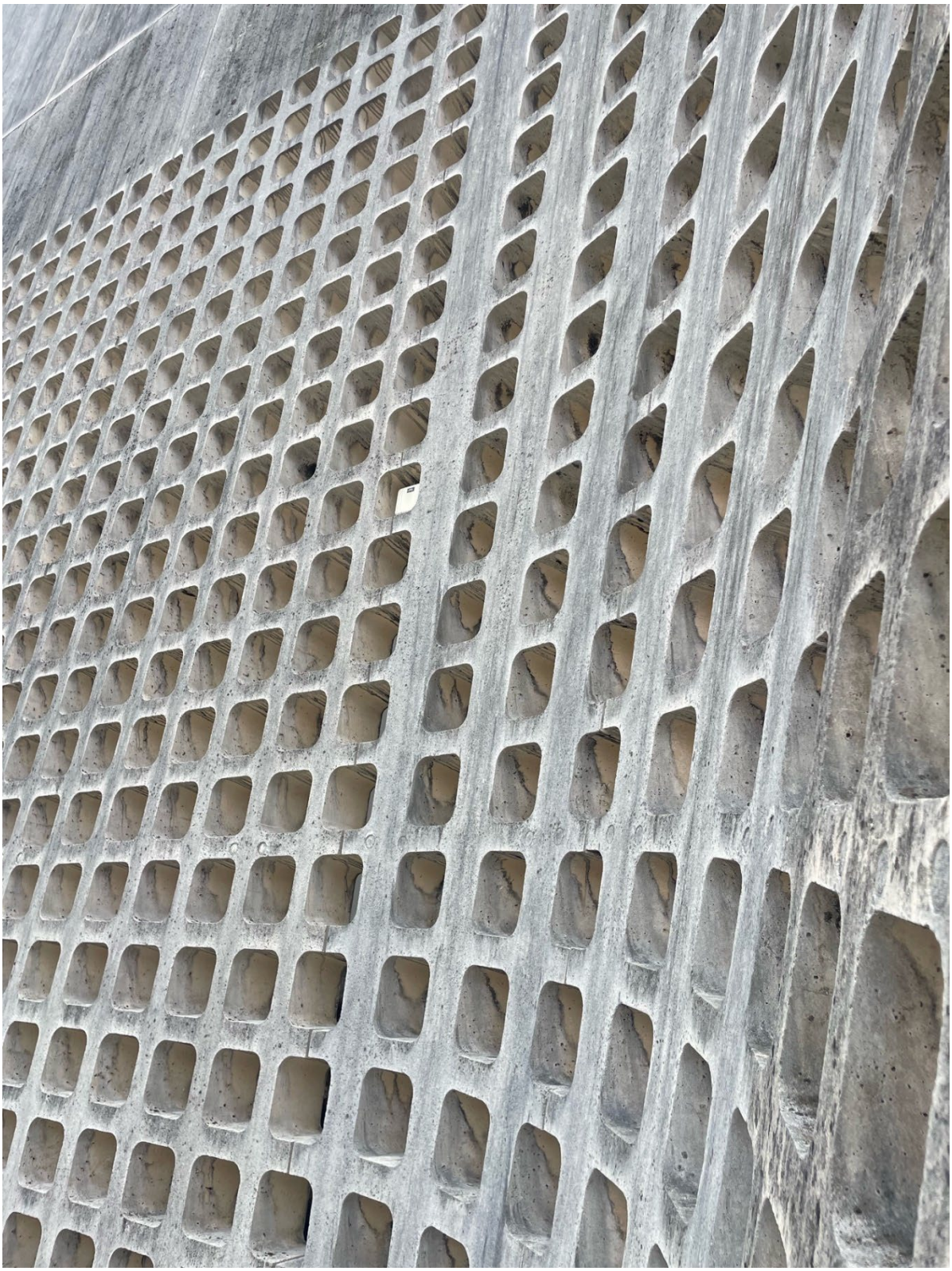

Figure 18: Okinawa Prefectural Museum Wall Detail, (2024)

Source: Author

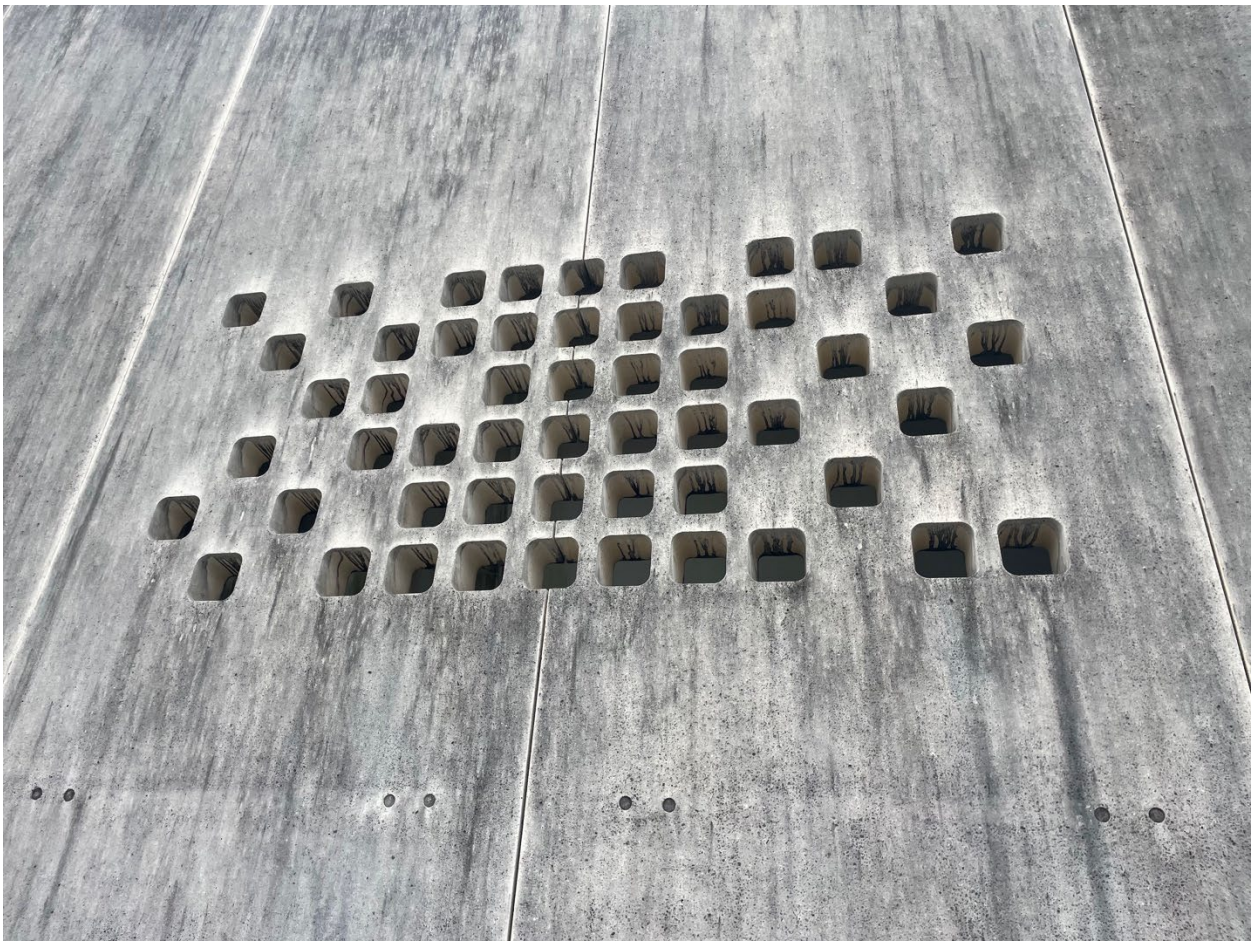

Figure 19: Okinawa Prefectural Museum Wall Detail Source: Author

The Okinawan prefectural museum in Naha is an example of an attempt to preserve and grow Okinawan culture. While this research has been previously critical of attempts at indigenous architecture heavily referencing traditional iconography of indigenous groups, the Okinawa prefectural museum contains elements of Ryukyu culture expanding past physical architectural forms. The overall form of the Okinawa Prefectural Museum is reminiscent of the Okinawan castles or Gusuku. The exterior presents a stepped façade with curved corners to emulate stacked limestone that would be traditionally used protective

walls.[31] Square cutouts pattern the exterior extending to the courtyard space.

These cutouts, known as Hana blocks, are essential for ventilation and light diffusion in concrete construction. In 1954, Okinawan architect Hisao Nakaza observed the value of concrete in the reconstruction of Okinawa post WWII but also the deficits that solid concrete construction brought about.[32] Okinawan homes, being known for its open rooms and permeable thresholds, were now using concrete brought by the American. Nakaza developed Hana blocks to allow for some privacy while maintaining an openness in the community.

Figure 20: Hana Blocks, (2023) *Source: Author*

Figure 21: Building Utilizing Hana Blocks (2023)

Source: Author

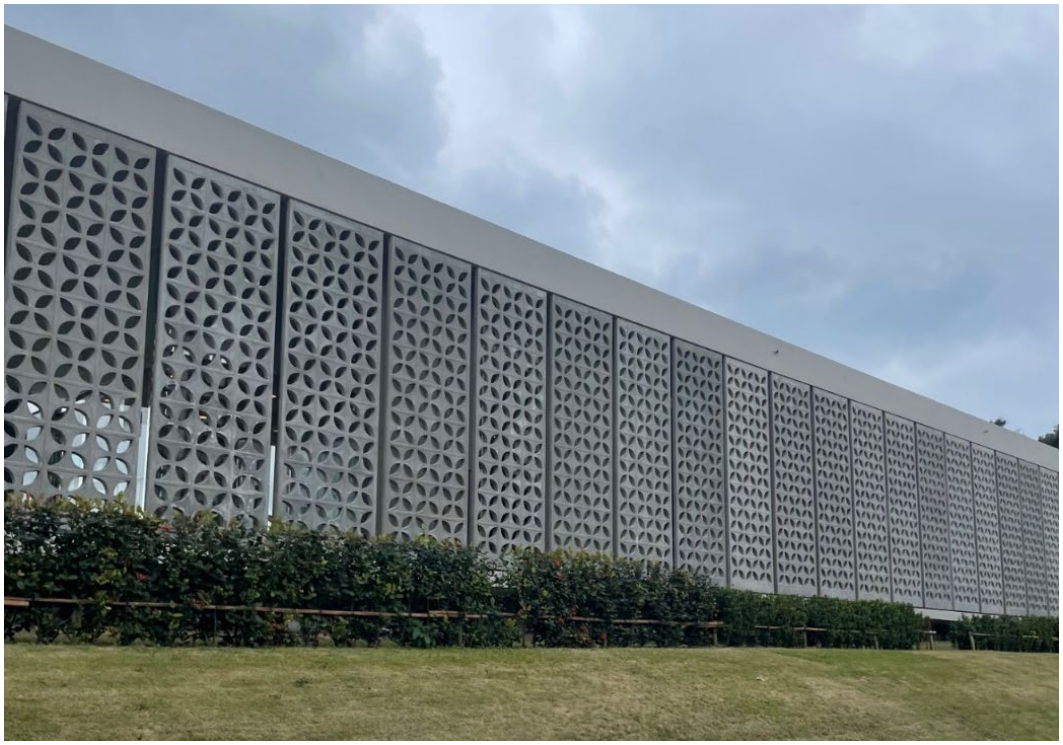

Figure 22: Building Utilizing Hana Blocks(2024) *Source: Author*

Figure 23: Traditional Okinawan Home(2024) *Source: Author*

The courtyard contains a traditional pre-war Okinawan home that welcomes visitors to explore its interior. The façade and courtyard walls are made of precast concrete that incorporates Okinawan sand and limestone. This concrete was originally a bright off white but has darkened due to weathering, creating tonal variations more visible as someone walks towards it. Moving to the interior of the buildings, architectural references to Okinawan culture become less apparent but are not omitted. The museum houses both history and art exhibitions. Due to the building typology, organizational and material applications of the Okinawan culture are understandably downplayed in effort to highlight the value of the historical information and artwork presented in both parts of the museum. Cultural elements are scattered throughout non exhibition spaces like bathrooms and transitional spaces. Windows in the bathrooms diffuse colorful rays of sunlight through Ryukyu glass.

Figure 24: Ryukyu Glass windows in Bathroom(2024) *Source: Author*

Ryukyu glass is a well-known industry in Okinawa, employing artisans to create handmade glass vases, cups, and a variety of art pieces. Past the ticketing and information desks at the entrance, a large atrium welcomes museum visitors. Natural lighting enters through second story windows as well as tree-like structures that extend down from the high ceilings. The space in which these skylights reside is meant to convey an Okinawan spiritual concept called Utaki. Utaki are sacred spaces in Okinawan villages often within forests or trees. In Japan, worship related to nature is focused on objects like tree and stones, but in Okinawa, worship is focused on the space surrounding the trees. With this concept in mind, the architects of the museum

modeled the entry atrium to create an Utaki space. An important factor in this building is the creation of space for Okinawans to learn about their history and culture while also experiencing the art of other Okinawans from the contemporary era. As mentioned previously, the Okinawan people are often disregarded in the discussions of what happens on their land by the USA and Japan. It is not hard to find Okinawans who are expressly proud of their culture, but as discussed, the physicality of architecture and the way it shapes our ways of living is crucial to the continued development of a community.

Figure 26: Okinawan Prefectural Museum Shell Cut Outs (2024)

Source: Author

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[5] Maeshiro-Takiguchi, "Cultivating Indigenous Ryukyuan". 26.

[6] Maeshiro-Takiguchi, "Cultivating Indigenous Ryukyuan". 28.

[7] Maeshiro-Takiguchi, "Cultivating Indigenous Ryukyuan". 30.

[8] Maeshiro-Takiguchi, "Cultivating Indigenous Ryukyuan". 35.

[9] Maeshiro-Takiguchi, "Cultivating Indigenous Ryukyuan". 36.

[10] Maeshiro-Takiguchi, "Cultivating Indigenous Ryukyuan". 37.

[11] Maeshiro-Takiguchi, "Cultivating Indigenous Ryukyuan". 40.

[12] Maeshiro-Takiguchi, "Cultivating Indigenous Ryukyuan". 42.

[13] Maeshiro-Takiguchi, "Cultivating Indigenous Ryukyuan". 43.

[14] Maeshiro-Takiguchi, "Cultivating Indigenous Ryukyuan". 44.

[15] Maeshiro-Takiguchi, "Cultivating Indigenous Ryukyuan". 45.

[16] Maeshiro-Takiguchi, "Cultivating Indigenous Ryukyuan". 46.

[17] Maeshiro-Takiguchi, "Cultivating Indigenous Ryukyuan". 48.

[18] Maeshiro-Takiguchi, "Cultivating Indigenous Ryukyuan". 50.

[19] Maeshiro-Takiguchi, "Cultivating Indigenous Ryukyuan". 52.

[20] Maeshiro-Takiguchi, "Cultivating Indigenous Ryukyuan". 54.

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“Disruptive Architecture:

The role of architecture in the liberation of Indigenous communities around the world.”

This summer, through my experiences and research of these buildings, a palpable truth was revealed to me: universalism in architecture is a slippery path to the eradication of cultural diversity. At each site I visited there was a weight to the atmosphere, an understanding of the history of each building. This history is not limited to the events that occurred on the site or the individual people who designed it, but the entire events that led to its creation. The destruction, the revolutions, the sufferings, and joys that are endured by a group of people in their journey to be recognized. Political representation is important in economic growth and prosperity, but the social recognition of oneself is fundamental to a culture’s survival. Through architecture this recognition is able to be undeniably portrayed to all those who view it. The spaces shaped by light and materials, familiarized by the wear and tear of use, are adjacent to the traditions of oral history. There is no other form of art so deeply intertwined with the life of the beings that inhabit it. The Westernization of architecture across the globe is the reinstitution of modern colonialism. While many countries look to the West as an idealized artistic and technological destination, this auto colonialism[1] is a result of the establishments created by colonial powers. The buildings discussed in these essays are each a

representation, not of a colonial establishment showing grace to these oppressed groups, but of indigenous communities taking back a dignity that due to them. They are making claim to their right to exist in the global eye.

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