Underlying Ethos in Indian Architecture Critical Regionalism in the age of Globalisation

SHAJI K. PANICKER & MICHAEL J. OSTWALD
School of Architecture and Built Environment
University of Newcastle, Australia

Professor Kurula Varkey has identified eight "psychic-cultural constants" which he believes have been manifesting themselves, in various ways, in Indian architecture throughout history. His eight constants are examined in this paper and a ninth constant is derived, which the authors posit underlies all of the eight constants of Varkey. The ninth constant will be seen to be sympathetic to the contemporary developments in Indian society, which are exemplified by the writings of the anthropologist, Arjun Appadurai in his 'Modernity at large'. The paper also questions the possibly superfluous concern, advanced in recent times by most contemporary writers and practitioners of architecture in India, that of losing one's architectural identity in the wake of globalisation.

Varkey's eight constants and this authors' ninth one will also demonstrate and support the possible application of Tzonis and Lefaivre's interpretation of Critical Regionalism to solving the contemporary issues of identity constructions in Indian architecture. However, the paper does not posit that Tzonis and Lefaivre's Critical Regionalism is the best and only solution for solving the problems of identity constructions confronting post-independence contemporary architecture in India—rather, it anticipates a possible solution.

~

In the last two decades, the mechanisms which promote the production of identity in contemporary Indian architecture, have come under increasing scrutiny. Much of this heightened awareness stems from the tacit presumption that whenever a person talks about Indian architecture or architecture of the non-Western world, they must necessarily discuss the issue of regional *identity*.[1] Such concerns for regional identity in India

seemingly arose in the 1980s in parallel with the growth of interest in national history and culture.[2]

At the heart of this shift in thinking was the conviction that India's adoption of Modernism had resulted in some irreparable loss of tradition. The writings of many prominent architects during this period, elucidates this concern. For example, Charles Correa believes that "[a]rchitects in Asia live with both these traditions (vernacular and modern) […] For these [Asian] societies, industrialization has not yet closed the doors to the incredibly rich world of the past; on the contrary, that world is very much a part of our everyday lives."[3] Furthermore, Correa asserts that "[i]ndeed it is not possible to build in Asia without acknowledging, in one way or another, the presence of the traditional—and the potent ideograms that underlie these traditions."[4] The Modernist architect Uttam Jain, a contemporary of Correa, expresses his fears that "this glorious heritage of the past in India […] may get eroded if modern 'mores' are to dominate, and go unchecked in India's daily life."[5] Architect Raj Rewal describes this endeavour, alluded to by both Correa and Jain, as the way in which his "generation has been trying to discover the common thread in which the fabric of Indian Architecture has been woven in the past; and its significance for our times."[6] Paradoxically, for Krishna Menon the consequences of this search for regional or national identity have been misleading. For Menon, "these identity constructions" are "semiotic packages reflecting aspirations to find continuity with an idealized past and a bridge to an idealized future."[7]

Despite Menon's reservations, architects like B. V. Doshi, Charles Correa, and Raj Rewal, and architectural writers and teachers like Kurula Varkey have made genuine attempts to identify those threads of regional identity which permeate the country's architecture. Regardless of whether these attempts have been derived from romantic or picturesque notions (the case of the three architects) or from polemical and comparative investigation (the case with Varkey) their conclusions are too important to be ignored.

This paper investigates a series of important factors that have been identified by Varkey and which have manifested themselves in Indian architecture throughout the ages. This paper is focussed on Varkey's eight psychic-cultural constants, which are significant both for the manner in which they suggest regional identity and the frame of reference Varkey adopts to develop his constants. Varkey is a crucial figure in Indian architectural pedagogy. Being the honorary director of the School of Architecture, CEPT (Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology), he had passionately steered and influenced a generation of architects emerging from the institution until his untimely death on October 30, 2001. CEPT, since its establishment in 1962, has been an influential institution in the context of post-independence architectural education in India. Founded on the concept of the Bauhaus by architects B. V. Doshi and Bernard Kohn, and engineers Rasvihar Vakil,

Sukumar Parikh, and Mahendra Mehta,[8] CEPT has nurtured some of the country's best upcoming architects including M. Qamar Sheikh and Jayashree Shaikh, Kiran Pandya, Rahul Mehrotra, Rajiv Narain, Soumitro Ghosh and Nisha P. Mathew. Varkey was also the successor of previous heads including B. V. Doshi, Hasmukh Patel, K. B. Jain, Anant Raje, and Leo Pereira.[9] Importantly Varkey takes the unusual stance of not limiting his discussion of architecture to north or northwestern Indian territories.[10] Whereas too often in the past research in this field has been limited to attempts to imagine an idealized past, and then re-invent it, this paper seeks to derive a ninth constant which can be used to question those architectural critics who are concerned about the loss of a sense of place in the wake of globalisation in architecture.

Varkey's 'Psychic-Cultural constants'

Varkey's psychic-cultural constants, rather than being stylistic descriptions of elements from the past, are typically philosophical and intellectual in nature. These constants are not intended to inspire principles from which Indian architecture has been, or continues to be, derived. Varkey believes that the plethora of cultures and traditions that have come together throughout India's recorded history, must have played a role in the creation of these "psychic-cultural constants" within a multi-layered culture.[11] Sunil Khilnani writes that "[t]he storehouse of shared narrative structures embodied in epics, myths and folk stories, and the family resemblance in styles of art, architecture and religious motifs – if not ritual practices – testify to a civilizational bond, that in fact extended well beyond the territorial borders of contemporary India: to Persia in the west and Indonesia in the east."[12] However, Khilnani cautions that "this varied, amorphous historical inheritance" may not carry any "single message", though it did impart a certain unified coherence to the ethnically, religiously and racially diverse population in the sub-continent.[13] This characteristic, of certain unifying 'generalities' and associated 'distinguishing' specificities, would hold true against the backdrop of any living culture.[14] This is one of the reasons why Varkey's psychic-cultural constants are primarily philosophical rather than stylistic.

Varkey's eight 'psychic-cultural constants' in Indian architecture suggest an important dynamic undercurrent, which is presented in this paper as the ninth constant. Propelled in turn by needs of the situation and then by the era itself (including the dynamics of global cultural systems) this ninth attitude will be seen to facilitate *inclusion* rather than *exclusion*. This ninth attitude is also instrumental in the possible application of Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre's Critical Regionalism to the problem of identity construction in contemporary Indian architecture. However, before outlining the qualities of this new, inclusive, constant and testing the applicability of Tzonis and Lefaivre's Critical Regionalism, it is important to describe Varkey's framework and its intention.

The sense of Centre and the Statements of Limits

'Centre' in Indian architecture, does not necessarily refer to a geometric or physical center, rather it has a more metaphysical value attached to it.[15] Centre refers to the psychical or spiritual focus of a form.[16] The centre, a pivotal feature in Indian philosophy, is the *Shunya*, the compelling void, or *Bindu*, the primordial source of all energy. The centre itself remains non-quantifiable (*Shunya* literally means zero), but carries with it the potential for continuity or movement.[17] This potential for dynamic movement is an important notion, because all the energies condense into this centre, and from it emerges form.[18] This energy source or *Bindu* is required as the starting point for measurement in space and time. Thus the centre becomes the generator of directions and limitations while simultaneously facilitating transformation and growth.

Attitude to Landscape

For Varkey it follows that, from a detailed understanding of the notion of centre and limits, building in the landscape is an 'introverted' act in India. This quality of introversion results in an architecture of contained periphery—a building wherein "the grand design of creation, the cosmic and the microcosmic, man and nature unite in a single thread".[19] It follows that Architecture was never an isolated activity, but "arose to give expression to the fundamental world-view of Indian society"[20] which is to be in harmony with the landscape. Even Islamic architecture in India, which is perhaps inspired by Indian architecture,[21] shares this hermetic or introverted quality — although the sense of 'inwardness' differs in its manifestation.[22]

Attitude to Spatial Organization

It is common in Indian architecture for various divers and diverse spaces to come together in multiple 'layers', sometimes overlapping, sometimes creating conjunctions and often resulting in a kind of geometric informality. Varkey argues that this layering of spatial organization is a response to the values of society, to behavioural patterns and to the climate of the region. The architectural result of this layering is that the space is seemingly without axis and the pathway through the space is forever shifting. Yet, it is not in the individuality of the spaces that the organization dwells, but rather in the ideational unity created by the merging and overlapping of parts within the whole.[23] Two prime examples of this are the temple city of Madurai in southern India and the city of Fatehpur Sikri.[24] Madurai is a set of enclosed rings, divided into squares, in which the most powerful point seems to be the centre. It is an introverted style of planning where the key movements are from the outside in—circling the sacred enclosure in a clockwise direction.[25] These

phenomenological movements also build, what B. V. Doshi describes as "several layers of choices."[26] In a slightly different manner, in Fatehpur Sikri the route of movement through the complex does not formally culminate in a single centre, but instead there are multiple centres which relate to each other and create the ideational unity.[27]

Attitude to Order

In the archaic texts of Indian architecture the role of measurement is to achieve harmony between the absolute and the quantifiable. Measurement gives finality to an architectural concept just as semiotically the word provides the base to the thought. According to the *Doctrine of Remainder* in Indian philosophy, an iota of imperfection must be present in any work of creation. Perfection was deemed as the prerogative of the Gods, whereas the work of humanity ingrained imperfection.[28] An architectural example of this concept is seen in the Kailash temple wherein it is the totality which gives order to the monolith; taken individually, nothing is perfect and precise. It follows from this realization, that the Indian notion of order is something that *accommodates* various divergent parts into one *ideational* unity. Thus the *whole* is something that incorporates and derives from the contextual and the circumstantial. Therefore, the attitude to order is *inclusive* rather than *exclusive* accepting complexities in an organic manner, rather than reducing the forms to some singular unity.[29] Thus, the manifested form has an inherent quality of multivalence in that it brings together, into a heterogeneous oneness, the demands of each institution, activity, or group.[30]

Attitude to Dimensional Order, Proportion

In combination, the Doctrine of Remainder and the symbolic value of numbers in Indian thought, point to the co-relation of character and proportions in a built form. This is seen best in the Tanjore temple complex where by obeying the principles of *Vastu Shastra*, the cella (*Garbhagriha*) gives birth to subsidiary shrines which are located according to the numerical values of their deities (numbers which are favourable to the particular deity). Though the underlying dimensional order is inherent in this process, it is not a geometric or mechanical notion of repetition. Instead, variations in magnitude and size of shrines follow some kind of genetic notion of repetition that is mostly organic in nature.[31] In the Tanjore temple every element in the composition corresponds and relates to the others in some ways. The complex composition forces the viewer to perceive the parts in order to perceive the whole. The aesthetic impression which results from this model is characteristically syncretistic calling up on a deep-grained sense of continuity.

Attitude to form

Form in Indian architecture, in a manner which is similar to the attitudes of spatial organization and order, is a conglomeration of diverse parts resulting into a complex unity. Being additive means that the forms are open and changeable. This accretive character permeates Indian architecture throughout the recognized periods in Indian history—from the Aryan to the Muslim and to the British invasions. Each period has seen a conscious mixing of styles and the creation of hybrid architectures. Doshi uses the examples of Indian music, food, and the way the *sari* (the traditional 5 and a half meter cloth worn by women in India) is worn, to illustrate the manner in which different combinations are allowed in the Indian tradition. According to Doshi, "such an attitude to design gives a choice to the onlooker, arouses interest, and modulates the space to generate different emotions in different persons."[32]

Attitude to Light

As essential characteristic of Indian architecture, from the earliest times, has been a response to natural lighting and the sun. As Charles Correa states, "[t]o build in India is to respond to climate."[33] Even the elevations and street patterns evolving from the response to the climate show sensitivity to the sun and the direct quality of its light. For Varkey, the challenge for Indian architecture has always been to "break the sun into shadow."[34] This is in part a pragmatic response to climate which is in turn an indicator of regional attitudes. In the north and northwestern parts of India the harsh sunlight needs to be controlled and in the south, sloping roofs, deep shades and overhangs, respond to the monsoons and high levels of tropical humidity.

Attitudes to Symbols and Meanings

Myths and symbols, in the forms of images and their 'biographies' have played a decisive role in the development of Indian thought and tradition.[35] Richard Davis believes that "[t]he lives of the Indian images […] are made and remade through their encounters with differing audiences, who reciprocally bring with them different ways of seeing and acting toward the images they encounter."[36] The grids of the *Vastu Purusha Mandala* or the symbols and concepts of *Shunya* or *Bindu* have been the generators of architecture in the past. They are themselves "metaphoric statements of culture's ethos."[37] Significantly, Christian Godin proposes that, "Indian thought, like Indian religion, from which it cannot be separated, is essentially iconic."[38]

Yet, it is important to note that even though the images, symbols, or myths have had their own individualities or identities, they "take on new roles and new meanings in response to

the changing world around them."[39] Denying the "traditional art historical concern with origins", Davis proposes an expanded frame of reference for viewing Indian religious objects—"one that accepts contingency, instability, and plurality in the identities of images."[40] This is what Varkey means when he says that "this symbolism was not absolute or universal but one which in manifestation continually accommodated to local and contextual reality."[41] Identity is constantly being reconstructed.

Yet underpinning Varkey's eight constants is an additional attitude which, when uncovered, elucidates the concern for regional identity. This ninth constant, which is tacitly and invisibly assumed in the eight others, concerns the cyclical nature of change of Indian society, and in Indian architecture. The ninth constant, which could be called an "Attitude to creative renewal and transformation", is never specifically mentioned by Varkey, and its role cannot be deduced by logic, yet it is perceptible within Varkey's cultural and spatial framework.

Attitude to creative renewal and transformation

All of Varkey's constants depend on a deeply infused understanding of the concept of the unfinished or the remainder in Indian thought. This concept recognizes the importance of 'imperfection', thereby acknowledging that something 'perfect' is beyond human achievement. This is the sole driving principle of the 'Doctrine of Remainder' in Indian thought and it is essential to the 'The Attitude to Order' as previously discussed. Thus the remainder cannot be inert—on the contrary, it is on the basis of this remainder that *everything* can begin again. The principle celebrates life in its conception, in its sustenance, and in its death, recognizing in the process that death does not mean *the* end. Indian art has always been an art of proliferation. Moreover, it also has an inherent quality of limitless syncretism, giving the civilization a certain degree of tolerance and enabling its acceptance of various diverse ways of life.

Varkey's eight constants and the derived ninth constant in particular, question the very need to worry about a loss of identity. The first and the second generation of post independence architects were constantly trying to negotiate a compromise between (1) their education and experience (which more or less was western-oriented, or Corbusier/Kahn influenced)[42], and (2) the demands of a nation unexpectedly worried about its identity.[43] The result of such endeavours unfortunately ended up canonizing certain architectural styles and patterns from the past, and certain ancient towns (Fatehpur Sikri, Jaisalmer, Madurai) as archetypes of "Indian" architecture. Even the writings of this period, which undertook a renewed interest in ancient towns and cities of India, seem to search for a unifying "Indianness" in architecture. What was not taken into account was that, in considering the works of the masters like Doshi, Correa, Raje, Rewal,

Jain, as exemplary post-colonial efforts in trying to solve the problems of identity, one was repeating the colonial attitude of appropriating one possible past and projecting it as *the* only past. This setting of exemplars or "exemplification", as Prakash warns, is born out of a "desire for anchoring [the past]" and should be "best left suspended".[44] Under such circumstances, it is tempting to consider a solution, which can accommodate the ninth attitude (including Varkey's eight) and still answer the pragmatic concerns of identity in contemporary Indian architecture. The following section tests Tzonis and Lefaivre's reading of Critical Regionalism to see if it can accommodate this solution.

Tzonis and Lefaivre's Critical Regionalism

In this age of globalization, where the anthropologist Arjun Appadurai has already proposed a "rupture" in the society,[45] the issues of identity constructions take on a different colour. The theory of Critical Regionalism as proposed by Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre looks appropriate for responding to the present crisis of identity in Indian architecture. Tzonis and Lefaivre's Critical Regionalism is founded on the writings of Lewis Mumford, who incorporated such diverse fields as social history, cultural history, architectural history and the history of science in his writings.[46] Moreover, Tzonis and Lefaivre's Critical Regionalism takes account of globalisation (which is being experienced by a nation-state like India), giving the theory a quality of universal applicability. The salient points of Tzonis and Lefaivre's Critical Regionalism could be summarized as 'Region' and the 'Antinomy' in Critical Regionalism. These will each be considered in turn.

According to Tzonis and Lefaivre, the definition of "place" or "region" in Critical Regionalism goes beyond "ethnicity" and against the "grain of nationalist insularity".[47] Consequently, "place" or "region" today should be understood not as a "static closed [entity] corresponding to similarly invariant, insular [group]."[48] Rather place should be seen as relational to the events occurring globally. This is validated in the writings of Appadurai, when he says that, "human motion, the volatility of images, and the conscious identity-producing activities of nation states lend a fundamentally unstable and perspectival quality to social life".[49] Appadurai, in his *Modernity at Large*, asserts that the "ephemeral" quality of a region, in the present era is due to globalisation. He confirms that;

> […] locality itself is a historical product and that the histories through which localities emerge are eventually subject to the dynamics of the global.[50]

Globalisation has necessitated the consideration of the new global cultural economy and region as "complex, overlapping, disjunctive order[s]" which are no longer comprehensible by the existing "center-periphery models".[51] The complexities result from

the fundamental disjunctures that exist between economy, culture, and politics, due to globalisation. Tzonis and Lefaivre's concept of "place" or "region" echoes Appadurai's concept of locality as "primarily relational and contextual, rather than as scalar or spatial".[52] Thus the redefinition of place or region forms the basis for the development of Tzonis and Lefaivre's Critical Regionalism. In India, economic liberalization in the early 1990s and the pressure of globalisation, has caused the demographic drift of some regions and issues away from the regional towards the urban.[53] This drift has resulted in the development of the regional architectural form from concentric to multi-centric then to shapeless entities still dependent on a single central government control. Thus, in this age of globalisation, Tzonis and Lefaivre's 'region' can be seen to be equally applicable to India as well.

Having established the definition of *region* in Critical Regionalism, the second and the most crucial element of Tzonis and Lefaivre's concept, is the inherent antinomy in the theory—that is embedded in the word 'critical'. Critical Regionalism is "self-examining, self-questioning, self-evaluating" and thus is innately confrontational not only to the world, but also to itself.[54] This 'criticality' is supposed to question the viewers "about the legitimacy of the very regionalist tradition to which they belong."[55] Unlike the process of surrendering consciousness in the shift from familiarization to over-familiarization (as was the case, according to Tzonis and Lefaivre, in the earlier forms of regionalism), Critical Regionalism sets up a "hard cognitive negotiation" between the viewer and the building.[56] In the process, it is argued that Critical Regionalism alerts us not only to the "loss of place and community, but also to our 'reflective' incapability to become aware of this loss while it was occurring."[57] Alternatively, Critical Regionalism suggests that, "all that remains of an original, unitary body of regional architecture are shards, fragments, bits, and pieces that have been torn from their original context."[58]

Tzonis and Lefaivre propose the method of "defamiliarisation" as a means of achieving the quality of self-reflectiveness in architecture.[59] According to Tzonis and Lefaivre, the earlier forms of regionalism rendered the architectural consciousness insensible because they did not "prick the conscience".[60] What is different in Critical Regionalism is that the regionalist elements are incorporated in a "strange", manner rather than in a "familiar" manner.[61] Critical Regionalism de-automatizes perception, by setting up a *metacognitive* state in the viewer's mind. Tzonis and Lefaivre refer to these strangely incorporated regional elements as "appropriately chosen poetic devices of defamiliarisation" in their discussion of Critical Regionalism.[62] These poetic devices of defamiliarisation depend on the way in which an architect perceives and interprets history and then uses place-defining elements or concepts drawn from past traditions. Tzonis and Lefaivre stress the universal applicability of Critical Regionalism when they say that the "operations of identifying, decomposing, recomposing regional elements in a 'defamiliarising' way is part of the universal set of skills of architects."[63] This implies that the poetic devices cannot be generalized. These

poetic devices may belong to a larger group or pool of devices, which has developed as civilization grew; adapting to differing climatic and social needs. However, it would be absurd to list such poetic devices, as a checklist of elements or themes to be followed in order to realize Tzonis and Lefaivre's Critical Regionalism in a building. Tzonis and Lefaivre have themselves argued against such an attitude;

> […]we have not tried to identify any general criteria of style. We have not provided answers to the pragmatic questions such as "are wooden houses less atopic than concrete ones?" or "are concrete cafeterias more anomic than brick ones?" we have not made check lists of physical design criteria of how to be a critical regionalist. And for a good reason. The poetics of critical regionalism does not include a set of design rules of partitioning, motifs and *genera* as does the definition of classicism, the picturesque or de Stijl.[64]

Implications

From this analysis it becomes clear that the regionalist strand of contemporary Indian architecture may be viewed through Tzonis and Lefaivre's Critical Regionalism. The theory is appropriate because it relates to the social changes in India, which due to globalization, point to the kind of 'rupture' Appadurai alludes to in his Modernity at Large. It is necessarily the job of the intelligent architect to recall or re-interpret the past, using appropriately chosen poetic devices of defamiliarisation from the constants discussed in this paper, in a manner of creative renewal. However, recalling the antinomy in Critical Regionalism, it should be realized that the reinterpretation should not be nostalgic, but should reflect the present situation, which is of a rupture in the society with no longer a "postulated organic world of regional artifacts."[65] Moreover none of the efforts should be canonized (as was done in the case of the first and second generation post-independence architects) to the extent that they become references for future generations of architects (and hence stagnant processes). The processes of re-invention and re-interpretation should be questioned and in doing so fresh experimentation should be encouraged. The above discussion also implies that one architect's choice as well as interpretation of poetic devices of defamiliarisation may differ entirely from another. Thus Critical Regionalism is not a style – it is, as Tzonis has argued elsewhere, an attitude.[66] This attitude, as can be seen, facilitates the derived ninth attitude of creative renewal and transformation in Indian architecture. However Critical Regionalism could be just one of the many concepts of architectural representations in the present era, and this paper does not intend to ascribe a special importance to this theory. In doing so, the paper recognizes the modern Indian society's polyvalence (described aptly by Appadurai) – whose system of rationalization has largely grown to be value free – as Colquhoun has said somewhere, "oscillating between a number of hypotheses, none of which [could be] completely confirmed or denied."[67]

Shaji K. Panicker is completing his Masters in Architecture from the University of Newcastle, Australia. Under the guidance of Professor Michael J. Ostwald and John Moore, his thesis examines the works of a couple of architects in post-liberalization India, with the framework of "Critical Regionalism" by Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre. Professor Michael Ostwald is Head of the School of Architecture and Built Environment University of Newcastle, Australia. Michael Ostwald's research in architectural theory explores the relationship between architecture, philosophy, mathematics, and virtual environments.

---

[1] Vikramaditya Prakash, 'Identity Production in Postcolonial Indian Architecture: Re-Covering What We Never Had,' in Gulsum Baydar Nalbantoglu and Wong Chong Thai (eds) *Postcolonial Space(S)*, New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997, pp. 39-52.

[2] Ritu Bhatt, 'Indianizing Indian Architecture: A Postmodern Tradition,' *Traditional dwellings and settlements review: journal of the International Association for the Study of Traditional Environments*, 13,1 (2001): 43-51.

[3] Charles Correa in a foreword in *The New Asian Architecture: Vernacular Traditions and Contemporary Style*, by William S.W. Lim, and Tan Hock Beng.

[4] Charles Correa, foreword, *The New Asian Architecture: Vernacular Traditions and Contemporary Style*.

[5] Uttam C Jain, 'Regionalism- What Regionalism?' *Architecture + Design*, 17,6 (2000): 34-38.

[6] Raj Rewal, 1984.

[7] A G Krishna Menon, 'Interrogating Modern Indian Architecture,' *Architecture + Design*, 17,6 (2000): 24-28.

[8] Chauhan, Uttara. "Back to School." Indian Architect & Builder (1999): pp. 119.

[9] Ibid., p. 129.

[10] Krishna Menon in his article, 'Interrogating Modern Indian Architecture,' points out this seemingly inherent quality in the contemporary discussions of identity in Indian architecture. Menon calls the "Chandigarh-Delhi-Ahmedabad-Mumbai axis", the "architectural belt" of India and laments at the positioning of all discussions regarding the issues of tradition and modernity in this belt. It emanates a wrong idea to an external audience, for whom the diaspora of Indian situations is largely unknown and incomprehensible. It projects the "architectural belt" as an exemplary area in the vast landscape of India, where the issues of identity and modernity are confronted.

[11] Professor Kurula Varkey, one time associate of architect B.V. Doshi, was the director of the School of Architecture, Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology (CEPT), Ahmedabad, and was responsible for the study program at Ahmedabad. This paper discusses Varkey's eight 'psychic-cultural constants' as it appeared in *Architecture + Design*, 'The Essence of the Indian Tradition: An Interpretation.' The author uses Varkey's description to formulate the 9th constant, which, the author believes, underlies all the eight constants of Varkey.

[12] Sunil Khilnani, *The Idea of India*, London: Hamish Hamilton Ltd, 1997, p. 155.

[13] Khilnani, *The Idea of India*, pp. 155-156.

[14] Varkey, 'The Essence of the Indian Tradition: An Interpretation,' p. 98-117.

[15] Varkey, 'The Essence of the Indian Tradition: An Interpretation,' p. 98-117.

[16] Sashikala Ananth, *The Penguin Guide to Vaastu: The Classical Indian Science of Architecture and Design*, New Delhi: VIKING: Penguin Books India (P) Ltd., 1998.

[17] Vibhuti Chakrabarti, *Indian Architectural Theory: Contemporary Uses of Vastu Vidya*, Surrey: Curzon Press, 1998.

[18] Chakrabarti, *Indian Architectural Theory: Contemporary Uses of Vastu Vidya*, p. 37.

[19] Madhu Khanna, 'Space, Time and Nature in Indian Architecture,' *Architecture + Design*, 8,5 (1991): 51-53, 55-63.

[20] Khanna, 'Space, Time and Nature in Indian Architecture,' p.61.

[21] E. B Havell, *Encyclopaedia of Architecture in the Indian Subcontinent*, New Delhi: Aryan Books International, 2000.

[22] For an elaborate discussion on Persian building tradition, read *The Sense of Unity* by Ardalan, Nader and Laleh Bakhtiar.

[23] Varkey, 'The essence of the Indian tradition: an interpretation,' pp. 98-117.

[24] Kurula Varkey, 'Themes and Ideas,' *Architecture + Design* (1989): 28-35.

[25] Kevin Lynch, *A Theory of Good City Form*, Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1981.

[26] B. V. Doshi, 'Between Notion and Reality,' *Architecture + Design,* (1989): 20-23.

[27] For this reason, Fatehpur Sikri is seen as the culmination of the synthesis of Islamic architecture with Indian. Unlike Indian architecture Islamic architecture was less elaborately layered and followed a strict hierarchical order within a non-deviating axis. Varkey, 'Themes and Ideas,' p.28.

[28] Varkey, 'Themes and Ideas,' p.33.

[29] Varkey, 'Themes and Ideas,' p.33.

[30] Varkey, 'Themes and Ideas,' p.33.

[31] Varkey, 'Themes and Ideas,' p.35.

[32] Doshi, 'Between Notion and Reality,' pp. 20-23.

[33] Charles Correa: Form Follows Climate, London : Pidgeon Audio Visual : [World Microfilms distributor], 1980.

[34] Varkey, 'Themes and Ideas.' p.36.

[35] Richard H Davis, *Lives of Indian Images*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press., 1997.

[36] Davis, *Lives of Indian Images*, p. 263.

[37] Varkey, 'Themes and Ideas,' p.37.

[38] Christian Godin, 'The Notion of Totality in Indian Thought,' *Diogenes*, 48/1,189 (2000).

[39] Davis, *Lives of Indian Images*, p. 261.

[40] Davis, *Lives of Indian Images*, p. 261.

[41] Varkey, 'Themes and Ideas,' p.37.

[42] Lang, Jon, Madhavi Desai, and Miki Desai,– *Architecture and Independence*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997.

[43] Bhatt, 'Indianizing Indian Architecture: A Postmodern Tradition,' pp. 43-51.

[44] Prakash, 'Identity Production in Postcolonial Indian Architecture: Re-Covering What We Never Had,' p. 52.

[45] Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, Public Worlds. Eds. Dilip Gaonkar and Benjamin Lee. Vol. 1. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996.

[46] Liane Lefaivre and Alexander Tzonis, 'Lewis Mumford's Regionalism,' *Design Book Review:* DBR, Winter.19 (1991): 20-25.

[47] Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre, 'Why Critical Regionalism Today?' in Kate Nesbitt (ed), *Theorizing a New Agenda for Architecture: An Anthology of Architectural Theory 1965-1995*, New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996. pp. 484-492.

[48] Tzonis, Alexander, and Liane Lefaivre, 'Why Critical Regionalism Today?,' p. 485.

[49] Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, p. 183.

[50] Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, p. 183.

[51] Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, p. 32.

[52] Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*. p. 178.

[53] During the late 1980s, driven by the threat of a serious fiscal crisis and pressurized by the International Monetary Fund, the Indian government was forced to think about opening up its insulated economy. Other

international developments, like the collapse of the Soviet Union, the abandonment of social democratic policies in Europe, the Gulf War, etc. put further pressure on the Indian economy. The process of India's economic liberalization was thus begun in 1991.

[54] Tzonis, Alexander, and Liane Lefaivre, 'Why Critical Regionalism Today?,' p. 488.

[55] Tzonis, Alexander, and Liane Lefaivre, 'Why Critical Regionalism Today?,' p. 488.

[56] Tzonis, Alexander, and Liane Lefaivre, 'Why Critical Regionalism Today?,' p. 489.

[57] Tzonis, Alexander, and Liane Lefaivre, 'Why Critical Regionalism Today?,' p. 489.

[58] Alan Colquhoun, 'The Concept of Regionalism' in Gulsum Baydar Nalbantoglu and Wong Chong Thai (eds), *Postcolonial Space(S)*, New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997. pp. 13-23.

[59] 'Defamiliarization' is a word borrowed from the Russian formalist writer, Victor Shklovsky. For a detailed reading, refer Lemon, Lee, and Marion J. Reis (eds), *Russian Formalist Criticism: Four Essays*, p. 4-5.

[60] Shklovsky uses this phrase, 'pricking the conscience' in the essay 'Art as Technique', where he discusses Tolstoy's 'defamiliarizing' style of writing. Tzonis and Lefaivre by using this phrase infer that Critical Regionalism in architecture makes the viewing experience as distant, hard to grasp, difficult, even disturbing.

[61] Tzonis, Alexander, and Liane Lefaivre, 'Why Critical Regionalism Today?.' p. 489.

[62] Tzonis, Alexander, and Liane Lefaivre, 'Why Critical Regionalism Today?.' p. 489.

[63] Tzonis, Alexander, and Liane Lefaivre, 'Why Critical Regionalism Today?,' p. 489.

[64] Tzonis, Alexander, and Liane Lefaivre, 'Why Critical Regionalism Today?,' p. 490.

[65] Colquhoun, 'The Concept of Regionalism,' pp. 18-19.

[66] Tzonis, Alexander. 'Critical Regionalism: An Attitude, Not a Style,' *AI Architecture of Israel*, 19 (1994): 78-89.

[67] Colquhoun, 'The Concept of Regionalism' p. 19.