This article explores how the “social” and the “spatial” are defined and represented in discourses on tradition in TDSR. I discuss some of the prominent debates in the journal since its inception, and argue that a paradigm shift is underway, in which discourses that define traditional environments as socially and geographically isolated, “nonurban,” “preindustrial,” or “premodern” spaces (and often located in the so-called Third World) are giving way to those which constitute “tradition” as a contested site of power relations in a global context. I suggest that this represents an important shift of emphasis away from idealist conceptions of tradition, to those which explore how it is grounded in asymmetrical relations of power that shape, and are shaped by, among others, the state, the global economy, the built environment professions, and writing on tradition itself.

The last three decades have been defined by a series of dramatic changes in the relationship between time and space. An intensive period of social and spatial restructuring following the global recession of 1973-75 has been marked by the expansion and reorganization of world financial markets, accelerated travel times, and rapid advances in information technology. The academic context in which these changes have been studied has undergone a parallel series of transformations. Increases in world migration have resulted in demographic shifts within the Anglo-American academic system. Oppositional movements within the academy
have emerged to question Eurocentric, patriarchal forms of knowledge, and have led to counter-hegemonic analytic spaces that have in some cases become institutionalized themselves. Intellectuals are increasingly linked together in “communities of method” that span across national boundaries. It is now possible to speak of the “cosmopolitics” of intellectual identity; and the practices of “flexible citizenship” among a global professional-managerial class. In response to these changes, critics and theorists in a wide range of disciplines have argued that space (from the virtual space of the Internet, to the “transnational” space of commodity production) has become the medium of social change, and hence political struggle. Central to these arguments is the assertion that space can no longer be regarded as a static container for “social processes” that unfold over time, but instead must be theorized as a social process in itself.

It is in the context of burgeoning debates on the politics of space, not only in relation to the city but also between “spaces of knowledge” in the academy, that the study of Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review presented here first developed. This article is part of a larger study of discourses of architecture, urbanism, and the built environment between 1960 and 1995 that I undertook in an effort to understand the changing relationship between the social and the spatial, both within and between built-environment disciplines. The research was initially undertaken in the context of five English-language scholarly journals. I selected journals as the frame for the study not only because they are central to formalizing and disseminating theoretical debates within disciplines, but because of their connections to academic structures of knowledge and power. Journals are embedded in the larger institutional structures of the academy and their circuits of cultural capital. They are also institutions in themselves, and define distinctive geographical, social and historical spaces of representation. As such, journals offer an opportunity to explore the relationship between discourse, its institutional supports, and the wider social and historical context of both.

In addition to TDSR, the publications that composed the larger study included the Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, the oldest journal of architectural history in the U.S.; Assemblage, a journal of architectural theory, design and criticism; the International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, concerned with the political economy of urban and regional development; and Environment and Planning D: Society and Space, a journal that has played an important role in adapting various forms of social and critical theory to the analysis of geography at various scales. When considered as a composite space, the journals bring together a wider range of theoretical positions typically isolated from each other by divisions between disciplines. Their juxtaposition in a comparative critical framework revealed their silences and limitations, while also suggesting how, in the context of emerging discourses on the politics of space, these might be overcome through transdisciplinary research practices.

TDSR is situated midway in the range of spatial scales and analytical systems encompassed by my study. Its emphasis on traditional environments exceeds the object-centered focus on individual buildings common to much architectural discourse. At the same time, its concern with ensembles of buildings and settlements means that its research is considerably less abstract than much of the writing in geography or urban studies, where urban localities, regions, and territories are often represented from an elevated, omnipotent viewpoint. While allowing an understanding of large-scale social determination in relation equally to large-scale conceptions of space, such writing often overlooks ensembles of buildings and urban space as social and historical artifacts that signify and transmit meaning.

TDSR also represents a point of mediation between different conceptions of human agency—defined on the one hand by architectural writing, which often constitutes the architect as a solitary author, and on the other by social-science discourses, which tend to represent buildings as epiphenomena of urban processes. With its stated emphasis on dwellings, settlements and environments, TDSR moves away from exclusive focus on professionalized architectural production and toward “cultural landscapes” produced according to the shared values of “ordinary people.” At the same time, the shift in scale does not, as is sometimes the case in geography and urban studies, preclude a study of the signifying dimension of built environments: indeed, one of the primary concerns of the journal is the transmission of tradition over time through shared cultural practices.

TDSR and its publisher and parent organization, the International Association for the Study of Traditional Environments (iaste), are also important objects of study because they attempt to construct an alternative to the ethnocentric conventions of “high” architectural scholarship, with its attention to monumental, professionally designed spaces in the metropolitan “First World.” Many of the buildings and environments studied in TDSR are located in the newly industrializing countries of the so-called “Third World,” and increasingly its contributing writers are based in institutions outside the Anglo-American academic system. TDSR may therefore offer insights into how to bridge between the social and the spatial; object-centered and process-oriented discourses; and between models of academic production concerned primarily with the First World and those that reflect critically on changing conditions in a globally interdependent world.

DEFINING TRADITION

Any attempt to investigate the critical limits of TDSR’s discourse on “traditional environments” must begin with an examination of the meanings built up around the analytical category of “tradition.” Since its inception in 1989, TDSR has bound together competing, and in some respects incommensurable, definitions of the term. These have been intertwined with changing social conditions and the broader history of discourses on tradition. It is important to sketch a brief and partial outline of this history, because aspects of prior debates and positions continue to influence writing in the journal today.
Within the field of traditional and vernacular building, definitions of tradition have emerged historically, together with their opposite, the field of practice and knowledge that defines “Architecture.” Necdet Teymur and Yasemin Aysan have suggested that two discourses have developed within this subordinate field of thought. Both define tradition in relation to the terms and conditions of dominant architectural practices, but distinctly different sets of values have become attached to each. The first, primarily negative in character, is the one to which all the practices that are refused or disqualified from the domain of “high” architecture are consigned. Teymur and Aysan argued that these exclusions are based on normative categories of classification that can be traced to the knowledge about “primitive societies” associated with the emergence of anthropology as a discipline and its basis in the writings of early anthropologists and explorers. Here tradition is associated with “backward” societies, thereby justifying the exclusion of non-Western buildings from the “high” architectural canon:

... as far as architectural classifications are concerned, many of these explorers justified the exclusion of buildings of these people from the domain of architecture by defining them as “barbaric,” “inferior forms,” “ugly” and “ill” places. Even when there were attempts to look at primitive buildings as the origins of architecture, the former were either reduced to classical principles to prove the evolution of existing rules and canons or they were associated with “primitive” forms of humanity measured by the yardstick of the “civilized” societies—which mainly proved their superiority. . . .

The second discourse is essentially positive and recuperative in character, and constitutes the traditional as a superior alternative to the dominant practices of architecture prevailing at a given historical moment. Here would be included not only the concepts of anti-classical “national” architecture favoring “spontaneous and natural aspects” as it emerged in France following the French Revolution, but also various national vernacular traditions that developed in response to discontent with the effects of rapid industrialization — such as the arts-and-crafts movement, the English vernacular tradition, and the Deutscher Werkbund movement.

In their book on the Jurgendstil buildings of Helsinki, Moorehouse et al. interpreted late-nineteenth-century Finnish vernacular building as a national style motivated by international events, and one that drew on investigation of particular Finnish vernacular forms. Interestingly, the authors described how this national architecture was strategically disseminated in international contexts in order to foreground the threat to Finland’s sovereignty as a nation by Russian expansionism:

... Finland sought to draw attention to the encroachment of its autonomy abroad, and international exhibitions and fairs were attended, such as the Paris World exhibition in 1908. . . .

The authors also interpreted the constitution of national vernacular architecture as “international” in another sense: they argued that Finnish architects and designers were inspired by the example of similar movements, particularly in France and Germany, which reached them through a rapidly expanding international media.

This international production of national architecture exchanged knowledges and drew upon sources that were limited to the industrializing nations of Europe. Teymur and Aysan have suggested that it was not until the 1960s that a recuperative, or positive discourse of tradition “outside the West” emerged in Euro-American architectural education. This effort drew upon practices of building in the Third World in order to both challenge and reform the practices of design and education in the United Kingdom and the U.S., but it did so largely in terms of what the West (and immediately post-colonial architects) were helping to construct in the Third World. Furthermore, an effort was made to link the rapidly growing interest in “traditional” buildings of the Third World to two geo-cultural events: the need for academic research to inform economic aid and development programs initiated following post-World War II decolonization; and a growing dissatisfaction with the aesthetic principles and design ideologies associated with architectural modernism.

These events converged into an ever-growing interest not only in so-called primitive societies, but also in the study of under-developed countries and cultures, rural settlements, and communities in local, regional, and national idioms of architecture. This growing interest coincided with the realization of the results of urbanization and the effects of international idioms in planning and architecture. . . .

The underlying tendency in these debates has been to construct (if in a benevolent fashion) a “primitive world,” that is separated both geographically and temporally from one which is “modern” and “industrialized.”

My research has suggested that the dominant mode of representation in TDSR between its inception and 1995 extended and developed these recuperative models of investigation. In the 1989 collection of papers presented at the first TASTE conference, TDSR’s co-editors, Nezar AlSayyad and Jean-Paul Bourdier, stated that

[A] thing is “traditional” if it satisfies two criteria: it is the result of a process of transmission, and it has cultural origins involving common people. Professional traditions satisfy the former, but not the latter condition. . . . buildings and spaces which are deliberately non-academic. . . . provide for the simple activities and enterprises of ordinary people. . . . strongly relate to place through respect for local conventions, and . . . are produced by a process of personalized thought and feeling rather than utilitarian logic. . . .
Here tradition was defined through the opposition to professionalized, impersonal and “utilitarian logic.” In a similar manner, IASTE’s research on tradition has been defined in opposition to the “excessive disciplinization” of the subject, as an “open and irrevocable interdisciplinary studies arena.” As somewhat less pointed definition of tradition continues to be published in the IASTE mission statement. This states that IASTE is concerned with the comparative and cross-cultural study of “traditional habitat as expression of informal cultural conventions.”

Discourses that define traditional “habitats” positively, in opposition to an advancing capitalist modernization, have played an important role in TDSR, particularly in the initial stages of the journal’s development. I examine such representations in greater detail below as “narratives of the ethnographic pastoral.” At the same time, however, a range of different, and in many respects contradictory, positions have emerged alongside these, which I refer to as self-reflexive narratives. They are marked by ambivalence and even outright skepticism toward their “positive” counterparts, and they have exerted increasing influence in the journal since 1995. This change is underscored by the program of the 2000 IASTE conference, entitled “The End of Tradition?”

THE ETHNOGRAPHIC PASTORAL

I have borrowed the term “ethnographic pastoral” from James Clifford, who has used it to describe the allegorical register of academic writing that describes (often distant and “exotic”) cultures from a specific temporal distance and with a presumption of transience or mobility on the part of the writer. Often written from a “lovingly detailed but disengaged standpoint,” these discourses attempt to salvage historical worlds as textual fabrications,

... disconnected from ongoing lived milieux and suitable for moral allegorical appropriations by individual readers. In the properly ethnographic pastoral this textualizing structure is generalized ... to a wider capitalist topography of Western/non-Western, city/country oppositions. “Primitive,” non-literate, underdeveloped, tribal societies are constantly yielding to progress, “losing” their traditions ... the most problematic, and politically charged aspect of this encoding is its relentless placement of others in a present-becoming past.

As Clifford noted, one of the central characteristics of the ethnographic pastoral is its tendency to isolate the society studied in time and space. The first step in the abstraction of the traditional settlement from “ongoing lived milieux” in TDSR occurs through contextualizing descriptions that emphasize the traditional society’s geographic isolation. The traditional settlement is initially portrayed as being surrounded by extensive, and largely unbroken, natural boundaries — usually either tropical jungle, ocean, or both — which separates the settlement from the rest of the world. These descriptions tend to combine physical separation with social, economic and political isolation not only from a larger world economy, but from national, regional and local forms of social organization that operate beyond the scale of the traditional setting. Such settlements have been described in TDSR as “elaborate compounds nestled in the foothills,” or located on plateaus “broken by valleys and entangled ravines.” They are far-away and “insular,” separated from the rest of the world by deep bays, and hidden in landscapes whose “configuration is ... peculiar.” Such a condition allows them to evolve peacefully, untouched by outside intervention or influence. These geographical frames not only create “natural” boundaries around the settlements studied, but they reinforce the representation of these societies as organic outgrowths that coexist with the spiritualized landscape that surrounds them.

The spaces of the ethnographic pastoral are also framed by their own, often premodern temporality, appearing as fragments of a remote and distant past that have survived into the present. Their very existence in a state that is largely untouched by the outside world makes them valuable, and also adds urgency to the need to preserve them textually. They are isolated as pure or uncontaminated examples of tradition (and hence abstracted from large-scale social processes), thereby making the clarity of the transmission process one of the primary criteria for their selection as objects of analysis. Joseph Aranha offered a paradigmatic example of this rationale in his 1991 article on traditional settlements in Nepal and Bali. He stated that

The processes of colonization and modernization have changed the forms of traditional settlements in much of South and Southeast Asia. Fortunately, a few places remain where patterns of living and physical forms remain largely untouched by the forces of change. Places like these provide an opportunity to study architectural environments that are determined by factors other than functionalism and profit.

The strength of a collective inner spirit also forms a powerful protective barrier around societies of the ethnographic pastoral. Because traditional settlements are represented as the projection or “transmission” of shared values, each traditional society assumes the status of a collective spiritual consciousness whose outer limit coincides with the physical boundaries of the settlement. A strong or vigorous traditional community is therefore one that has not succumbed to outside influence. In this way the resilience of traditional architecture is linked to the enduring presence of a common inner spirit, which may be spiritual, religious, or even poetic in nature. Saif-Ul-Haq, for example, suggested in a 1994 article on architecture within the folk tradition that “[t]he roots of traditional Bangladeshi architecture are dug deep into the psyche of the common people. [Bangladesh is] a land where poetry and philosophy are inherent in every person, ...”

At the same time, however, tradition can survive only if it becomes detached, not only from its larger “lived milieux” but from the immediate exigencies of everyday life within the tradi-
tional settlement. Although traditional environments are represented as the projection of common values, the transmission of tradition is predicated on the assumption that those values may become tacit, and so be passed down from generation to generation without question. As Maria-Christina Georgali observed:

\[\ldots\] in order for tradition to survive, certain elements and rules of composition must acquire a certain typicality independent of their time and place of generation. Such forms may be thought to have acquired an a-spatial and a-historical nature. \ldots\]

As suggested above, the journal’s discourse of the ethnographic pastoral has tended to associate each side of the modern/traditional dyad with contrasting models of social organization. Thus, modern societies are represented as dynamic, constantly changing, and invasive; while traditional societies are represented as passive, assenting collectively to the discipline of tradition, changing only in response to external pressures over which they apparently have little or no control, yet remaining unified and free of internal conflict. According to this schema, the world is effectively divided into two geographical and conceptual zones, each isolated from the other. Yet because the meaning of the dyad has been produced through opposition, the interrelated meaning of the terms “traditional” and “modern” is seldom examined. Traditional societies are also abstracted from time and space by the way in which archival sources are used in the discourses of the ethnographic pastoral. As noted above, the traditional settlement is frequently represented as a projection of shared cultural values, usually linked to religious or spiritual beliefs that are considered unique to a particular group rooted in a specific place outside historical determination. Because the documentation of such beliefs is considered to be objective or transparent to the reality they describe, rather than constitutive of it. The logic discovered in the analysis of photographs and maps is presumed to pre-exist the process of representation, when in fact the media chosen, and the position from they are analyzed have determinate effects on how traditional settlements are understood.\textsuperscript{22}

The documentation stage of the writing process thus reduces the traditional settlement to a series of morphological relationships that are mapped through putatively objective techniques. In this way, the traditional environment is made over into a research object that is congruent with the techniques that are used to analyze it; it is reconstituted according to the protocols of the researcher before analysis can begin. The extensive critical literature on ethnography and anthropology that has emerged over the last decade has devoted considerable attention to problematizing the relations of power masked by the apparent neutrality of the ethnographic observer.\textsuperscript{23} The most significant aspect of this critique for TDSR concerns the way in which the desires and values of the observer silently shape the conditions observed: the indigene and his or her inhabitation become ut-text of the observer’s fantasies of the “other,” as an inverted projection of his or her own “modern” subject position.\textsuperscript{24}

### THE ARCHITECTURAL TRANSLATION OF TRADITION

Although the environments studied in the research outlined above are represented as the projection of the shared cultural values of traditional societies, they can also be understood as projections of the shared professional values of the architects and academics who study them. Many of articles in TDSR have been presented as “case studies” that attempt to textually preserve a disappearing world heritage. However, the translation process they initiate opens the traditional environment to multiple appropriations by professionalized architectural practice. TDSR has published only a few examples of contemporary architectural production directly influenced by traditional “codes and maxims.” It is more common for articles to imply general lessons for professional practice based on traditional cases. Thus, the traditional environment is constituted as a potential storehouse of abstract hierarchies and modes of spatial organization that, once removed from their traditional materialization, can be adapted and applied to “modern” practice.

When leading figures involved with TDSR and IASTE have turned their attention to defining the purposes of the journal and the association, they have suggested that the study of tradition should be developed as an interdisciplinary science that will help inform/reform professional action. For example, in papers commenting on the future direction of IASTE and TDSR presented at the association’s 1996 conference, both Amos Rapoport and Paul Oliver linked the future of the discourse of tradition to the improvement of professional practice. According to Oliver, IASTE’s scholarship should lead to “interdisciplinary action based on integrated and evaluated research.”\textsuperscript{25} Rapoport argued that the primary function of the conferences and the journal should be to influence and improve design, planning and development.\textsuperscript{26} For Rapoport, traditional environments provide a laboratory in which the “environment-behavior studies” (EBS) scientist might observe relations between humans and environments in their simplest, archetypal forms.\textsuperscript{27} The EBS paradigm suggests that there are fundamental human responses to the built environment that transcend time and place. After these have been effectively isolated and studied in “simple” traditional settings, they can then be abstracted and applied to all forms of building. The goal of the journal and the society should therefore be, according to Rapoport,
the development of an “interdisciplinary science” of tradition that is concerned with “learning from the traditional domain”:

... the five conferences and TDSR have from the start emphasized one very important goal: learning from [tradition] for the purpose of the design, planning and development. 28

The suggestion that the study of tradition should form the basis of a new interdisciplinary science was also raised in Gerard Toffin’s paper presented at the 1992 IASTE conference. Toffin argued that TDSR and IASTE have played an important role in beginning to redefine Euro-American architectural history and theory by studying buildings for the way they represent “cultural identity.” 29 For Toffin, the purpose of studying tradition was to “decenter” Eurocentric models of architectural history and theory. However, he argued that this decentering should be undertaken in order to recenter existing structures of knowledge and power around the study of tradition. Toffin did not challenge the existence of professionalized knowledge and training located in powerful institutions in the West. Instead, his goal was to reform the canons of knowledge that define such institutions from within, and in doing so, develop a new and improved form of architectural history and theory, which he called “ethno-architecture.” 30 Toffin imagined the world represented by this new “composite science” as a mosaic or patchwork of distinctive cultural identities materialized in built form, each separate and distinct from the next. 31

Like Rapoport, Toffin claimed that the traditional environment offers a model that architects and ethnologists alike might learn from when seeking to understand how the “social, the mental, and the material” are “blended” together. While this relationship can be studied in any building, it is “particularly clear” in the traditional environment:

This interweaving is particularly clear in non-Western, “traditional” civilizations where all aspects of life are interconnected, and religion often controls all aspects of social life. Against all formalist temptations, Ethno-architecture grants man priority and gives privilege to the question of meaning. 32

The textual translation of the “traditional environment” into “traditional architecture” may be seen to begin with the titles of articles such as “You Are What You Build: Architecture as Identity among the Bamileke of West Cameroon.” But this process often continues in great depth, as authors classify the buildings they document as “architecture,” recoding a diverse array of structures into the professionalized language and discursive tropes of Euro-American architectural design. For example, after having written that “... the floor plan of the Newar house is laid out to the model of the Tantric Priests,” Joseph Aranha described the “layout of the plan,” translating each of the spaces he described into its Euro-American equivalent: the “lowest floor” contained “a small shop”; the second floor, a “private sleeping room”; the third floor, the “main room for public entertaining”; while the “top-most floor serves as the kitchen.” The facade, which contained “exquisitely carved windows,” maintained “vertical as well horizontal hierarchy.” 33

The traditional society is thus discursively constructed as a collective consciousness that materializes its common beliefs as the codes and maxims, or traditional canons, of Balinese / Samoan / West Cameroonian / Chinese / Turkish / Islamic architecture. Yet by stressing the opposition, rather than the co-implication between tradition and modernity, discourses of the ethnographic pastoral in TDSR have ironically tended to constitute a “traditional” version of the high architectural history and theory the journal has sought to challenge. The vision is of a corpus of “exquisitely crafted” ritual buildings of indigenous cultures that are physically and theoretically removed from the social and spatial processes of urban development. Such writing not only overlooks the potential of traditional buildings and modes of social organization for coping with, and even contesting, the processes of rapid urbanization, it also defers critical analysis of the global professionalization of tradition.

TRADITION AND CRITICAL REFLEXIVITY

A range of other theoretical positions have developed in TDSR that challenge those associated with narratives of the ethnographic pastoral. These first appeared as meta-critical reflections on the journal and its discourses. In these, the ironic exteriority of the participant/observer has not been entirely abandoned, but turned back on the text, making the representation of tradition and its consequences the object of study. Authors have questioned two of the primary characteristics of representations of traditional environments according to the ethnographic pastoral: their organization around dichotomies such as First World/Third World, East/West, modern/traditional, rational/intuitive, individual/collective, spiritual/capitalist etc.; and the tendency to represent societies through the viewpoint of an objective, unlocated subject. The latter concern has led to writing in which reflexivity defines a politics of intellectual identity, through the consideration of how one may position oneself in relation to an object of study.

Janet Abu-Lughod, in a 1992 article entitled “Disappearing Dichotomies,” stated that it is no longer possible to assume a correspondence between social formation and spatial location due to the proliferation of “intermediate types” that have characteristics associated with both the West and the Third World. In a comment with pointed relevance for TDSR, she stated that in an increasingly hybrid world, researchers have been forced to take smaller and smaller units of analysis in order to continue to work within homogeneous contexts:

In desperation we break off from the present globalization process some small pieces of relatively insulated “local” culture or regional specificity... we then put them into a residual category we call “traditional” or “vernacular”...
Abu-Lughod further argued that the noun “tradition,” with its object-like implications, should be superseded by a verb called “traditioning.” This, she suggested, would redefine tradition as “process not product” in which past practices and spaces are constantly recycled and reused to meet present needs.6

Dell Upton also questioned the tendency to divide the world into neatly opposed categories. In a 1991 article entitled “The Tradition of Change,” he suggested the concept of traditional architecture had paralyzed the study of vernacular landscapes. He argued that researchers are “too interested in continuity and authenticity” and “tend to ignore change and ambiguity.”36 He called for an “impure” understanding of the world, in which the static is replaced with the evanescent, and narratives of spatial and temporal fixity are replaced with those of migration.

Writing in 1997, Anthony King argued that such hybridity is not new, but is narrated as such because it is written by First World academics whose societies are only now beginning to experience the “plural” forms of ethnic composition long-established in the Third World through processes of colonization:

Cairo and Rio manifested the same “multicultural” qualities we associate with the modern metropolis over 100 years ago. The question is, from what position do we speak and more precisely “whose modernity” do we narrate?36

King questioned the very category of tradition (and any reform to its meanings), by suggesting that the use of the term is itself a mark of privilege held within a global system of knowledge and power:

... the notion of tradition as applied to buildings is temporally and spatially specific to our own, essentially global position, which assumes a knowledge of many architectures, many others (or cultures) and a hegemonic overview. The question is how much reference it pays to the positionalities of those Others themselves. . . .36

These and other arguments have helped to broaden TDSR’s critical terrain. A small but significant indication of their impact has been the fact that the word “tradition” increasingly appears in quotation marks in the journal, a move that brackets the term in a way that simultaneously suggests critical distance from its authenticity as a singular concept, its appropriation into various ideological constrictions, and even its periodization as a workable category. Though the articles described above are largely concerned with scholarship in the present, their emergence clearly suggests a larger research trajectory for TDSR, in which the traditions of research on “tradition” are foregrounded and studied in relation to moments of large-scale historical change, the growth of the academy, and the global diffusion of scholarly knowledge.

“Tradition” in the ironic and critically reflexive sense has a much more slippery meaning than in the recuperative models it implicitly backs away from. There is no longer a transcendent ideal to be preserved or lost. As a consequence, the oppositional relations between inside and outside, First World and Third, West and East, masculine and feminine, past and present, which structure the interpretation of traditional societies, are also called into question. In its “de-essentialized” form, the term resists fixity, both historically and geographically, and is equally difficult to identify with a redemptive moral position.

Some of the new ambiguities attached to the term are exemplified by Jyoti Hosagrahar’s 1999 article on housing extensions in New Delhi under British colonial rule.49 She explored how, as building extensions planned between 1936 and 1941 were subsequently taken over by private real estate development, customary building practices diverged from the intentions of the colonial building codes. There is no clear divide here between capitalism and tradition — in this case, one actually serves to reinforce the other, while simultaneously undermining the authority of colonial spatial practice. Other articles have explored tradition as an ideological production of modernity, rather than an uncorrupted realm that preceded it. Thus, Laurel L.Cornell showed how what has typically been represented as the traditional Japanese house, with its sliding paper walls and tatami floors, was in fact a modern invention that reached its apogee at the beginning of the twentieth century.40 Similarly, Sibel Bozdogan suggested that the national or modern dualities associated with the “traditional Turkish house” were not inherent in the form, but socially constructed by institutions and agents in particular, signifying contexts. There is, she wrote,

. . . nothing that automatically links “good design” with the “old” . . . tradition is a relatively autonomous preoccupation of the architects, as well as a recurrent cultural construct within the discipline. It has, however, acquired historical significance and legitimacy only in the contexts of nationalism and postmodernity. . . .

These readings of “tradition” within, rather than outside the space of capitalist modernity are perhaps at their most pointed when dealing with the “heritage industry.” On the one hand, the proliferation of world heritage sites and the growing interest in historical preservation would seem to offer the chance to bring the arguments of the ethnographic pastoral to practical realization. Thus could the disappearing examples of traditional space not simply be preserved textually, but physically as well, at scales extending to that of entire neighborhoods or towns. At the same time, however, recent articles in TDSR have argued that the process of preservation almost inevitably forces out the occupants of the traditional environment being “saved.” In a paradoxical trade-off, described in locations as diverse as Jordan and Brazil,40 the social space of tradition is simultaneously preserved and commodified by the intertwined processes preservation, gentrification, and global tourism.
CONCLUSION

As suggested at the outset, a concern with the relevance of tradition to architectural practice is central to those recuperative discourses which emerged out of a desire to establish counter-models to “modern” industrialized architectural production. The more recent, critically reflexive analysis of tradition as an ideological weapon, an Orientalist projection of an imperialistic state, or architectural packaging for a post-Fordist real estate industry does not immediately call forth counter-models at the level of professional practice, except by implication. Indeed, this form of writing succeeds at least in part because its intellectual agenda is not determined in advance by the need to conform to given ideas of professional practice. The attempt to investigate tradition as a socially situated practice whose meaning is not given in advance, but which is produced in social relations of power, has opened the journal to vastly different accounts of the meaning of tradition, far removed from the dream of a unitary “science of tradition” as called for by Amos Rapoport, or a pluralistic compendium of ethno-architecture as proposed by Gerard Toaff.

In what amounts to a paradigm shift, tradition has been increasingly understood as both an instrument and effect of power. The shift is underscored by the iaste 2000 conference, “The End of Tradition?” Its planned thematic sessions will explore such topics as “the insidious revival of tradition,” the “territorial implications for a placeless society,” and the commodification and production of tradition by tourism. All of the above would appear to explore the production, appropriation and transformation of tradition on an unprecedented scale. The “end” of tradition is therefore intertwined with its global (re)production. It may also be associated with the eclipse of recuperative discourses on tradition.

In the context of my larger study, it is possible to see how the paradigm shift now underway within TDSR and iaste has brought a number of issues into focus that have implications for the broader field of urban studies. The point can be illustrated by comparing TDSR with another journal that shares an international outlook but which is dramatically different in terms of its representation of space, the International Journal of Urban and Regional Research (IJURR). This journal was founded in 1977 during a period of Marxist ferment in urban studies. It continues today as the project of Research Committee 21 of the International Sociological Association. Like the narratives of the ethnographic pastoral in TDSR, the discourse on international urban political economy in IJURR has been largely defined by a dualistic model of global space. The world city has also acquired its conceptual clarity through the opposition between the local and global; however, here the local is a passive space determined by the dynamism of metropolitan “command and control” centers. Inasmuch as the local is the inert target of hostile and exploitative global processes, it recalls the trope of the ethnographic pastoral, but in an economicistic language, and at a vastly altered scale of representation.

Until recently, TDSR and the IJURR represent two opposed, and largely noncommunicating ends of a common set of global processes: thus, where the IJURR stressed economic flows, TDSR examined pockets of “traditional” time and space on the outer edges of an advancing global capitalism. Inasmuch as the discourses of the ethnographic pastoral represent hand-crafted artifacts produced by “preindustrial,” nonalienated labor, they are far removed from the IJURR’s abstract space of flows of capital, labor and ideas. In the world city of international urban political economy, space only becomes tangible through government policies, economic processes, and state ideologies. As such, it cannot signify or transmit meaning; it is either a boundary condition, a conduit, or a reflection of the processes it contains. Urban space is produced by processes rather than agents, and when professionals appear, they are “effects” of larger economic structures.

In more recent debates on issues such as the localizing of global traditions or the manufacturing of heritage, TDSR has moved toward the outlines of a transdisciplinary critical practice that begins to bring cultural and economic processes together in the same analytic space. In doing so, the potential exists to move beyond both the economism of urban political economy and socially abstracted interpretations of tradition. Such a formulation not only challenges the way in which analytic techniques and conceptions of space are parcelled out and isolated from each other in discrete disciplinary spaces, but requires a rethinking of the “scale politics” of academic research, in which built-environment disciplines have until now addressed one scale of analysis to the exclusion of others that may overlap and occur simultaneously. In this context, the search for transdisciplinary models of spatial analysis that do not simply seek alliances between established blocks of knowledge, but question their very existence as such, becomes integral to an understanding of the symbolic and material forces involved in the politics of space.
REFERENCES

2. See B. Robbins, Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling Beyond the Nation (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998).

5. This article is based on research for my Ph.D. dissertation, “Spaces of Representation/Representations of Space: Discourses of Architecture, Urbanism and the Built Environment, 1960-1995,” completed in the Department of Art History and Urbanism, Binghamton University (1998). The project is currently under consideration for publication in the Architect Series from Routledge.


7. Ibid., p.308.

8. Ibid., p.308.


10. Teymur and Aysan do not take account of the neovernacular movement of the late nineteenth century, which can be seen as comparable.

11. Ibid., p.309.


13. Ibid.

14. See the mission statement, published on page 2 of Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review since the first issue.


31. Ibid., p.30.

32. Ibid.


35. Ibid., p.11


