THE SCRIPT-ANALOGUE AND ITS APPLICATION IN ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS:
THE RELATIONSHIP OF AFRICAN WOMEN TO AFRICAN TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE

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Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

Environmental Design and Planning

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SEPTEMBER 1, 1989

BLACKSBURG, VIRGINIA
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(ABSTRACT)

This work involves the presentation of an original critical theory, termed the "script-analogue", for the discovery of significance in works of traditional architecture within their cultural contexts. The theory includes a set of related ideas about the relationship of architecture and culture, and uses these ideas as a method to analyze the relationship of African women to African traditional architecture.

The use of the script as an analogue refers to the script as it is used in theater, and indicates that the relationship of the individual, culture, and the architectural environment is dynamic and interactive. The "script-analogue" derives from post-structural thought, and modifies and expands on some of its themes to make them directly applicable in the context of architecture. It represents a dynamic analytical alternative to the reading of architecture as "text".

In the "script-analogue" theory, culture is represented through the actions of individuals, who are members simultaneously of a culture and overlapping and modifying sub-cultures. Who an individual is, culturally and sub-culturally, is important in the relationship of the individual to architecture. The theory offers a means by which gender differences, in terms of "who" builds and uses architecture, can
be addressed in research, through the investigation of metaphors of significance to women, and thus it can facilitate research which focuses on women.

The concept of architecture is expanded to include both the built environment, and the unbuilt environment which is designated to be of significance through language. Memory is the means by which significance in architecture is given continuity. The term commemorative is used to indicate the commemoration, through architectural forms, of the appropriate actions of individuals within culture. The term orientative indicates that the locations of architectural forms and spaces, and the orientations of people to architecture, are factors in the memory of architectural significance and propriety of actions.

The "script-analogue" proposes that architectural significance can be discovered through investigations of the metaphor in language, and that metaphor is the means by which cultural themes exist in an inter-connected relationship to each other. Ritual, as metaphorical action which takes place in an architectural setting, activates the script, and connects it to other cultural and sub-cultural themes outside of the local and specific conditions. This inter-connectedness is termed in the "script-analogue", transcendence through metaphor.

The substance of this dissertation comprises both an explanation of the ideas involved in the "script-analogue" theory, and examples of its application. In addition to the findings generated by the application of the "script-analogue" to the relationship of African women to African traditional architecture, this dissertation suggests other applications of the theory, such as evaluations of housing design in Africa, and it attempts to bridge the gap between architectural theory and practice.
This work represents the formulation of an original theory, termed the "script-analogue", based on some of the themes of post-structuralism, and developed for the analysis of traditional architecture within its cultural context. The theory is used in this dissertation for the analysis of the relationship of African women and African traditional architecture. The development of the "script-analogue" derives from an effort to deal with material not readily accessible to analysis. It was perceived that Western theoretical models tend to operate under the implicit premise that culture represents a unified whole, and that those things significant about architecture for men are not different from those for women. Additionally, the differences found in traditional cultures from mainstream, modern culture are difficult to perceive and identify. The available theoretical models do not facilitate an analysis which takes into account these differences. Many of the difficulties in formulating a theory about architecture and culture stem from preconceptions based on the connotations of language, which itself is culturally based. For example, if one addresses the question; how are architecture and culture related, the phrasing of the question itself is misleading, in that culture is seen as a "thing" which can exist apart from the actions of individuals. Thus the development of the "script-analogue" theory was generated from a careful questioning of the preconceptions which derive from language, and the attempt was made to mediate these preconceptions.

During the writing of this dissertation, many people have given help and encouragement. I would like to thank the members of my committee for their guidance, and in particular, my major professor, Dr. Humberto Camillonri-Rodriguez, for his careful attention to this work under difficult circumstances, and for making possible its
completion. The other members of my committee offered assistance in a variety of ways. I would like to thank Dr. Joseph Wang for his subtle yet persistent directing of my attention back to the project at hand during the prolonged period of the working out of ideas in this document. Dr. Mary Rojas’ editorial comments and critiques were thorough and invaluable in the structuring of a document which did not follow a traditional format, and at times seemed too complex to be manageable. Dr. Patricia Mathews’ dedicated and intensive efforts were instrumental in bringing of this work to completion. I would like to thank D. Eugene Egger for his insightful critiques of the ideas involved in this dissertation, and for supporting the connection between the teaching effort and ideas presented in the formality of writing.

Special acknowledgment must be given to friends, colleagues and family members who also faced the struggle involved in the writing process. Professor Ron Daniel's encouragement, support, and confidence in the project were invaluable. offered both friendship and thoughtful commentary. Of particular importance in the formulation of ideas which resulted in this dissertation were the many generative discussions with ; discussions which involved creative speculation and intellectual precision.

Without the support of my family, this work would not have been possible. My mother, gave thoughtful editorial comments and assumed the role, among others, of grammarian. I give my profound thanks to my husband, who gave, simultaneously, intellectual and family support, with excellence in both ideas and child-care. And finally, a special thank you to my daughter, , whose involuntary participation in this project was tolerant and gracious.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation presents the formulation of a theoretical model, which has been termed the "script-analogue", to be used for the analysis of traditional architecture within its cultural context. The "script-analogue" shows a means by which culture and architecture are interrelated. The theoretical model proposes that culture and architecture exist in a dynamic and interactive metaphorical relationship, a relationship which enhances the identity of the individual within culture and subcultures and gives significance to the architectural places where individuals live their lives. It also proposes that the "performance" of rituals, which take place in architectural settings and have metaphorical content, must be considered in the analysis of traditional architecture. The theory expands the notion of what is usually considered to be "architecture", addresses the importance of "where" architecture is, and indicates the significant differences in perceptions and experiences which may be discovered by using a sub-culture as a component of an architectural analysis which links culture to form.

Statement of Purpose

There are two purposes to this work. The first is to present a formulation for a theoretical model, derived from adaptations of post-structural thought. The model, the "script-analogue", frames a set of ideas to be used for the discovery of cultural significance in traditional architecture, and for the evaluation of works of traditional architecture in terms of their fulfillment, or non-fulfillment, of their potential to
enhance the human environment. The second purpose is to use the model to answer two questions. How is identity reaffirmed by and for traditional African women in physical and conceptual terms, through the architecture they use, make, maintain, and embellish? And, also, how does African traditional architecture reinforce women's cultural (African) and sub-cultural (female) identities? The investigation of these questions comprises a testing of the theory, and provides examples of its use.

An Overview of the Theory

The terms involved in the "script analogue" and their relationships are illustrated in a diagram, on page 5. The term script, as an analogue to a script used in theater, is used as the title of the theory, and of the diagram, to indicate that the relationships among people and architecture are reciprocal and active. It represents an alternative to the post-structural reading of architecture as "text." The "performance" aspect of the script in a traditional culture is ritual, in everyday life and on special occasions. Ritual is a type of performance which unites people, things and ideas, due to its metaphorical content, and its capacity for repetition. In the "script-analogue" diagram, ritual is represented as a circular element which connects the individual, architecture, and memory, and is the means by which these elements are related to others within a

1 Post-structuralism, or, alternately termed, deconstruction, is an outgrowth of, and alternative to, structuralism, and derives primarily from literary criticism. It represents a related set of ideas which "question[s] the assumption... that structures of meaning correspond to some deep-laid mental 'set' or pattern of mind which determines the limits of intelligibility." Christopher Norris, Deconstruction: Theory and Practice, (London: Methuen, 1982), p. 3. The themes of post-structuralism, including the concept of "text" are further discussed in this dissertation, beginning on page 12.

2 The term "traditional" culture is used to distinguish it from modern, industrialized cultures. Although all cultures may change over time, the traditional culture values continuity rather than change as an end in itself.
cultural and sub-cultural pattern. Rituals may be performed by an individual, singularly, or the individual as a member of a group.

The metaphor is a very special use of language, because, in describing something in terms of something else, in a way that is related to cultural values, it functions as a powerful connector of the elements of culture. This connection is achieved by the placement of cultural elements in a relationship with each other through their juxtaposition in language. Transcendence through metaphor indicates what it is that a metaphor "does" in transcending the local and specific in time and place by activating, through ritual, a network of metaphorical connections throughout a culture.

The individual is placed at the center of the diagram, to indicate that culture is not an entity with intrinsic properties of its own, but is manifested in the actions of individuals. Culture and sub-cultures are sub-headings under the term individual. Each person, as bearer of, and participant in culture emphasizes some human possibilities and de-emphasizes others. Collectively, correspondences of the actions of individuals can be seen thematically as patterns. Individuals are members of culture, and also belong to many overlapping sub-cultures simultaneously. A sub-culture may be significantly different from the mainstream culture and should be taken into consideration in any analysis which considers culture and the products of human work. In other words, the actions of individuals within sub-cultures such as gender or ethnicity may be patterned differently than those of members of a dominant culture.

The concept of architecture as the totality of the environment which has significance for people, through language, has been indicated by the use of the terms built and designated architecture (Fig 2). These terms expand upon the usual perception of architecture as being designed and built forms, to include architecture which exists in spaces which are not built, but "designated", through language, as being qualitatively
different from neutral spaces. This term brings into sharper focus the idea that the architectural environment includes all of the designed environment, and indicates that its "designation" may be through language and not manipulated form.

Memory is used to indicate the process through which architecture is a factor in the continuity of culture. Commemorative and orientative memory are terms used to include both architectural forms and their locations, and to take into account that built forms may be significant (commemorative), and further, that "where" they are, and where people are in relationship to them (orientative), is of equal importance.

The application of the "script-analogue" theory can indicate whether or not a work of architecture is significant, not in terms of its esthetic quality, or what it may intrinsically "mean", but whether it is connected to other elements of culture. "How" it is connected is through a process of metaphorical associations presented in language, and activated by ritual actions which take place in architectural settings.
The Script Analogue

transcendence through metaphor

ARCHITECTURE — INDIVIDUAL — MEMORY

transcendence through metaphor
The Need for this Research.

The development of the "script-analogue" was a response to a need for a theoretical model which could propose how architecture and culture are interrelated. There are three primary problems which this theory addresses: 1. There is a lack of effective critical theories for the analysis of architecture which take into account cultural differences. These differences may be identified between the industrialized, modern world, and traditional cultures, and between culture and sub-cultures such as gender and ethnicity. There is a need for an appropriate methodology for the analysis of architecture which could help to overcome the inevitable cultural biases which color perceptions. There is a particular scarcity of research concerning the relationship of African women to African traditional architecture. 2. There is a need for methodologies, derived from those qualities which are unique to architecture, as the environment where human actions take place, which address the question of how architecture and culture are interrelated. 3. Although post-structuralism has opened many interesting avenues of thought, there is a semantic obstacle presented by the post-structural "text" analogue in reference to the "reading" of a cultural product, such as architecture. There is a need to make some of the ideas suggested by post-structuralism more accessible for use in research. The manner in which the "script-analogue" addresses these three needs is discussed as follows:

Ruth Benedict wrote in 1934: "Western civilization, because of fortuitous circumstances, has spread itself more widely than any other local group that has so far been known. It has standardized itself over most of the globe, and we have been led,

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3 The work of Labelle Prussin on women's relationship to nomadic architecture is an exception to this lack of research, in, for example, "Women as Placemakers: Architecture and Language Use in the Nomadic African Context", unpublished working paper, xerox copy, n. d.
therefore, to accept a belief in the uniformity of human behavior that under other circumstances would not have arisen.\textsuperscript{4}

The "script-analogue", as a critical theory for the investigation of the architecture of traditional cultures, can be applied to an analysis of African architecture, as has been done in this dissertation. A history and theory of African art and architecture, and of the architecture of other traditional peoples, has been slow in developing. The pervasive, global influence of modern, industrialized culture has perhaps augmented the ethnocentrism that is the unconscious inclination of all people, as bearers of, and participants in, their cultures. Mainstream American and European formulations about the meaning of action and artifact are most usually presented as universal truths in art and architectural history, theory, and criticism. The necessity for questioning our assumptions about human behavior and the products of culture is fundamental to the discipline of cultural anthropology, but, until recently this has had little impact outside of the realm of anthropological fieldwork, and rarely is directly considered by art and architectural historians and theorists.\textsuperscript{5} Much of the existing material concerning the architecture of Africa has been either primarily pictorial, or presents African architecture as "primitive". There is a lack of literature which attempts to analyze the arts of Africa within their cultural context, although the writings of Africanists Labelle Prussin, Robert Thompson, and Suzanne Blier are notable exceptions.


\textsuperscript{5} The work of Robert Thompson, as presented in his book, \textit{African Art in Motion: Icon and Act}, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974), is an exception to this tendency. His work constitutes an interdisciplinary blending of the methodologies of anthropology and art history and theory, perhaps drawing upon the ideas of his mentor, George Kubler, and Kubler's ideas as presented in \textit{The Shape of Time}. However, Thompson has not generally included African architecture in his research.
The need for contextual analysis is particularly important for the Western researcher investigating the architecture of the non-Western world. Prussin and Thompson have argued for the contextual presentation of African art in a fashion other than is the norm in the Western museum setting, with reference to the loss of significance which ensues when an artifact is separated from its cultural context of relationships and metaphors. There are significant differences between African and Western world-views, making a traditional art-historical approach problematic in the African context. The Western theorist writing about Western architecture shares with his or her readers implicit assumptions about cultural norms and values. Among the differences between African and Western culture are: differing social structures, including relationships of marriage, family, and gender roles; the relative importance of group rather than individual identity in African culture; differing concepts of privacy; significant differences in religion and spirituality; and the African cultural unity and integration of the arts, as opposed to the Western separation of the arts into discrete categories. The "script-analogue" theoretical model was designed to facilitate the investigation of architecture by taking into account the ways in which members of culture metaphorically refer to architecture, particularly in the traditional, non-Western world. These references can reveal the metaphorical network by which architecture is related to other ideas, artifacts, and actions within a particular culture.

A re-evaluation of art and architectural history, and the generation of theories and methodologies appropriate for women's arts is central to the feminist art historian.

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6 The organization of the exhibition of the Katherine Coryton White collection of African art, at the Frederick S. Wight Art Gallery at the University of California, Los Angeles, 1974, to which Thompson's book African Art in Motion is the correlative, is a response to the non-contextual exhibition of African art which has been the norm in American and European museums and galleries. This exhibition included video tapes of African art in motion, as it was "danced", in addition to the exhibited works of art.
However, this re-evaluation has not been a central concern for historians in general. Feminist theory is based on the premise that because the biological and social experiences of women can be different from those of men, women's perceptions and priorities can also be different. The connection between female experience and female sensibility in art is addressed by the art historian Mary Garrard: "The definitive assignment of sex roles in history has created fundamental differences between the sexes in their perception, experience and expectations of the world, differences that cannot help but have carried over into the creative process, where they have sometimes left their tracks."  

As a set of ideas, post-structuralism has opened avenues of thought which explore the significance of the difference between a male dominant culture and "muted, or marginal groups" such as women, and also sub-cultures based on ethnicity and regionalism. Post-structural theorists frequently investigate sub-cultures and sub-cultural products, such as women and women's art, which are related to, but outside of and different from mainstream Western culture. However, little has been done, to date, to broaden the scope of theory in the arts to include the creative expressions of non-Western women. The "script-analogue" theoretical model outlines a way to investigate neglected examples of such "marginal" groups, in this instance, traditional African cultures, and African women. The assumption is made here that the experiences and


8 In post-structural writing, the "marginal" is often used in reference to notes, drawings, and other information which appears in the margins of a written text, and is potentially more significant than that which is written conventionally.

9 Feminist art criticism and theory and post-structural theory are not antithetical. The feminist critic may use a post-structural approach.
expectations of the traditional African woman are of a different nature than are those of
the traditional African man, and that her relationship to her architectural environment
expresses this difference. Most investigations of African architecture have not
considered the differences in perspective which are related to gender, and have treated
African cultures as if they represent only one perspective, that of men. The "script-
analogue" can be used as a means to take account of, for example, the shift in significance
encountered by investigating the relationship of women, as a sub-culture, to
architecture.

It is axiomatic that architectural form and space are cultural products and
simultaneously influence culture, but research efforts by architectural historians and
critics have not satisfactorily addressed the question of how this occurs. Labelle Prussin
has suggested that, "Architects and social scientists concerned with the built
environment have, in recent years, begun to attend to the language of the environment
and the ways in which meaning is communicated through it. . . While many of these
studies have addressed the nature of environmental cues and architectural codes or
styles, few have investigated the ways in which these formal and visual elements,
particularly at the domestic level, acquire meaning in cultural context."¹⁰

The "script-analogue" does not propose to uncover what it is that a work intrinsically
"means". However, it suggests that the significance of a work can be found by
discovering the ideas which are metaphorically related to it. Works of architecture are
unique among the arts in that they provide the settings for human actions. The use of the
"script-analogue" can be a way to discover which architectural forms and locations are
important, and to whom they are important. It suggests that architecture, memory, and

¹⁰ Prussin, "Women as Placemakers: Architecture and Language Use in the Nomadic
culture are related by metaphor, and must be activated by the performance of rituals to be culturally viable.

The "script-analogue" is offered as an operationally useful alternative to the semiotic and post-structural ideas concerning the "reading" of architecture as "text". There is a lack of agreement in post-structural writing by its various proponents about just what it is that constitutes the architectural "text". This lack of agreement makes problematic a consistent reading of architecture as text. This difficulty perhaps derives from the semantic connotations of a text as a literary work, and the transposition of its associations with reading to the world of the non-verbal object. The difficulties posed by use of the word text as an analogy to "that which can be read" comes not from its denotation and modifying explanations developed in the proliferation of recent post-structural literary and architectural criticism, but from its connotations in reference to a literary text.

The script, as a work of literature, provides a structure for actions which are staged in a specific setting, and is incomplete without the human participation in its performance. The script, as it is used in theater, as an incomplete work which is a component of a process, is closer to the meaning of "text" as actually used in post-structural analysis when applied to architecture.

The difficulties presented by the use of the text as an analogue are pointed out by the architect and theoretician Peter Eisenman, when he writes: "While the term "text" is at present quite fashionable, its value as an idea is almost obscured by its intellectual currency as a catchall for anything related to meaning."11 This statement constitutes an acknowledgment by Eisenman of the variations in usage of the "text analogue" and the

difficulties that this lack of agreement poses for critical discourse in the context of architectural theory and criticism.

The Script-Analogue and Post-Structuralism

After an extended struggle to find an appropriate way to deal with the inter-relationships among African women, culture, and architecture, it became apparent that none of the existing theories were adequate, because none of them explicitly demonstrated how architecture and culture are interrelated. Of the theories which were attempted in this work prior to the formulation of the "script-analogue" model, post-structuralism seemed to come the closest to resolving this dilemma.

The "script-analogue" comprises a set of related ideas which were generated by some of the concepts of post-structural thought, and is an attempt to make these concepts more directly applicable to investigations of architecture. For example, the post-structural themes of the "objectification" of language, the investigations of the "marginal", and the "text" as analogue were used and modified in the development of the "script-analogue". The ideas involved in the "script-analogue" are in alignment with post-structuralism in several significant respects, but differ from it in that the "script-analogue" makes operational, in the specific context of architecture, concepts which in post-structural writing are used thematically rather than methodologically.

Post-structuralism calls into question the separation in the empirical sciences of the observer from the observed (the researcher from the researched) in that the language used by researchers (or anyone) does not represent absolute truth or absolute impartiality. When post-structuralists say that language is objectified, they refer to the idea that the words which people, as participants in culture, use to describe or categorize things, actions, and ideas are the means by which things, actions, and ideas
are given significance. The work of Jacques Derrida has been critical in exploring some of the implications of "deconstructing" the language-based premises used in criticism and theory, which regard the observer as privileged and removed from the observed. Post-structuralists "work to undo the idea... according to Derrida, of the ruling illusion of Western metaphysics... that reason can somehow dispense with language and arrive at a pure, self-authenticating truth or method." Although the premise that intrinsic meaning does not exist in objects outside of their representation in language is not a new idea, post-structuralism is particularly assertive in pursuing this line of thought. "Deconstruction... starts out by rigorously suspending [an] assumed correspondence between mind, meaning, and the concept of method which claims to unite them." "There is no deeper subjective reality underlying the ordinary socially created intelligibility of the world." "This turns our usual picture of the

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12 That a researcher chooses to investigate a particular category of things is influenced by the categories which derive from his or her language. For example, the post-structuralists assert that the idea of "nature" is a cultural construct, and that the separation of people and nature is a product of language. Richard Harlan, *Superstructuralism: The Philosophy of Structuralism and Post-Structuralism*, (London: Methuen, 1987), p. 9.


14 Norris, op. cit., p. 19. The criticism of this position is that the writer using deconstruction for critical analysis of works is also operating from a "privileged" position. "The deconstructors clearly expect that their texts will be read with care and attention, their arguments weighed and their conclusions discussed in a decently responsible manner. Yet how can this be squared with their own professsed scepticism towards meaning, logic, truth, and the very possibility of communication?" Norris, op. cit., pp. 126-127.

15 Norris, op. cit., p. 3.

16 Harlan, op. cit. p. 68.
universe quite upside down. For language categories and social meanings are now the ultimate reality, coming before objective things and subjective ideas."17

The "script-analogue" focuses on relationships and processes, through an investigation of the metaphor in language, rather than on intrinsic "meaning" or esthetic quality,18 and is in accordance with post-structuralism in this regard. The "script-analogue" represents an attempt to look at the products of culture by investigating the metaphorical references which are attached to them by the members of the culture in question, and thereby mediates some of the biases and preconceptions which may impede the understanding of a culture which is different from the one in which the researcher is immersed. The primary theme in post-structuralism is the "deconstructing" of the language-based premises which most Western theoretical models use in an attempt to uncover meanings that are presumed to be intrinsic. With this in mind it was possible, in the formulation of the "script-analogue", to re-evaluate, for example, the "meaning" most usually attached to the word "architecture", that it consists of built forms existing in space, and to expand this idea to include forms and places which are "designated" through language to be of significance to people. Similarly, the ways in which architecture reinforces cultural and individual memory were expanded to include "commemoration" through form, and "orientation" of forms, people, and spaces, to take into account that where architecture is has cultural and individual significance.

17 Ibid.

18 Whether or not there are universal standards of esthetic quality which can be identified is a subject of philosophical discourse. However, for example, in modern culture bodily scarification is not considered to be beautiful. Scarification of women in traditional Africa is often considered to be beautiful. The change in posture caused by the wearing of high-heeled shoes by modern women can be considered to be "beautiful", in that formal dress for women usually involves wearing high-heeled shoes. It is doubtful that it would be considered to be so by the traditional African, who values bodily strength and a straight alignment of the body, not precarious balance.
Post-structuralism directs one's attention to the "marginal", in that one of its assertions is that the writing which may occur in the margins of a text can be as important, or potentially more important, than the text itself. The post-structural emphasis on the marginal seems to give greater significance to the investigation of subcultures and "marginal" groups of people. This can be seen in the recent proliferation of post-structural writing which has a feminist theme. A methodology of "how" marginal groups can be investigated is an important component of the "script-analogue", and one which is suggested thematically by post-structuralism. However, post-structuralists generally avoid specifying a methodology about "how" this may be accomplished. There are inherent difficulties in the "application" of post-structuralism. For example, there does not seem to be an agreement among post-structuralists as to whether it is a theory, a method, or a philosophy. It is not generally considered to be a theoretical model, in that its proponents actively seek paradox rather than resolutions.


20 This disagreement can be documented in critiques of post-structuralism. For example, Norris writes, "To present 'deconstruction' as if it were a method, a system or a settled body of ideas would be to falsify its nature and lay oneself open to charges of reductive misunderstanding". Norris, op. cit., p. 1.

21 Much of post-structural writing is purposefully paradoxical. "Of a variety of means [Roland] Barthes possessed for giving himself something to say...he had an exceptionally fluent, ingenious generalizing power...the most elementary was his aphorist's ability to conjure up a vivacious duality...anything could be split either into itself and its opposite, or into two versions of itself; and one term then fielded against the other to yield an unexpected relation". Susan Sontag, editor, A Barthes Reader, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), p. xii.
The lack of agreement about the meanings of the terminology used by post-structuralists presents a further difficulty in its application as a methodology. For example, the idea of "displacement" is important in post-structural writing, but it embodies a variety of connotations. "No longer exclusively a technical term in psychoanalysis, it exists in a penumbra of meaning, summing up in its various connotations a decisive shift in humanity's understanding of itself. 'Displacement' has become an indispensable term of the new post-structuralist theory, as much invoked, and with as little rigor, as 'image' in the writings of the New Critics."22

Most of post-structural writing is focused on literary criticism, using writing to investigate other writing. It calls into question what it is that constitutes a "work", and asserts that the written criticism of literature is also a work of literature. Post-structural analyses of literature, and of physical products of culture, do not take consistent forms. Because a piece of literary criticism is regarded as also a "work", it does not have the replicability associated with research. It is not necessarily incorrect in its findings, but it exists in the world of creative invention, rather than research. In one sense, it is antithetical to the assumptions of post-structuralism to apply it, because post-structuralism is still being developed and modified, and does not explicitly present a methodology, or procedure for analysis, and to apply it has connotations of locking it in and making a set of ideas which are exploratory, into something pragmatic.

Another difficulty in the application of post-structural analysis is the lack of consensus about not only what it is that constitutes a work, but also what it is that constitutes the "text" of a work in a given situation, and the mechanisms by which the researcher may "read" its text. Part of this difficulty lies in the connotations of the

word text due to the perception of the literary text as narrative. The script, as it is used in theater, represents an alternative to the use of "text" as an analogue in post-structuralism. As a work of literature, the script, although it can be read, does not realize its full potential until it is performed. The "script" theoretical model, as a framework for action, can take into account the actions of people within culture as the performance, or dynamic element, which completes the script.

An Overview of the Study.

This chapter (Chapter 1) includes a discussion of the purposes of this work, a discussion of the needs to which this research responds, an overview of the ideas presented in the "script-analogue" theoretical model, and a comparison of the script-analogue to post-structuralism. The substance of this dissertation comprises both an explanation of the ideas involved in the "script-analogue" theory, and examples of its application. The explanation and elaboration of the "script-analogue" occurs in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 includes a discussion of the methodology of its application. Chapters 4, 5, and 6 comprise examples of the application of the "script-analogue" to the relationship of African women to African traditional architecture. In Chapter 4, the house as metaphor is investigated with reference to the Kamba, Kikuyu, Kaguru, and Iraiqw ethnic groups of East Africa, and the Hausa of West Africa. Chapter 5 investigates the role of women in building and maintaining architecture, and the means by which these activities reaffirm female identity. Chapter 6 investigates the "land" as metaphor in its relationship to African women. Chapter 7 represents further elaboration, in the context of comparisons of the "script-analogue" to the theoretical models of four major works about African art and architecture. Chapter 8, the concluding chapter, discusses the implications of the script-analogue theory for the analysis of traditional architecture,
and suggests some of the possible ways in which it can be applied. A review of literature is found in the Appendix.
CHAPTER 2

THE SCRIPT-ANALOGUE

The "script-analogue" represents a formulation which can be applied to an analysis of architecture within its cultural context, and which derives from the unique qualities of architecture. The power of architecture lies in its metaphoric content in combination with its pervasive material and spatial influence as the setting for human actions. The pre-historic cave, as setting, and the rituals, as performance, which took place there marked the genesis of the arts which we, in modern culture, have separated into the categories of dance, theater, poetry, music, painting and sculpture. This categorization of the arts, through the terms we assign to them, has impeded us from understanding the nature of their interrelationship in the traditional culture. The "script-analogue" suggests that the means by which they are interrelated to one another is through the metaphor in language.

The set of ideas framed by the "script-analogue" diagram (Chapter 1, p. 5) represents a theoretical model, and also suggests a methodology, or procedure, for their applications. Although it may not be possible to identify completely "how" these ideas and corresponding terminology were selected, it may be explained "why" the terms were used, with reference to the ideas suggested by each.

Script

The concept which led to the formulation of the other ideas represented in the "script-analogue" was that the script, as it is used in theater, as a component of a process, is closer to the meaning of "text" as actually used in post-structural analysis.
when applied to architecture. That language influences thought and perception is axiomatic in cultural anthropology. It is reasonable to assume that the connotations associated with the analogue derived from a literary text can influence and limit how that text may be used. With this as a starting point, it was necessary to explore the ideas which could elaborate on the "how" questions of method in critical discourse in the realm of culture and architecture.

How are culture and architecture interrelated? How can significance be discovered in architecture? For whom is it significant? The exploration of these questions produced the terms and ideas of the theoretical model. The "script-analogue" proposes that the analysis of architecture can be accomplished by considering both performance and setting, and suggests that significance in architecture cannot be realized apart from the relationship of the actions of individuals as members of culture and sub-cultures simultaneously, with the architectural environment providing the spatial location and conditions for these actions. An investigation of the metaphor as it is used in language, and ritual as metaphorical performance, are the primary means by which this analysis is conducted.

What is it that the script "does" in the context of theater? The script is that which "frames" its elements in a structure which allows their eventual performance in space and time, and their repetition. In a book entitled Frame Analysis, the sociologist Erving Goffman defines frames as organized sets of agreements which are fundamental to all kinds of human interactions. The "frame analysis" referred to in the title of his book concerns examinations of the elements which govern events and our subjective involvement in them.\(^1\) The idea of the frame as a set of agreements operational in human

actions, or "subjective involvements", led to the idea that the script is a frame which delineates place (built and designated architecture), cultural and personal memory, and the actions of the individual within culture and sub-cultures, as the performance of the script. The "script-analogue", as a critical tool, can expand and contract to delineate the elements of the event under consideration. However, as with "text", the interrelationship of the parts within the script is never wholly contained within it, but exists in the network of connections among its parts, and also in the tendrils the elements of the script send out to touch other elements within a larger cultural pattern. The script as an analogue emphasizes this dynamism, and indicates the means by which the network of connections occurs; through metaphorical language and the actions of individuals.

The format of a literary text such as the novel or essay is more complete than a script, or, as Marshall McLuhan would say, it is a "hot" medium,2 which contains within it more contextual information than does a script, but, paradoxically, does not age well. The literary text is less participatory than a script, hence the necessity for annotated versions of the text as it resides farther and farther from the cultural context in which the reader is a participant. In the literary text of a novel or essay, the descriptions, characterizations, the actions of the characters, and the narrative or story are usually present. A script, on the other hand, as a literary text, is itself incomplete, and consists of a composite of elements coexisting in a state of preparedness for performance. The descriptions of setting and action are comparatively sparse, in that the purpose of the script lies in its potential transformation into the multi-dimensional art of theater. The "reading" of a script is difficult because it presents the verbal dimension as a prelude to

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performance. Due to the open-ended, dynamic, participatory, character of a script through its essential incompleteness, it continuously brings the past forward to the present and future. Although its structure remains intact, the theatrical script can undergo permutations of locale, costuming, and dialect, and can be "up-dated" or otherwise changed. However, a change in any of its essential elements transforms the script into something else, perhaps into a new script.

In *Experiencing and the Creation of Meaning*, Eugene Gendlin writes about the complexity of experience, in the following quotation:

"Experience is multischematic. It is capable of many specifications, many units, and therefore many different kinds of relationships between units. By "capable of", we will mean that experiencing as such is not patterned in any one of these schematics, but that when experiences are specified, then schematic relationships between experiences are like-wise specified."³

The "script-analogue" attempts to deal with this complexity through the identification of the significant elements of a given situation, and the inter-connected relationships among them. The term script is used as, perhaps, a mnemonic device to remind us of the performative nature of the interrelationship of individuals within culture, and architecture.

Metaphor

Metaphor is an important element of the "script-analogue". A metaphor describes something by references to something else, and therefore functions as a linguistic connector of ideas. The metaphors discovered with reference to the elements contained within any given script, or contextual situation, refer to elements not within the frame. This is what is termed transference through metaphor. What is being transcended is the local and specific. The strength of the metaphor lies in these references, or connections. Thus we see an interconnected network or web of metaphors. Like an alternating electrical current, references shift along a network of circuits. For example, one could say that an African woman's identity within culture and an African traditional house are metaphors for each other. This metaphoric association of woman and house is seen in references, for example, to house as container, to the woman in her procreative role, and to the ritualized use by the woman of clay pots within the house. The significance of the house, or of the woman, in terms of cultural identity, remains relational and is in constant flux, due to the inter-connectedness of metaphors. We can thus never achieve an understanding of ultimate "meaning", but through an understanding of the elements which comprise the script of a given architectural and cultural situation, and by acknowledging that the relationship of the parts leaves its traces in metaphors which can be identified, we can come "close" to discoveries of the significance of the elements.

4 This metaphoric association of woman and house is described in the article, "A Xhosa Mural": "Traditionally each wife had her own indlu (house) with which she was identified so completely that it was seen as an extension of her very being. Indlu and woman were virtually synonymous; the name of the hut was the name of the woman. The former is a tangible, inviolate extension of the latter, and it was what set a woman apart from the other wives." Thomas Matthews, African Arts, (May, 1979), p. 48.
The metaphor connects the architectural form and its location with a network of ideas presented elsewhere in a culture. These ideas may have other physical forms in clothing, ornament, bodily alterations, such as scarification, and in tools and utensils, and also presented in language in folktales, songs, parables, and poetry. The "script-analogue" allows one to see "how" the cultural product or behavior under investigation is related to its context, through its metaphorical references. In transcendence through metaphor, that which is being transcended is the local and the specific in space and time.

The question may be asked, how do ideas which are metaphorical differ from those which are analogous? Both metaphor and analogy share characteristics, in that they describe something in terms of something else. However, the analogy is used to explain something in terms of similarities. Something is "like" something else. A diagram can be considered to be an analogy because it explains ideas visually. "Script", as a term, has been used as an analogy to the script of theater. The metaphor, however, although it shares characteristics with the "something else", also has connotations of important differences. Thus the metaphor relates to that which is similar, and enhances and accentuates that which is different, giving it greater depth of expression. For example, the Kikuyu parable, "A woman's hut is the cradle of family tradition", is metaphorical. It has references to the similarities of the hut as container, and the cradle as container, and their connections to the woman. It also accentuates differences, in this case, the difference between one and many, and the nurturing of a child as opposed to the nurturing of tradition. The infant occupant of the cradle can be seen in a singular relationship with its mother, while the house, as a "cradle", is not only the location where the woman nurtures her family, but where she also nurtures tradition, with its implications of the many members of the family, the ancestors of the family, and the "many" of all the memories of tradition.
Ritual

The 1983 issue of the Princeton Journal of Thematic Studies in Architecture was devoted to the topic of ritual. What was striking about the writings included in this journal was the lack of agreement on the meaning of ritual, and the struggle of the contemporary architect to design buildings with "meaning". "The architect's desire to find a new kind of ritual comes in the wake of renewed interest in the past, and suggests an attempt to redress the balance to counter the proliferation of mute form... with an architecture that once again engages the participant on a primary level." It is this "engagement" which is afforded by ritual in the African context, and which energizes the architectural/cultural script. Ritual cannot be "invented" artificially if it is not related metaphorically to that which is identified and valued in culture.

A script acquires its richness through its performance, and that performance would not be possible without the structure which allows the repetition of the script. This interrelationship is addressed, in terms of architectural space, by anthropologist Henrietta Moore: "The organization of space both precedes and follows the action which takes place therein; it determines those activities and is, at the same time, their product... Spatial texts may, therefore, be said to have both a history and a future." The "script-analogue" suggests that this history and future is activated in the present by the performance of ritual, which can be seen as analogous to the performance of a play, and the architectural setting as the "stage" where ritual is performed. The performance of ritual draws performer and observer into a vital relationship, with each other, with

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the architectural setting, and with the culture. Ritual is the activator, and perhaps the most significant element of the script. Rituals are performed by an individual, or groups of individuals. These performances, through their metaphorical associations, draw together and relate built and designated architecture, commemorative and orientative memory, and individuals as singular bearers of culture and sub-cultures. It may be said that ritual "potentiates" the dynamism of the script, and activates the possibilities of transcendence through metaphor. The term "potentiality" is used here in the Aristotelian sense: "not a mode in which a thing exists, but rather the power to effect change, the capacity of a thing to make transitions into different states."8

Ritual can be seen as metaphorical actions which "take place" in a physical setting, are repeated, have attached value, and whose metaphorical content resonates outside of the ritual being performed in place and time.9 Ritual is stylized, and not

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7 The Africanist literary critic James Olney, in *Tell Me Africa*, discovered a metaphorical relationship between characterization in the African novel, and ritual sculpture. "Like ritual masks that are not ordinarily drawn directly from life or intended to represent particular individuals, but rather so symbolize the being or the existence of ancestral force in composite, character in the traditional African novel is not likely to be drawn from an individual; for it is not, any more than a carving of "lkenga" or any more than a Dan mask or a Benin bronze, a living likeness, but rather a sum of existing, informing forces. Fictional character in *Things Fall Apart*, [by Chinua Achebe] like ritual sculpture, is more a significant and affective or symbolic figuration than a mimetic one" (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 178.


9 There is disagreement among anthropologists as the the parameters of the definition of ritual. This issue is discussed in the article by Jack Goody, "Religion and Ritual: The Definitional Problem", *British Journal of Sociology* 12 (1961). In this article, the definition of ritual is expanded to mean a "standardized form of behavior/custom", p. 159. Further, the acts being performed are not interpreted by the observer as leading to the ends observed empirically, but are critical in communicating information. According to this definition, in the African context, for example, the manner in which a woman serves food can be considered a ritual if the actions have an informational content which extends beyond the actions being performed.
extemporaneous. As an element of the script, ritual is that which activates memory and concentrates a frame of ideas. It is the mechanism by which the cultural and individual past is brought into the present for reaffirmation, and is also connected to a future time when the ritual may be performed again. Paradoxically, because of the metaphoric content of ritual, it transcends the local and specific, and simultaneously concentrates its references in exactly the local and specific.

Ritual actions are frequent in African traditional cultures. Labelle Prussin writes: [in Africa], "As far as we know, every act involving the closure of bounding space and every act involving openings or passages through space is accompanied by some ritual behavior." In writing about African biography, Olney defends the validity of abstracting from individual African autobiographies the "single and general pattern" that characterizes a culture. That which elevates an event from the commonplace, to one which connects and generalizes, Olney suggests, is ritual.

"Where is the point, at which the merely individual

Explosion breaks

In the path of an action merely typical

To create the universal, originate a symbol

Out of the impact?" 12


11 Olney, op. cit., p. 38.

"African autobiography, which imitates African life in universalizing the individual experience, would seem to demonstrate that "the point" is in ritual... in the 'rites de passage' that mark individual life with the imprint of general humanity."\textsuperscript{13} If the individual life can be marked, through ritual, with the imprint of general humanity, so, then can the "imprint" of a culture be discovered in an individual life. The performance of ritual by individuals affirms and reaffirms the architectural and cultural connection.

\textbf{Built and Designated Architecture}

\textbf{The Individual within Culture and Sub-culture}

\textbf{Commemorative and Orientative Memory}

There is a triad of elements and their modifiers which are activated by ritual within the frame of the script. These are "built and designated architecture", "commemorative and orientative memory", and "the individual within culture and sub-cultures". Each of these sets of terms can be seen as "expansive", in that their role in the "script-analogue" model is to expand the ideas usually considered in each of the three categories: architecture, culture, and memory. Designated architecture was used as a term to include not only built architectural forms, but also places of significance which may occur without reference to designed and built forms. Architecture may be "designated" through language, in terms of what it is "named", and through the metaphorical references attached to it. Designated architecture may have as referents naturally occurring features of the landscape. Thus we can consider such topographical features as mountains, groves of trees, and bodies of water, for example, as falling under the category of designated architecture. Designated architecture may also have been designed

\textsuperscript{13} Olney, op. cit., p. 38.
and constructed in a minimal way in terms of architectonic forms, as in, for example, an arrangement of stones on the ground (Fig. 2), or the placement of a designed and fabricated object in the landscape, as in the placement of a clay pot in juxtaposition to a tree.

The term memory was used to indicate the means by which the significance of architecture and culture are carried forward into the present. Commemorative and orientative memory are also "expansive" terms, in that the inclusion of "orientative" indicates that not only are architectural forms significant with regard to what and who they commemorate metaphorically, but that "where" they are is also important. The "where" is relational, architecture to architecture, the proper orientation of people to architecture, and the proper orientations of sub-divisions of architectural spaces in relationship to each other. Thus, orientative associations concern the memory of proper directional or positional locations. Under this category we find cardinal directions, up and down, left and right, and the accompanying built and designated architectural features which provide points of reference to these orientations.

The term memory, as that which provides continuity, is used here with respect to both individual and cultural memory. Although all cultures change over time, a traditional culture displays a tendency to value continuity. The architecture of a culture is experienced through associations with the personal and cultural past. Architectural meanings are remembered (known) through these associations, and in turn, architecture provides cues as to proper behaviors within culture. Commemorative memory is based on the relationship of the person to architectural forms and places, and the significance that arises out of this relationship. Commemorative memory is associated with named built and designated architecture, and subdivisions of
architectural forms and places, such as gender associated rooms within a house, public and private places, and sacred and profane places.

Although the "script-analogue" can be used as a means to investigate the relationship of culture and form, in the diagram "culture" is not used as a term separate from the actions of individuals. The use of the word "individual" in the center of the triad "architecture", "individual", and "memory" is meant to indicate that the individual is the means by which culture is expressed, through actions and the products of human work resulting from actions. The individual is simultaneously a member of culture and the bearer of culture. Culture is not a "thing" which has intrinsic properties of its own outside of the patterns of actions of groups of individuals.

The terms culture and sub-culture are used in the "script-analogue" theory to guard against over-simplification in discussing the relationship of architecture to culture. Sub-culture is meant to indicate that there may be significant differences and concerns associated with memberships in sub-cultures. The term sub-culture is itself problematic, in that "sub" implies underneath, or lesser in importance, while in actuality, sub-cultural differences, such as gender, may significantly deviate from the cultural pattern while still sharing in many of its patterns of emphases.14

In terms of the "script-analogue" the individual is seen as participant in culture, and overlapping sub-cultures, simultaneously. Culture can be seen as a theme which emphasizes some human possibilities and de-emphasizes others, in a manner which can be termed a "pattern". The products of human work are also elements of this cultural pattern. A differentiation can be made between actions and products which are

14 The term "sub-culture" is commonly used in cultural anthropology to indicate groupings of individuals whose actions and beliefs may differ to a greater or lesser degree from those of the dominant culture.
idiosyncratic and individual, and actions and products which are integral components of the pattern, by identifying their metaphoric content. That which is metaphorical is necessarily connected to other metaphors within culture; that which is habitual or idiosyncratic can be seen as isolated, and may not be culturally significant.

Most investigations of the relationship between culture and form concentrate on the relationship of the products of human work to the dominant (male) cultural theme. Each individual within culture is a participant in this dominant culture, and is also, simultaneously, a participant in sub-cultures which, to a greater or lesser degree, modify and shift significance away from the dominant cultural pattern. These sub-cultures can be seen as layers which are superimposed on the primary, or structuring pattern, in configurations which are not always congruent with it. Thus, membership in sub-cultures of gender, age, occupation or profession, ethnicity, and region may modify or conflict with the primary culture.

The "script-analogue" can be used as a means to take account of, for example, the shift, or alteration, in significance encountered when investigating the relationship of women, as a sub-culture, to architecture. Each individual within culture is both participant in, and bearer of, culture, and is also a participant in a variety of sub-cultures, which, as they are identified and focused upon in the context of this research, lead to a greater understanding of the relationship of the individual to his or her architectural environment.
CHAPTER 3

APPLYING THE THEORY

After the theory was developed, its terminology defined and elaborated upon, and the relationship of its elements presented in a diagram (Chapter 1, p. 5), it was necessary to test its effectiveness by applying it. A major premise of the theory is that the elements of a traditional culture are intertwined with each other, and an examination of a particular element inevitably leads to other elements of significance. It was decided to use the house as an example of a built architectural form, women's role in house building and maintenance as significant elements in the making of architecture, and women's relationship to the "land" (as an example of designated architecture), as points of entry for the application of the script-analogue.

The house was selected because of its complexity as an architectural type, in that it accommodates a wide range of actions occurring within a human lifetime, seen in the personal narratives that occur in the temporal spaces between a woman's birth, bearing of children, and death, within the house. A woman's house and the entirety of the life she leads there are commemorations of each other. Women's participation in the building of houses, including her actions in maintaining the house's cleanliness and good repair, were selected as the second point of entry for this investigation, in that these are important mechanisms by which she lays claim to "ownership" of the house, even though in most cases, her husband or other male relative is the title holder of the house.

Agricultural land was also selected as a starting point for investigation because it is a complex example of "designated" architecture, as seen in the metaphorical dualities embodied in the differentiation between settled land and bush land, wild animals and
plants, and domesticated animals and plants, and in the relationship of women to features of significance in the landscape.

For the analysis, after an extensive review of the literature, examples were selected from the data which corresponded to the triad of elements in the diagram: 1. **Architecture (built and designated)**; 2. **Memory (commemorative and orientative)** and, 3. **The individual within culture and sub-culture**. It was also necessary to identify the metaphors and rituals which activate the script and connect its elements to other elements of significance within a culture. The analysis of a singular cultural/architectural event by means of the script-analogue is not a complicated process, if one has access to a range of cultural manifestations of metaphors, in a literary or oral tradition, in the form of religious texts, songs, parables, and folktales. However, an architectural form as complex as a house, with its shifts in occupancy, and the density of the repeated and occasional actions occurring in a house, presents us with a situation of greater difficulty. To make the house accessible to analysis, it is necessary to regard the house first in a holistic sense, rather than as a composite of primary and secondary architectural forms and the accompanying rituals and habits that occur within and around the house.

Robert Nisbet writes: "Metaphor is a way of knowing. . . Metaphor is our means of effecting instantaneous infusion of two separate realms of experience into one illuminating, iconic, encapsulating image."¹ This encapsulating image makes it possible to condense the complex narratives of African cosmologies of primary images of the world into the totality of the form which is named "house", by looking to references to

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the house as "sacred center". Susan Blier writes: "The cosmogony that is defined in Batammaliba narratives and related architectural and ritual (metaphorical) images is a decidedly architectonic one. Like Batammaliba houses, the cosmos is a multistory structure organized into a series of carefully delineated parts." The anthropologist and Africanist Dominique Zahan writes: "In the universe... the house constitutes the smallest portion of the cosmos but also the most noble, as it is entirely subject to the uninterrupted organization and control of man. The house is that part of space in which man most thoroughly imparts his conception of the world. Thus, it is not surprising that everything concerning the house is determined by cosmic references."

Among the Mossi of Bourkina Faso, a myth of creation recounts that a house containing one of the first ancestors of the Mossi people descended from the sky. This house was lacking a door. The first act of making continuous the sacred realm of the sky/spirit world and the secular world of humanity was to cut a door in the house, revealing the priest inside, and conjoining the two realms. In these and other references, we see that dwelling in the traditional house is itself a sacred condition, as opposed to dwelling in another kind of house, perhaps one of "modern" design, which may not have metaphorical references to the cosmos attached to it.

One may look to the primary themes of African religions in order to provide a frame of reference for the specifics of particular metaphors and rituals in African cultures. According to Zahan, it is possible to investigate the religions of Africa in terms of the "overall spirit" of African "theology". All African peoples are profoundly

2 Blier, op. cit., p. 57.


4 Zahan, op. cit., p. 2.
religious. But the number and nature of their beliefs are extremely varied.\(^5\) This theology does not exist in a body of abstract texts, but is revealed by an investigation of the rituals and themes which can be identified from them. African mysticism is not phrased in terms of the opposition of worldly and spiritual, or sacred and profane, but these realms are merged. God and people, the spiritual and physical world, are parts of an interlocking system. The integration of this system is reinforced through the ritualized actions of daily life, and occasional rituals such as celebrations of planting, harvest, initiation, weddings, and funerals.\(^6\)

The sacred includes all area inhabited by a particular society and recognized as their territory.\(^7\) Occasional rituals such as those performed at births, rites of passage, and funerals concentrate a people's identification with their territory and reaffirm cultural values, in particular space and time, at times of conflicts and tension, and paradoxically, these rituals both heighten and simultaneously neutralize conflicts. They are not of a different character than those of everyday life, but perhaps serve as "pausing mechanisms", which can be seen as analogous to the "suspending the beat" in African music, as identified by Robert Thompson,\(^8\) where the pause disrupts the musical pattern and thus emphasizes its character all the more.

In the application of the script-analogue to an analysis of the African woman and the house, it was necessary to search first for those metaphors and rituals in culture which

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\(^6\) "It would not be an exaggeration to say that in Africa the rite encompasses all human actions because, at least in its origins, any such action is always religiously meaningful and requires the 'sacredness' of the space in which it is accomplished", Zahan, op. cit., p. 31.

\(^7\) Ibid.

\(^8\) Thompson, op. cit., pp. 10-13.
refer to the house as sacred, specifically for a particular ethnic group, or generally, in
the African cultural pattern. In order to elaborate on these metaphorical references, it
was necessary to continue the search for other metaphors which indicate conditions of
the house through which the relationship of the house to cultural and personal identity
are given a fuller dimension, and emphasized by ritual. As Suzanne Blier has indicated
through her typology of African metaphors, the metaphors used in African cultures are
complex and often superimposed, as in her category of "nested metaphors".9

Wittgenstein has suggested, "one doesn't recognize a symbol by its sign; one looks for
its uses."10 The frame, or script, in which a metaphor is being used, particularly in
what is said and done in ritual and its architectural context, can delineate the
metaphorical relationships which are operational. Once having decided upon the limits
of the frame, and discovered the metaphors suggested by these limits, (and the
metaphors outside the script which exist in relationship with it) a hypothetical process
of "taking away" critical elements can be performed, to determined what, if anything,
will be altered or diminished if the form or action is no longer present. This, for the
most part, remains speculative, due to the relative lack of research which documents the
cultural ramifications of planned or accidental changes. Research of this nature may be
scarce or inconclusive, because it is difficult to isolate a single change or influence upon
a culture, and also because some of the cultural changes have a delayed impact, making it
difficult to correlate them with a single source.

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9 Blier, op. cit., p. 36.

10 Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. Translated from the 2nd
It is possible to make reasoned speculations about why a cultural change has produced a particular result, by considering the elements of the script model. For example, an investigation of Nabdam architecture in Northern Ghana, in *Shelter in Africa*, includes a plan of the compound of a large Nabdam extended family (Fig. 3). Traditionally, the Nabdam build circular houses connected by curved walls, to form an organic, composite of households (Fig. 4). The plan reveals a zone of the compound which has rectangular buildings (Fig. 5). This study mentioned that that particular compound had been built by a man who had returned from the more urban, southern Ghana, where he would have seen rectangular, modern, house types. The author writes that, "It is probably significant that this compound was almost always empty of people. The sharp definition of inside and outside space does not equal the range of environments produced by the screens, walls and semi-enclosures of the traditional construction."12 "The traditional form of building can be manipulated to create easily a small environ for each wife."13 In traditional Nabdam architecture, women ornament the facades of their houses with finger marks in the wet clay, over which abstract patterns are applied with vegetable dyes (Fig. 6). The author of this study speculates that the lack of facade ornament on the rectangular buildings can be correlated with the inability of women to "identify with their homes" (Fig. 7).14 The article does not include Nabdam

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11 While it is true that a rectangular house type can be found in areas of West Africa, it seems quite likely that the adoption of the rectangular form in this instance was due to its owner's contact with the modern rectangular house forms seen in urban areas, rather than the rectangular traditional forms not used within Nabdam traditional house typology.


13 *Ibid*.

14 *Ibid*. 
metaphorical references to women, their houses, or facade ornament, but it is reasonable to assume that such metaphors could be found, and could suggest the reasons why women found it difficult to "identify with their homes". The implications of this lack of identification could be far reaching. The script-analogue suggests that if the form or orientation of the house is altered, perhaps by contact with Western culture, that its connection with other elements of the culture will be weakened if the house is no longer metaphorically intertwined with these other elements.

The scale of the investigation was both ascending and descending; an investigation of the house included its relationship to its internal features of forms and orientations, and also to the larger scale of the orientation of the house within a larger compound grouping of buildings, including, but not exclusively, other houses. The metaphorical implications associated with the house were also found to exist in its relationship to other artifacts found in a given culture, such as furniture, utensils, and screens. The investigations led to metaphors presented in ritual, such as weddings and ceremonies of initiation, rituals in connection with house construction, planting rituals, and the performance of ritual purifications necessitated by the violation of taboos. During the course of this research, it was found that the selection of a particular type of architecture as the primary object of investigation was not the critical factor in the success or failure of an analysis, because an investigation of any architectural type necessarily included its relationship to others, and to other important cultural metaphors. Additional information added elaboration and nuance to architectural significance. However, in no case investigated here did the additional information negate or alter that which was already determined. Instead, it underscored the essential unity of the cultural pattern.
There is another point to be considered in the use of the script-analogue for the analysis of architecture: the differing perceptions as to what constitutes a "work" of architecture in the modern and the traditional African context. Western theory and history most usually analyze a single building, or, in the analysis of a historical period or movement, a series of single buildings. In the African context, the architect of a particular building may be known, and the architect's style distinguishable from that of others. However, typological restrictions limit the possibilities for innovation in the traditional culture. Architectural excellence may be identified by "indigenous connoisseurs" within a limited range of modes of expression, and always in relationship to an ideal model. Thus, while acknowledging individual variations, we may consider a "type" of building, within its cultural context, to be a "work".
CHAPTER 4

THE HOUSE AS METAPHOR: APPLICATIONS OF THE SCRIPT-ANALOGUE

In this chapter, the script-analogue is applied to the analysis of the relationship of women and architecture in six African ethnic groups, the Kamba, Kikuyu, Kaguru, Nandi, Iraqw, and Hausa, and specifically, to the relationship of women and the house. Although the investigation focuses on women and the house as the point of entry, other ideas are necessarily referred to as they are perceived to be metaphorically connected to the elements within the script.

The House as Metaphor: The Kamba.

The Kamba are an agricultural and cattle raising people who live in Kenya’s Eastern province (Fig. 1). In applying the script-analogue to the relationship of Kamba women with Kamba traditional architecture, we may consider the following things as primary to the script’s frame:

1. **Metaphor and ritual:** It is necessary to search for metaphorical references in African culture, in the Kamba culture, and in references to women, to discover the interrelationship of the elements of this script. It is also necessary to identify the rituals which represent the performance of metaphorical actions. Some of the rituals and metaphors identified in this context are: the house as image of the cosmos, rituals of house building which include the actions of women and men, women’s cooking at the hearth, and women’s role in ritual mediation between the Aiimu (ancestor spirits) and the world of the living.

2. **Built architecture:** The form of the Kamba house, in its entirety (Figs. 8, 9, 13),
and the miniature Aiimu spirit house, placed at the base of wild fig trees on the landscape.

2. **Designated architecture:** Agricultural land, apportioned to women by men, and farmed by women.

3. **Commemorative memory:** The cultural and personal memory of the forms of the traditional house which comprise the setting for appropriate actions. An African architectural setting reinforces memory and behavior, in that the house where one is born, lives, and dies is always the same, or very nearly so, if not the same house. A female child observes and internalizes spatial significance from the actions of her mother in the domestic environment and then repeats these actions in her own, identical dwelling.

4. **Orientative memory:** The cultural and personal memory of the appropriate orientations with regard to the house; of people to people, of people to the house, and of spaces and forms of the house in relationship to each other (Figs. 10, 11). The hearth is a significant metaphorical "center" for African female identity, and is located in the center of the Kamba house.

5. **The individual within culture:** The traditional Kamba woman as member of African culture (Fig. 12).

6. **The individual within sub-cultures:** The traditional Kamba woman as a member of Kamba culture, and as a member of the female sub-culture.

In beginning the analysis, it is necessary to search for those metaphors and rituals which indicate the condition of living in the house as a ritualized one. While not all the actions performed by a woman in and around her house have metaphorical content, the
fact that she lives in a traditional house rather than in some other kind of house, give that "living" metaphorical presence.

The house is the location where Kamba women raise their children and nurture their families, and the hearth, consisting of three stones located in the center of the house, is the metaphorical center of women's role in the family. The Kamba woman cooks the food for her family, and the clay vessels she uses are made by women (Fig. 17). Zahan writes, about African ritual: "No African rite is as surrounded with secrecy as those concerned with fire. According to numerous myths, fire was originally stolen, and even in the context of the cult it still retains something of the illicit character of an object which must always be concealed. The jealously it inspires is equaled only by the jealousy of a man on account of his wife. 'Temples' related to fire are more numerous than one might think, since any hearth where an African woman prepares food can be properly considered a sacred place of worship. This is not so much because of the holiness of the food but because of the 'sanctity' of fire."¹

This relationship between the woman, the house, and nurturing as expressed by the cooking of food at the hearth can be seen in a Kamba ritual associated with house building (Fig. 14). The first house in a new village is built by the head of the village, and both husband and wife participate in the rituals associated with this new residence. "... in the evening after sunset the wife will light a fire and cook a little porridge (Ngima) in the house; she will first smear a little on the poles that support the erection, and then the husband and wife will each eat a little, and after them all the children will eat a little, a little will then be thrown on to the floor for the Aiimu or spirits."²

¹ Zahan, op. cit., p. 29
In Kamba cosmology, the Aiimu, a collective group of ancestor spirits, provide a focus for rituals and metaphors. Kamba folktales metaphorically present the contiguous realms of the mystical and the temporal world. The realm of the Aiimu is intertwined with the world of the living. The Aiimu are said to live in sacred wild fig trees; the "good" and "bad" Aiimu do not associate, but reside in separate trees. The house defines and commemorates the physical and metaphysical location, or center, of dwelling, for the Kamba, and the Kamba metaphorically signify this relationship of identity and house by building miniature huts, called "Nyumba wa Aiimu" for the Aiimu at the foot of "good" and "bad" fig trees. The Aiimu may take possession of a living person, for purposes of mischief, or to pass along important messages about present and future events. The Supreme Being, termed "Ngai", seems to be an abstract concept, whose work was essentially finished following the population of the earth, and in particular, the creation of the Kamba people. It is to the Aiimu that offerings are made at the beginning of each harvest, and the Aiimu are the vehicles for prophecies from Ngai. During such times, the Aiimu may enter the body of a person in order to deliver the message. Women are generally used as mediums for the expression of Aiimu, and each woman is said to have an Aiimu for a spiritual husband. A woman's fertility depends on Aiimu, and in particular, upon her spiritual husband.

The Aiimu inhabit a world that is spatially contiguous with the physical world, yet distinct from it. Usually women mediate between these two territories. In Africa the female role of mediation is not exclusive to the Kamba. An African woman is the link between the past and future. "Within the lineage the past and the future are represented

3 Ibid.

4 A woman who fails to become pregnant after six months of marriage is said to be neglected by her Aiimu. Hobley, op. cit., pp. 89-90.
by the head of the family and his son. Between the two of them, the mother, carrying their descendants on her back, is extra-generational. As the present she belongs to both at once. “For the African, time is inconceivable without generations as its framework. The succession of human beings issuing one from another offers to African thought the ideal basis for establishing the three fundamental correlative stages of duration: past, present, and future. However, contrary to what we might expect, a succession of individuals linked by ties of birth appear on the ideal axis of time facing not the future but the past.”

“[The African woman] is above all a mediator, since the child perched on her hips is none other than an ancestor returned to the world of men through her. Thus everything occurs as if woman were the crossroad where future and past, death and life intersect... she incarnates the junction...”

The form of the traditional Kamba house has changed over time, but the circular plans of the earlier and later house types remain essentially the same. In both types, the hearth predominates, in the center of the structure. The earliest type of Kamba house was a bee-hive shaped structure, thatched to the ground (Fig.9). The more recent type of traditional Kamba house is made of packed mud, or, alternately, sun-dried bricks. These houses are circular in plan, as was the older form, with conical thatched roofs.

5 Zahan, op. cit., p. 45.
6 Ibid.
7 Ibid.
9 Andersen, op. cit., pp. 66-73.
It is clear that the elements just described are complex and interwoven in their relationships to one another. The significance of the house, or the significance of the woman's identity does not reside solely within any of the elements, but rather, in their interactions. The rituals "living in the house", "cooking at the hearth", and "mediation", activate these elements, which then metaphorically transcend the script, or frame and connect with other metaphors within Kamba culture. For example, women's relationship with agricultural land can also be seen as one of mediation, in that their efforts primarily produce the crops. The Kamba women own the granaries, fill them with the products of the harvest, and distribute and cook food. The relationship of men to land is more removed, in that it is abstract. Men are the title holders, and men apportion land for women's use.

The miniature houses for the Aiimu placed on the landscape metaphorically reinforce the woman's identity as mediator between Aiimu and people, the house as the woman's "place", as symbolic center for woman and the family, the woman's role in agriculture as one of mediation, and the woman's "mediative" procreative role. In the referring back to the Kamba house, the meaning of the miniature Aiimu house shifts away from itself, for the significance of the Aiimu house exists in its reference to the Kamba house as a metaphor, among others, for the woman's mediating role in her culture. The complex acting out of the script is in a state of continuous flux, through this network of person, architecture, memory, metaphor, and, among others, the rituals of cooking of food in a new house, and the ritual mediation with the spirit world. The woman's role is central in the production of food, the making of clay pots, and in her significance as the pivotal

10 An illustration of the metaphorical connection between a woman and her house can be found in the Kamba "woman's stool", which men are forbidden to use. The name of the stool is "kitul", as is the name of the design inlaid upon it with metal. The design represents the framework of a house. (Figs. 15, 16), Hobley, op. cit., pp. 36, 38.
connector of generations past, present and future. The elements of the script can all be seen as metaphorical, because all have significance which resonates elsewhere, in locations not enumerated in the above description, but all in reference to the elements described.

In order to determine whether the elements of the script selected for a given analysis are metaphorical rather than neutral or habitual, one can hypothetically "take away" the elements in turn, and speculate on the possible changes resulting by their removal. If the taking away of an element does not reverberate elsewhere in the cultural pattern, and effect a change in it, then it can be assumed that the element was not critical to the script. Among other possibilities, a change in the location of the hearth, a change in the location of the Aiimu houses, a change in or elimination of the woman's ritualized role as mediator, or a lessening of the woman's participation in agriculture could change or weaken the significance of other cultural elements for women.

A traditional culture is rich in metaphors and ritual (which itself is metaphorical action), and it is this richness which continuously reaffirms the values of a culture. And yet the traditional culture is a fragile one. If cultural values outside the African culture and the female and Kamba sub-cultures come to be superimposed on the existing value system, the system can begin a rapid transformation, and the cultural pattern could shift, and perhaps become a hybrid form. For example, suppose that with increasing cultural contact with modern, Western culture, the Kamba adopt a rectangular house form that uses contemporary materials, and is perhaps roofed with a corrugated tin roof. This causes the network of metaphorical relationships to begin to falter, and perhaps to be transformed into something different. The memory of those architectural forms and orientations which function as mnemonic devices for the woman living in a traditional house are not reinforced by the modern form. The miniature
Aiimu hut, instead of being a locus of highly charged referential meaning, becomes "once removed" from that meaning, although it may then generate nostalgia. The role of the woman as mediator is also altered, for the form of the Aiimu house no longer refers to the house where the woman nurtures her family with the products of her agricultural work (Fig. 17).

In another hypothetical case, suppose that the Kamba are converted to a religion other than their traditional one, and the role of the woman as mediator between a spiritual realm and a physical realm is made obsolete. In other words, the ritual, that of mediation, is removed from the script, and the connection between house as metaphor and Aiimu house as metaphor is weakened. The concentration of meaning afforded by the ritual no longer energizes this relationship, and perhaps the house becomes a house which is essentially neutral, and the Aiimu house becomes a remnant of the past, which may continue to be constructed, again, as a nostalgic form, or perhaps is negatively viewed, or is no longer constructed at all. The metaphor of woman as mediator between past and future is also weakened by the loss of her role as mediator between the world of the ancestor spirits and the world of the living.

The House as Metaphor: the Kikuyu.

The traditional Kikuyu occupy the region of north central Kenya (Fig. 1). The following example is an investigation of the relationships among metaphors which give meaning both to the Kikuyu house and to the identity of the woman for whom the house is a residence. Some of the significant cultural elements which correspond to the elements in the script diagram are as follows, although others may be discovered through further investigation:
1. **Metaphor and Ritual**: The woman's living in the house and compound, in a house of "proper" form and orientation, the preparation of food at the hearth, and taboos associated with the hearth.

2. **Built architecture**: the woman's house, the hearth,

3. **Designated architecture**: agricultural land used by women.

4. **Commemorative memory**: the form of the house (Figs. 18, 19).

5. **Orientative memory**: gender-related zones within the house, the proper orientation of people to the hearth; inside, as opposed to outside the compound (Figs. 20, 21, 22).

6. **The individual within culture and sub-culture**: The woman, as African, Kikuyu, and female.

The house itself is a complex metaphor for the identity of the Kikuyu woman, and other modifying metaphors can be identified which add to our understanding of the significance of the interrelationship of woman and house. In addition to positive metaphors of affirmation, there are powerful negative metaphors of ritual prohibition, which should be considered when searching for metaphors within a culture. In Kikuyu culture, these can be identified in the form of taboos centering on the house and its hearth.

Jomo Kenyatta's quotation of the Kikuyu parable, "a woman's house is the cradle of family tradition",\(^{11}\) can be a starting point for investigating the relationship between a Kikuyu woman's cultural identity, and a Kikuyu house. This parable does not alone present the meaning of the relationship between a woman and her house, but must be

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coupled with the physical reality of the house and the lives which take place there. The significance of the house lies in the connection between it and the parable as metaphor. A house is a house, and simultaneously "the cradle of family tradition" which requires the presence of the woman. As the woman nurtures her child in the cradle, so does she nurture family tradition in the house. The term family, implies not only the woman's relatives, but the entirety of Kikuyu culture as "family". The act of "dwelling" of the woman in the house is a ritualized condition, which is modified and reinforced by the many ritual activities which she performs in the context of the house. The connection of the parable, the woman, and the house is one example, and others can also be found, that commemorates the identity of the Kikuyu woman, and also gives significance to the house.

The following passage gives a physical description of the Kikuyu woman's house, to be used as reference to the analysis: Co-wives each have a separate house in which they cook, sleep, eat, raise their children, and perform other activities of domestic life. The house is circular in plan with a conical thatched roof. The exterior wall is constructed of a single row of poles, with saplings tied at regular intervals in a parallel row. The gaps are then filled with mud. Thatching of the roof is done with bundles of grass, in layers, and held in place by friction (Fig. 23).

The plan of the house is actually a square within a circle (Fig. 22). Within the circular perimeter wall, the arrangement of the poles supporting the rafters form a square. The front and back sides of the square parallel the entrance. Four pairs of posts comprise the corners of the square, and additional posts, the number varying according to the size of the house, connect the corners and form the sides of the square. A few short posts are set up to support the rafters and to define the verandah area in the front of the house.\(^{12}\) The kitchen is located in the center of the house, with the hearth at the center

\(^{12}\) Kenyatta, op. cit., p. 82.
of the kitchen. Above the hearth is a platform which provides a ceiling to protect the flammable thatch from sparks, and is used as a storage space for firewood. The kitchen area is screened from view by a plank wall that spans the area between the corner poles on the front side of the square (Figs. 20, 21).

Metaphors can re-enforce the memory of propriety within culture positively, as was the case with the Kamba house and the Aiimu miniature house. However, metaphors can also be found in their negative aspect, as ritual prohibitions about what does not constitute proper behavior and form. That which is positive can be read as the mirrored image of that which is negative, and the disequilibrium of improper behavior contains within it the mechanism for regaining equilibrium, through the performance of rituals. Many of the activities that a woman performs in and around her house which are charged with metaphoric meaning can be identified as actions which avoid the violation of ritual taboos. There are many taboos relating to entrances, to the interior of the compound as opposed to the exterior, and to inside the house rather than outside. Within the house, of significance is the proper relationship of women and men to the hearth. With reference to the compound, violation of the following prohibitions, among others, necessitate the performance of rituals of purification.

1. If a jackal barks in the entrance of the courtyard of a compound, a purification ritual is performed. 13

2. It is taboo to kill a particular bird, "nyamindigi", within a compound. 14

3. The hooting of an owl near a compound is a bad omen and necessitates a purification ritual.

13 Kenyatta, op. cit., p. 66.

ceremony.  

The ritualized condition of living in a house within a compound, as opposed to living in the secular and "dangerous" world outside is revealed by the multiplicity of metaphors associated with the condition of living within. The transcendence through metaphor associated with ritual is seen in this metaphoric density, where the act of "living within" must continually be reaffirmed. Owls hoot, jackals bark, and through the rituals necessitated by these events, the continuity of culture and individuals within culture is brought periodically into alignment with past and potential future events.

In its commemorative and orientative aspects, the hearth and its fire within the Kikuyu house is of particular significance in the reaffirmation of female identity. The hearth is regarded as the "center" of the house, where women cook and serve the food they have grown. The fertility of the "feminine" earth is mediated by women, and women manage and oversee food distribution. Women plant and harvest crops, transport the harvest to the homestead, and oversee the distribution of cooked food. The importance of the house for both architectural meaning and female identity can be seen in the taboos focused on the hearth and its fire:

1. The fires in a homestead should not be allowed to go out entirely.

2. "If a cooking pot cracked while food was being cooked in it, that food might not be eaten except by women past childbearing."  

3. A fire must not be allowed to go out while beer is being brewed.

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15 Ibid.

16 See Chapter 6 for a discussion of the relationship of African women to agricultural land.

17 Leakey, op. cit., p. 167.

18 Leakey, op. cit., p. 166.
4. If a woman allows a pot in which she is cooking casor oil to boil over or go dry, a purification ritual must be performed.

5. A person has to pass to the right of the hearth when entering a house. The right side of the hearth is the male side, although the other associations of the hearth are female.

As was the case in the Kamba example, the importance of the hearth, in terms of its form, its orientation in the house, in the orientation of people to the hearth, and in the rituals necessitated by lack of respect in the use of the hearth, can perhaps be understood by the ramifications of its absence, for the hearth is a particularly meaningful locus of female (and by association, family) identity in Kikuyu culture. If it were not present in the house, or if a contemporary stove were to be substituted, the associations of women with agriculture, with nurturing, with the gathering of firewood, and with propriety in marriage, could be affected by its absence. Further, the absence of the hearth's fire, in the center of the house, would remove the meaning of its form and location as a "sacred place of worship", and the woman's identity could be diminished.

The Kikuyu designate the orientations left and right as associated with women and men, respectively. This association is prevalent among other African cultures, and will be expanded upon in further examples. In the Kikuyu woman's house, the hearth is oriented in the center. The proper orientation of people to the hearth, as is seen represented in a taboo, is to the right when passing it. The hearth is associated with women, which is reinforced by the woman's association with agriculture and cooking. The orientation "right" is associated with men. It seems to be contradictory that the

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19 Leakey, op. cit., p. 167.
proper orientation to the woman's hearth would be to the male side. However, an explanation for this can be seen through an investigation of layers of metaphors.

The concept of complementarity is an important theme in most African cultures, represented by metaphors in African architecture, art and dance.\textsuperscript{20} It can be seen in the relationship of male to female in marriage, between spiritual and earthly concerns, and in the interplanting of men's and women's crops. The Kikuyu recount a myth of their origins which may provide a key to the complementary male/female associations of the woman's hearth. In this myth, the founding male ancestor, Gikuyu, and his wife Moombi (which means molder, in the respect of shaping clay) had nine daughters and no sons. Gikuyu wanted a male heir, so he appealed to the Supreme Being, Ngai, and was instructed to make a ritual sacrifice. Once this was accomplished, nine young men appeared, who became the husbands of Moombi and Gikuyu's daughters. As these families grew, they were designated as clans, each with its identifying name. Collectively, they were called "Rorere rwa Mbari ya Moombi, or "children of Moombi's Tribe".\textsuperscript{21} The Kikuyu people, according to the legend, were at this time matriarchal. However, "Men were indignant at the way in which the women treated them, and in their indignation they planned to revolt against the ruthless women's administration of justice." This injustice included being "put to death for committing adultery or other minor offences."\textsuperscript{22} The men overthrew the women's rule by impregnating them, and then

\textsuperscript{20} In some African cultures, this complementarity is represented by the concept of androgyny. "The idea of androgyny, the ideal form of the human being, reflects the concern for perfect equilibrium between male and female and for their total reciprocity in equality." "Marriage is really only a poor substitute for the initial androgyny. Nevertheless, like androgyny, it is fundamentally characterized by the idea of complementarity, the leitmotif of African thinking in all domains." Zahan, op. cit., p. 11.

\textsuperscript{21} Kenyatta, op. cit., p. 6.

\textsuperscript{22} \textit{Ibid.}
subduing them when the women's pregnancies were advanced. Thus, the Kikuyu culture shifted from matriachal to patriarchal, and their collective name was changed to "Rorere rwa Gikuyu", or the children of Gikuyu. However, the names of the original clans, which derived from the names of Moombi's daughters, remain unchanged. Thus, the clans originating in male ancestors have female designations.

As a rule, women in Africa produce the crops that feed their families, while men's agriculture is more directed toward crops used for cash or trading. This, coupled with women's ability to bear children and continue the family lineage, in a culture whose spirituality includes the idea of reincarnation, makes women potentially powerful. This power can be seen in the Kikuyu myth, where women originally held political authority as well as the power of agriculture and procreation. One can speculate that for the Kikuyu, particularly the men, this could be perceived as an "imbalance" of power. Kenyatta writes, "In the Gikuyu family group, as in other forms of tribal organization, there are certain rules of behavior which must be strictly observed in order to keep the group in harmonious relationship." Perhaps, in order to preserve a "harmonious relationship", from a male point of view, the women were symbolically stripped of their political power. It is significant that the means by which this was accomplished was by impregnating the women. This may be seen as metaphorically neutralizing women's most powerful attribute, by negating it and relating pregnancy to weakness. Yet the female clan names were kept, perhaps as an equilibrating mechanism. Contemporary Kenyan coins commemorate the Kikuyu female clan names. The complementarity


24 Kenyatta, op. cit., p. 8.

25 One of the rare works of African autobiography by a woman is titled *Daughter of Mumbi*, by the Kikuyu woman, Charity Waciuma. In this book, Waciuma recounts her
between men and women, as recounted in the story of the founding ancestors, may have its architectural counterpart in the complementary proper orientation to the right (male) side of the female hearth.

The following passages expand upon the metaphorical relationships presented above. Because the Kikuyu culture is (or perhaps was, before extensive contact with the modern world) unified, further investigations of architectural/personal/metaphorical relationships add depth to our understanding of its significant elements. We can see a metaphorical relationship between the size of the house (built architecture), its orientation with respect to other houses (orientative memory), and cultural and sub-cultural identity (African, Kikuyu, women). The metaphors and rituals of the marriage ceremonies for first and subsequent wives provide the "performance" component to house form and location.

A Kikuyu woman's house can be seen as a singular unit in a hierarchical system of house, compound, and village. In other words, the built architectural environment of the traditional Kikuyu can be seen as concentric rings of ascending scale. The dwellings also reflect a hierarchy of size. The first wife's house is larger than those of her co-wives, symbolizing her position of importance in the family. Her house is also larger than her husband's house and more complex in its internal partitioning. Thus the physical size of the house reaffirms the identity of the woman, in relationship to the sizes of the other

conversion to Christianity. Because of this conversion, she did not participate in the ritual of female "circumcision", which is central to the female rite of passage for the Kikuyu and many other African ethnic groups. She wrote that by not undergoing the operation and accompanying rituals, she was set apart from Kikuyu culture. Olney, op. cit., p. 102. Perhaps this difference influenced the selection of the title of her book, where she is linked to the powerful female ancestor, rather than to the male ancestor. Many African cultures refer to female circumcision, an operation which is not analogous to male circumcision, but usually involves clitorectomy, as a means by which female sexuality may be subdued. Waciuma did not participate in this Kikuyu ritual, which is said to subdue women's sexuality.
houses. The orientation of the Kikuyu homestead follows the principles of associations of left and right with femininity and masculinity prevalent in African cultures. "If a man is associated with the right because of the strength and action which he incarnates in the manner of the right side of the body, then woman belongs to the left because of the notions of obscurity and secrecy which she shares with that side."26 The compound buildings are arranged in a circle, with the man's (head of household) house to the right of the center, and his wives' houses arranged counter clock-wise. The first wife's house is next to, and to the left of her husband's, the second wife's house to the left of hers, and so on27 (Figs. 24, 25). Also, the interior partitioning of the Kikuyu house designates the right side of the house as the male side, and the left side as the female28 (Fig. 18). As was mentioned, within the house, the proper orientation to the hearth is to the right; one must path the hearth to the right, "male" side, rather than to the left.

A metaphor of importance here is the cultural value placed on being first, or "senior" wife, and its attendant privileges, as evidenced in the marriage rituals of first and subsequent wives. For a first wife, there are four discrete steps in courtship, which are formalized by ceremonial gatherings of the respective families of the suitor and his prospective bride. The wedding proceeds after the prospective husband has built a house. The wedding itself can be seen as a theatrical/religious event, involving a ritual abduction of the bride, followed by a feast at the husband's homestead. The bride and her female age-mates then engage in eight days of ritual "mourning"; following this is a ceremony of "adoption" of the bride into her new family. After the adoption, a

26 Zahan, op. cit., p. 11.
27 Leakey, op. cit., p. 134.
ceremonial visit is paid by the bride to her parents. The marriage is concluded by the return of the bride to her husband's homestead, and the ritual giving of gifts.\textsuperscript{29} The marriage of a first wife thus involves many ritualized actions, and a complex metaphorical layering, which, in a sense, can be seen as having been condensed into two powerful architectural metaphors, which represent commemorative and orientative conditions. These are the relative size of the first wife's house to those of her husband and of other, subsequent wives, commemorating her status as senior wife, and the orientation of her house in the compound.

The marriage of a second wife is quite simple in comparison. "The husband, following his wife's advice, starts to act. He approaches his parents, and after consultation with them, arrangements are made to visit the girl and her parents. If accepted, he proceeds to pay the dowry and other gifts connected with marriages. When all arrangements are completed, he builds a hut next to that of the first wife and then brings the second wife home."\textsuperscript{30} The relative status of subsequent wives is seen in the previously mentioned orientations of their houses in the compound.

In a polygynous marriage, the relative harmony or disharmony among the wives is essentially determined by considerations of personality. As with any close family grouping, the potential for tension and discord exists, as does the potential for a harmonious sharing of responsibility. The hierarchy of house size and orientation among the Kikuyu is in a sense, a physical representation of a political ideal, in that the senior wife in principle should be deferred to by the junior wives, and should, in turn, defer to her husband. The metaphorical references to the respective values attached to

\textsuperscript{29} Kenyatta, op. cit., pp. 163-174.

\textsuperscript{30} Kenyatta, op. cit., pp. 176-177
the condition of being senior or junior wife is part of the network which links metaphor to metaphor, in the case in point, the elaborate marriage ritual of the first wife, and the simple, by comparison, weddings of subsequent wives. With reference to the taking away process used in the Kamba example, the violation of the normal conditions of size and orientation of the wives' houses would be contradictory to the cultural significance of being a first wife or a subsequent wife, and might accentuate any tensions present in familial relationships, by failing to metaphorically support the superior role of the first wife. One can speculate about the weakening of tradition which would occur if the hearth were no longer present at the center of the house, if the propriety of left and right were no longer observed, if the forms and orientations of the houses within the compound were altered, or if the rituals of marriage ceremonies were altered or replaced.

The House as Metaphor: "Positive Men" and "Negative" Women in Kaguru and Nandi Culture.

In this example, the analysis of elements of the Nandi, of western Kenya, and Kaguru, of east central Tanzania, cultures (Fig. 1) are combined, not for purposes of comparing and contrasting, but because they share many metaphorical associations. An investigation of both presents a more complete picture of the significance of gender and "positive" and "negative" in African cultures. The Kaguru present a challenging example for the use of the script-analogue, in that they are a matrilineal people, which is atypical within the larger African cultural pattern. The Kaguru are organized into about 100 exogamous and matrilineal clans, each with a founding female ancestor. Kaguru society recognizes two superimposed systems of social organization: matriliney, and the kinship relationships of the household centering on a man as the head of the household,
his wives, their children, and their children's spouses. The conflict between matrilineage and marital relationships is reflected in the social identities of the people associated with a particular settlement. The optimum condition from the viewpoint of the male head of the household would be to retain in his compound those people who are relations by matrilineage, including his sisters and daughters and their families, and also those people related by marriage, such as wives, their children, and children's spouses. By assembling these two sets of individuals in the same homestead, a man would stand to gain much in terms of available agricultural labor. Only a wealthy man is able to afford the financial inducements necessary to retain both groups of people in his residential complex.31

The following can be used as elements of the script-analogue, although further investigation could reveal others:

1. **Metaphor and Ritual**: associations of women with wild land, wild plants and animals, with danger and disorder, associations of women with the positive and negative aspects of fire and water, with the soft parts of the body, with cleanliness, metaphorical representations of the association of men with the center post of the house (Figs. 28, 29, 33, 34), and women with the enclosure, and orientations of men and women metaphorically represented in a legend of mythical migration.

The rituals associated with female initiation, which, for the Kaguru is termed "igubi", or wild pig.

2. **Built architecture**: the Kaguru and Nandi houses, and their components.

3. **Designated architecture**: cultivated land and bush land.

4. **Commemorative memory:** the traditional form of the house, the hearth and center post of the house.

5. **Orientative memory:** gender associations of inside and outside the house, and left and right.

6. **The individual within culture and sub-culture:** the Kaguru woman, and the Nandi woman (Fig. 27).

Gender roles of the Kaguru are complex, as are the issues revolving around the significance of the house (Figs. 26, 27). To better understand the complex relationship of men and women, one can look at the metaphorical representations of woman and house. The Kaguru use two traditional house types: a low, rectangular building made of wooden beams reinforced with dried earth, and a thatched, round, beehive-shaped structure, which is the more contemporary traditional type. The beehive dwelling is thatched nearly to the ground (Fig. 26). Its plan consist of two concentric rings. The interior room is the private space where the hearth and sleeping area are located, and the exterior space is the public area. "Kaguru sometimes describe a house as a kind of model expressing a combination of essential male and female qualities necessary for a marriage and for children and their nurturance." The Kaguru say that the male principle is represented by the center post, and the female by the surrounding and enclosing circular walls and by the hearth and its stones at the center of the dwelling.

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33 Beidelman, op. cit., p. 44.

34 Beidelman, op. cit., pp. 44-45.
Within the house, the hearth and its fire, at the core of women's private residential space, is metaphorically complex and paradoxical, in that it is both positive and negative, and is reinforced by positive and negative references to women found elsewhere in the culture. The fire provides warmth and nutrition in its positive aspect, and refers to the family and its maintenance.\(^{35}\) For the Nandi, as well as the Kaguru, this association of women with the inside of the house and men with outside, or outdoors, is metaphorically replicated in the associations of women with the hearth, which is seen as the center of female identity (Fig. 31). For the Nandi and the Kaguru, the hearth is the representation of "female warmth", and has associations with preparation of food and of nurturing the family.\(^{36}\) In contrast to the positive aspect of the hearth, Nandi women are also seen as being "weak and indecisive", susceptible to cold, and physically, intellectually inferior, yet have a greater capacity for pity than do men (Figs. 28-34).

Metaphoric associations presented in legends and folktales interconnect with physical architectural forms and conceptual norms of propriety with regard to orientation. The Kaguru see the relationship of men to the physical world in reference to the qualities of settled, cultivated, organized land, and that of women symbolized by the wild, unorganized bush-land. These two qualities of order and disorder are themes in the concepts, objects, and locations ascribed by the Kaguru to men and women, as seen in the following lists:

**Men:** society, cultivated plants, domestic animals, order, the skeleton or body framework, the center post of a house, weapons of the hunt as expressions of dominance.

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\(^{35}\) In Bantu culture, young girls are instructed during initiation about "the laws of the hearth (representing the union of man and woman), and the laws of cooking (evoking the conception and birth of the human being)." Zahan, op. cit., p. 56.

Women: wilderness, wild plants, wild animals, disorder, the soft, unorganized body parts, the hearth, in its positive and negative aspects, rivers and rain, in their positive and negative aspects.

Women are seen by the Kaguru as both positive and negative, productive, and dangerous. This apparent paradox can be seen in the associations listed above. Rivers and rain also are interrelated to this duality of order and disorder, in that they are vital to agriculture, and yet are destructive in excess. Legends and folktales also demonstrate the differentiation between "rational" men and "irrational" women. There are tales explaining the similarity of domestic plants and animals to those found in the wild. Kaguru explain this by saying that long ago God gave man and woman the same domesticated plants and animals. Man tended his, as was his nature, while woman neglected hers until they went wild. The Kaguru term for female initiation is "igubi", or wild pig, and carries with it the connotations of wilderness, wild animals, and also nutrition and submission to the hunter. The implicit purpose of female initiation into womanhood is to control and manage the "danger and disorder" associated with femininity.

For the Nandi, the following qualities are attributed to women and men:

37 Beidelman, op. cit., p. 43.

38 "Junod rightly remarks that the word which designates water among the Thonga, as well as many of the names of streams among the Bantu of southeastern Africa, possess the feminine suffix 'ti' (or for certain groups, the feminine prefix 'mi'), which seems to show that long ago, water was considered a feminine principle." H.A. Junod, The Life of a South African Tribe, 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan, 1927), quoted by Zahan, op. cit., p. 21.

39 Beidelman, op. cit., p. 43.

40 Beidelman, op. cit., p. 107.

41 The Nandi belong to the Kalenjin linguistic group. They inhabit the highlands of Western Kenya (Fig. 1), and are pastoral people who also practice agriculture. In the
Women: intellectual, physical, and moral inferiority, the left side, weakness, indecisive, contradictory, quarrelsome, neatness and cleanliness, a greater capacity for pity, susceptibility to cold, the cooking hearth, warmth. 

Men: intellectual, physical and moral superiority, the right side, strength, decisiveness, amicable, not as neat and clean, a lesser capacity for pity, less susceptible to cold, cold and rain.

The subordinate position of women and the cultural expressions of the necessity for male control of women should not be seen as implying a perception of women's lack of importance. As was discussed in the Kikuyu example, the power of the relationship of women to agricultural and personal fertility is recognized and ambivalently valued as both productive and destructive. Among the Kaguru, this concept is strengthened by matriline; the tracing of ancestry through women, where the inheritance of property through the female lineage reinforces the interdependence of men and women. Perhaps the cultural importance of women creates the male perception of the need to control women, for the sake of equilibrium.

With its metaphoric male and female principles, the house is the center of reference of the cultural ideal of a complementarity of femininity and masculinity. As was seen with the Kikuyu, there are many taboos associated with the house, and rituals necessitated by their violation. For example, more than one initiated person may not live in a house with a member of the opposite sex, which means that a separate house must be built for each wife in a polygynous household. Divorced or widowed relatives

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must have their own houses, and adolescent children must live in separate boys' or girls' houses.\textsuperscript{42}

The associations of left and right with women and men are presented in the Kaguru legend of mythical migration. It is thought that the Kaguru migrated in mythical time to their present region from the northwest. The people accomplished their journey by marching in a double column, with the men on the right and the women on the left, accompanied by the ancestors of the peoples now adjacent to Kaguruland.\textsuperscript{43}

With reference to the Kaguru, the Nandi, and the script-analogue, we can observe that the identity of the woman and the significance of the house is part of an interrelated metaphorical system in which there are many references to the dangerous as well as to the productive qualities of women. "Kaguru sometimes describe a house as a kind of model expressing a combination of essential male and female qualities necessary for a marriage and for children and their nurturance."\textsuperscript{44} This can be seen as a representation of the theme of complementarity in the general African culture. "... social man is that man who discriminates and works toward keeping all things in their place. The epitome of this kind of person is the elder; in contrast, women possess strength (fertility) and dangerous qualities at the price of not being able to make moral distinctions all the time."\textsuperscript{45} Beidelman writes: "In discussing Kaguru ritual... opposites are sometimes combined to unleash power, but it is so inherently dangerous that it must be surrounded

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  \item \textsuperscript{42} Beidelman, op. cit., p. 56. The separation of categories of individuals has significant implications for the design of "modern" housing in Africa.
  \item \textsuperscript{43} Beidelman, op. cit., p. 50.
  \item \textsuperscript{44} Beidelman, op. cit., p. 44.
  \item \textsuperscript{45} Beidelman, op. cit., p. 45.
\end{itemize}
by prohibitions." As was discussed in the Kikuyu example, the value placed in African culture on procreation and continuity, as seen in the prevalence of the central role the mythical ancestors of a people play in rituals of celebration and in daily life, and women's significant role in agriculture, places women in a powerful cultural position. Among the Kaguru, particularly, this power, when coupled with matriliny, runs counter to the theme of complementarity, for the role of men is potentially secondary. The tension produced by this "disequilibrium" can be seen in the many ritual taboos centering around the house, the metaphorical references to the "dangerous" qualities of women, and in the presence of masculine metaphors in female rituals of initiation. To "take away" any of these metaphorical elements in language, ritual, and in architectural forms and locations, could potentially bring the Kaguru cultural pattern into a condition of disequilibrium, at least from the male perception.

The transcendence through metaphor of past, present, and future, can be seen as a mechanism for the relieving of tensions which are present in any culture, as was mentioned in the discussion of the importance of the size and orientation of a Kikuyu wife's house in maintaining equilibrium. A culture is not a fixed point or end product of a process, but instead is itself an ongoing process which fluctuates between stability and instability. Ritual and metaphor provide the "encapsulating and iconic" image which momentarily stops time at a point of, simultaneously, maximum disharmony, and harmony. The metaphor, as distinguished from the analogy, has within it both similarities and differences, as in the duality expressed in the metaphorical relationship of women to the productive and destructive potentials of the fire of the hearth.

46 Ibid.
The House As Metaphor: the Iraqw

The Iraqw are an agricultural people of North Central Tanzania (Fig. 1), who raise cattle and small livestock in addition to their farming activities. In Iraqw culture, the relationship of people to built and designated architecture is particularly powerful, in that, atypically, their social organization is based on "categories and relations of space." The following elements can be identified:

1. **Metaphor and ritual**: the term "ayordo", or "mother-belonging-house", the metaphor of the liana vines as representing the connection between "slufay" poetry (metaphoric language) and architecture, built and designated, the associations of women with "inside" and men with "outside", women's association with the back of the house and the negative connotations of back as opposed to front, the ritual consecration of the boundaries of land, and the metaphorical associations of this consecration with sacredness, continuity, enclosure, and encirclement, the ritual seclusion of women during initiation.

2. **Built architecture**: the Iraqw house and its components (Figs. 36, 38, 39).

3. **Designated architecture**: Iraqw territory, the "yard" of the house as belonging to the woman.

4. **Commemorative memory**: the forms of the house and its components, the physicality of territory.

5. **Orientative memory**: the conceptual boundaries of territory, seclusion of women during initiation, inside the house as female, outside the house as male.

6. **The individual within culture and sub-culture**: the African, Iraqw woman (Fig. 36).

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Ritual and metaphor reveal the closeness of the mystical and physical connection between the Iraqw and territory, or land. "Slufay", or Iraqw poetry, in the form of oral performance, provides metaphors for the Iraqw attitudes and values associated with dwelling and orientation. Central to the Iraqw conception of space is the term "aya", which is difficult to translate into English because it encompasses a construct of values that are both physical and conceptual. The word includes the meanings attached to sacredness, continuity, boundary, inside as opposed to outside, closure, and encirclement. "... [it] is a settled tract of land, defined by a boundary, 'digmu,' that is drawn and maintained by ritual action."48

The 'aya' contains households, gardens, and grazing land, and the people and animals enclosed within the boundary are connected in a network of social and spatial relationships that are likened in "slufay" poetry to the lianas, or vines, which tie the poles of a house together, or to a spider's web with its connections among many points. Iraqw poetry defines the aya in a ritual sense, in that the aya is the focal point and subject of ritual and prayer, and is the focus of its poetic component, the slufay, in ceremonies that consecrate the boundaries of the aya. The aya metaphysically presents the moral qualities associated with, in particular, the necessity for the unity of the group and their collective responsibility.

The metaphorical interconnections between elements of the built and designated environment and its relationship to poetry and ritual, described as a vine or web, is exemplary of what is meant by the quality of the script-analogue as a simultaneous interrelationship of elements, whose significance is found in their interconnectedness.

48 Thornton, op. cit., p. 61.
not in the physical or conceptual properties of a singular element. The woman's identity within her culture is metaphorically presented in poetry, and in the forms and orientations of her house. The territory contained within the boundaries of the "aya" is ritually designated and maintained, and exemplifies the differentiation between sacred and profane space which is necessary in order to regard the act of dwelling within this space as a ritualized activity.

Among the Iraqw, the designation of private, interior space as associated with women, and public, exterior space with men, follows the pattern of spatial organization found in the other societies included in this study. The interior of the house and the immediately adjacent outdoor area is the domain of women, while the domain of men is the public, exterior world; among the Iraqw and many other African societies, a separate building is constructed as a men's house, or a male communal area for conversation, relaxation, and the performing of small tasks such as repairing tools and weapons.

The connection of a woman with her house, within the sacred boundary of the "aya", can be seen in the term given to the mother of a family, "ayordo", which translates as "mother-belonging-house". The term "ayordo" can thus be seen as commemoration of female identity and motherhood, and also of the house as a referent to this identity. The "do" is the most important social and spatial unit for the Iraqw, and the term refers to the individual house, although it can also refer to "the domestic group", "the grouping of people for whom this place is a residence", and the "potential descendents of that domestic group". The house is the domain of women and children, and women are responsible for maintaining it. Men may travel long distances to buy and sell grain and

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49 Thornton, op. cit., pp. 32-35.

50 Thornton, op. cit., pp. 32-33.
to engage in other trading activities, or to search for employment, while women rarely travel, and in particular, are rarely away from the house overnight. During the day, men are absent from the household while they herd animals; women are nearly always present, either within the house or in the outdoor area immediately in front of the household entrance where they perform domestic tasks such as food preparation or weaving mats.

The interior of the house is divided by a solid wall which is penetrated by a small doorway. This wall makes visible the public/private spatial differentiation. The interior divisions of the house are also related to gender. The section to the front of the house is the more public, male area, where men may entertain their friends on days that are cold or rainy. This is also the place were livestock are kept at night. The women's and children's private space is to the rear of the house, with the sleeping platform above. The men's sleeping platform is directly above this area. Among the Iraqw, the direction "back" as opposed to "front" has a negative connotation, which metaphorically refers to a "negative" quality of women, and also is connected to other metaphors in Iraqw culture, which refer to "back" with respect to the back of a hill, mountain, or house. This association of the orientation "back" can be seen in the Iraqw term for neighbors, "papay", which means "back and sides of a house", and the word "hhay" or "group of people." Neighbors are those people who live to the back or sides of a house. They must be cooperated with for maintenance of pastures, but also may be perceived as slightly dangerous or competitive. Thus the female orientation of space within the house, the female space being located at the back, also partakes of this negative

51 Thornton, op. cit., p. 35.

52 Thornton, op. cit., p. 37.
connotation, of danger and competition. As has been mentioned in the Kamba, Nandi, and Kaguru examples, the inside-female, outside-male, spatial organization is an important part of one cultural pattern in traditional Africa.

Spatial orientations are particularly powerful in Iraqw culture in that the proper orientation of men and women to boundaries and to architecture are formalized in traditional poetry and ritual. The strength of this connection can be deduced by the hypothetical "taking away", in terms of the script analogue, of any of the forms or metaphors than give significance to the Iraqw house, territory, and women's identity. If the ritual consecration of boundaries were no longer performed, or the male/female, outside/inside associations were no longer respected, the culture could be transformed by the breaking down of the "vine-like" connections of metaphor and the architectural environment.

An example of the differing associations ascribed to architecture by men and women can be seen in the ritual seclusion of Iraqw women during their initiation. The Iraqw practice male and female initiation, and although the ceremony for women has been outlawed by the Tanzanian government, it may continue to be practiced in secrecy. As with the Kaguru, the initiation and "circumcision" of women can be seen as an implicit proclamation of male control of women, and in particular, control of female sexuality. However, these initiation rites may reveal a duality of meaning; in the context of the script-analogue, the area in which women are secluded can be seen commemorating the identity of women within culture and sub-culture, and is oriented in space in a designated area. In Iraqw culture, metaphors can be found which relate to seclusion, in its positive aspect, as an identification of those who belong as opposed to those who do not belong in the aya; and in its negative aspect, with respect to protection of the aya from danger.
The significance of this seclusion may be different for men and women. During and following initiation, women are secluded or separated from the rest of society and given instructions in correct behavior and about sexual matters. The initiation, "Marmo", is conducted in secrecy, and is the means by which girls assume adult status and become eligible for marriage. The rituals also initiate girls into the secret society of women, which implies a female collective power, in the promotion of solidarity among age-mates. However, by men, the seclusion may be seen in terms of subduing and controlling. Seclusion of women may be related to another Iraqw example of ritual seclusion, that of confinement, within a house, of an individual or a family as a result of the violation of a taboo. A person or family who has violated a taboo is seen as being "polluted", and therefore dangerous to the solidarity of the aya, and is separated from it by seclusion, or more rarely, by exile.

Thus, the consequences of infractions against societal norms may be seen in spatial terms, by exile, or confinement. The initiated status of adult women may also be seen in spatial terms, where the solidarity of the female group is analogous to the "aya" enclosure or boundary which contains, protects, and defines ethnic identity, or, in the case of the ritual seclusion of women, female identity. The "secret" society of women includes those who belong, i.e., other initiated women, and excludes those who do not; men and the uninitiated women. Most cultural studies, unless otherwise specified, may be hindered by the assumption that the dominant viewpoint, from the perspective of both researcher and participants in the culture under investigation, is the correct, or "most accurate" viewpoint. By focusing on, in this case, the metaphorical/ architectural connections which define Iraqw women, as members of a sub-culture (female), an

53 Thornton, op. cit., pp. 218-222.
alternative perspective can be offered. As we have seen, women's initiation may be seen by men as a ritualized set of ceremonies expressing male dominance over women, and the ritual seclusion of women during initiation may be in response to the perceived negative and dangerous qualities of women, with respect to their potential for threatening the concept of complementarity which is valued in African culture. The initiation of women is a celebration of their readiness for marriage, procreation, and the title "ayordo", or "mother-belonging-house", and may be seen by women as ritual empowerment.

The House as Metaphor: The Hausa.

A complex condition of dwelling can be seen in the residential compounds of the Hausa people of Northern Nigeria and Niger (Fig. 1). The following elements have been selected for investigation by means of the script-analogue.

1. *Metaphor and ritual*: Metaphorical references to women in the Koran, seclusion of women as ritual and metaphor, prayer in public assembly associated with men, private, secluded prayer for women, the ritual, performed by women, of placing a plate at the apex of the "zaure", or entrance building.

2. *Built architecture*: the Hausa compound, the woman's house or apartment within the compound, facade ornamentation, and the ornamentation of the woman's house or apartment, the zaure.

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54 This potential is also represented by the Iraqw taboos with respect to "abnormality in childbirth". An unmarried daughter may not give birth in her parents' house, and a woman who has a spontaneous abortion is in a polluted condition. Any birth that is considered abnormal results in this condition. These include breech births and infants whose top teeth come in before the bottom teeth. Thornton, op. cit., pp. 140-141.
3. **Designated architecture:** the outside (of the compound) as a designated zone for male use, and the interior designated for female use.

4. **Commemorative memory:** the form of the zaure, the forms of architectural embellishment, the forms of the containers which make up the woman's dowry, the plate, as container, which is placed at the apex of the zaure upon its completion.

5. **Orientative memory:** the woman's proper location inside the compound, the men's proper location outside the woman's zone to the back of the compound, the man's zone to the front.

6. **The individual within culture and sub-culture:** the secluded Hausa woman (Fig. 42).

Purdah, or seclusion of women (called "kulle" in the Hausa language) is prevalent in the traditional Hausa urban centers (Fig. 39). The typical Hausa residence includes a cluster of buildings surrounded by a roughly rectangular compound wall, which houses the male household head, or "maigida", and his extended family, comprised of his wife or wives, children, and often his married sons, their wives and children, and other family members (Fig. 40). The compounds are high and windowless, protecting the privacy of their occupants, particularly the women in families who practice kulle. The only access to the compound is through the entrance building, or "zaure", which is usually cylindrical in shape and has a domed ceiling constructed of mud and palm frond fibers (Fig. 41). From the entrance building, access to the compound is strictly controlled through a series of anterooms and passageways which channel human traffic in a

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serpentine pattern that protects the women's quarters from visual intrusion\textsuperscript{56} (Figs. 44-48).

One can look to the Koran for the complementary metaphors which suggest that the totality of dwelling in a kulle compound is a ritualized activity.

"Wives of the Prophet, you are not as other women. . . speak honorable words. Remain in your houses; and display not your finery, as did the pagans of old" (Koran 33:32)\textsuperscript{57}

O Prophet, say to thy wives and daughters and the believing women, that they draw their veils close to them; so it is likelier they will be known and not hurt."\textsuperscript{58}

(Koran 33:59.)

In the case of Hausa architecture and culture, there are two vital and co-existing dominant cultures: that of Islam, and that which is traditionally African. Complementarity between men and women, (not to be confused with political equality, which is another complex issue not under direct consideration here) is valued in a general African cultural pattern. This complementarity is metaphorically represented in works of art, and is also seen in the significant contributions of women and men to


agricultural production. Complementarity between men and women and the Moslem seclusion of women are seemingly paradoxical. This paradox is also evident in architecture, in the dual presentation of "male" and "female" metaphorical references.

Hausa architecture is particularly noteworthy for its facade ornamentation, fabricated in mud plaster relief (Fig. 43). This ornamentation may be placed over the doorway of the "zaure", or entrance building (Fig. 41), or it may cover the entire facade with a rich patterning of geometric and abstract curvilinear motifs (Figs. 50, 51). This ornament is executed by specialist craftsmen, and directly reflects the economic standing of the household, and in particular, that of the patriarch, in that the application of ornament is expensive and must be repaired frequently due to erosion caused by rainfall (Fig. 52). The forms derive from patterns widely associated with Islamic ornament, such as the mandala and interlace pattern, and continuous geometric motifs, stars, chevrons, and floral patterns. Women's apartments within the confines of the compound may also be ornamented, executed by the woman herself, or by paid craftsmen (Fig. 53). This ornament is private and "hidden". Hausa architectural ornament can be seen as an expression of female identity when associated with women's private residential spaces, but when transposed to the public, male domain of the street, it loses its association with women and instead becomes an expression of the Islamic faith and of the wealth of the male head of the household, and by extension the family.

It is through the zaure that the dual references to male and female identity are found. The zaure is usually a cylindrical form with a domed roof, is normally the tallest

59 Strict seclusion of women precludes their participation in the production of crops, although the processing, cooking, distributing, and selling of food is an important economic activity for Hausa women.

60 Saad, op. cit., pp. 235-249.
building in the compound, and is the compound's only entrance (Fig. 54). The round form can be shown to predate the rectangular building type, and is associated with rural locations prior to the introduction of Islam to Hausaland. Yet, the round zaure building continues to be built in contemporary, traditional Hausa architecture. Its circular form and domed ceiling suggest the subterranean environment of the cave, and archetypal associations with femininity and the Mother Goddess of prehistoric (and most traditional African) religions. The dichotomy presented here is one of a "female" form associated with the most public and male oriented building of the compound.

The superimposition of Islam upon a culture which could be considered traditionally African produced a significant difference in women's role in the making of architecture. When facade ornament is present in traditional African domestic architecture, it is almost always executed by women. Among the Hausa, house building and ornamentation is exclusively a male occupation, yet upon the completion of the zaure building, the women of the household place a plate at the apex of the dome (Fig. 55). "When the plate loosens and falls, the arches are no longer stable." The Africanist Labelle Prussin has pointed out that the imminent collapse of the roof may cause cracking, loosening the plate sufficiently for it to fall. She also suggests that it is possible that "the plate marks the center of 'place', a distant echo of the Fulbe Bororo saying that 'without a wife there is no house.'" The reference here is to an earlier age, when the nomadic Fulbe defeated the Hausa states in the "Fulbe Jihad", in the early 19th century. Through the Fulbe contact

61 Schwerdtfeger, op. cit., p. 71.
63 Prussin, Hatumere, op. cit., p. 206.
with the sedentary Hausa, there was a merger of the architectural languages of the two ethnic groups. A component of this new architectural language was the Hausa dome, of earthen construction, which echoed in form and technology the dome-like form of the Fulbe-Bororo nomadic tent structure, which was entirely fabricated and owned by women.

To elaborate further on the metaphorical relationship of Hausa women to their architectural environment, the woman's dowry, consisting of ceramic or enamel-ware plates and bowls, stacked and arranged on shelves, can also be considered as part of the architectural ornament of her private domain within the compound (Fig. 57). The dowry is the most personalized expression of her identity as an individual. It reflects her status, independent of her husband, in that it is provided by her own family and is brought to her new residence on her marriage. There is competition among young, unmarried, women to accumulate extensive and elaborate dowries.

The dowry plates and bowls are containers, and yet are not used to contain food. They are containers in a metaphorical sense, as symbols for female identity in terms of procreation and containment. While the containment of women within the compound walls can be seen in a negative sense, of restriction of mobility, the association of woman with container can be positively associated with pregnancy and procreation. The ritual placement, by a woman, of the plate at the apex of the zaure building, is but one of a network of metaphors which connect past, present, and future time within Hausa culture, and may have alternate metaphorical interpretations by women and men. One can speculate that for a man, the plate indicates the presence of the woman in the

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64 Prussin, _Hatumere_, op. cit., p. 199.
household and the stature of being a married head of the household. For the woman, it may suggest the independence, despite the constraints of purdah, referred to by her dowry.

The analysis of the Hausa woman and her architectural place as a script allows one to uncover the interrelationships of metaphors of significance for women; the importance of the woman's place and her activities within the enclosing walls of the compound, the facade ornament, the interior ornament of a woman's apartment, a nomadic history where women were the builders and owners of their "houses", women's independence (from her husband, through her connection to her own family, and from agricultural labor), and archetypal images of women as containers of life. Without the "performance" of the ritual, for example, of the placement of the plate at the apex of the dome by a woman, the architectural significance of zaure dome and plate, and of the entire compound, would be rendered less significant, not in terms of what it "signifies", or "means", but, rather, in terms of its importance within culture for women and men.

To read the spatial confinement of women only as metaphorical spatial repression implies that the metaphorical associations are the same for the dominant culture (male) and the muted sub-culture (female). In actuality, Hausa women sometimes choose to enter into polygynous and kulle marriages. "Despite their air of male dominance, both polygyny and seclusion clearly reduce a wife's workload." In Hausa culture, men's political power can be seen as hierarchical, in spatial terms, for example, in accordance


66 Saunders, op. cit., p. 70.
with the district in the city in which one lives, which is associated with profession, and in the hierarchical ordering of rooms within the compound from the male-dominated world of the street, through a series of enclosures and passages, to the female world of the compound's interior, where the husband is also the holder of political authority. However, the Moslem Hausa woman is not entirely powerless, rather, her power is of a different nature. It is not of the character of an infiltration of the public and male world, but is expressive of an essential difference, one which is at variance with the predominant pattern. A Hausa woman can disrupt the pattern, spatially, metaphorically, and physically, by disrupting the marriage and leaving the household. If she chooses to do this, she disorganizes the hierarchy of men, for a man's stature is ultimately dependent on the presence of a wife or wives in his household. Upon leaving, the woman is not without options; she may become a courtesan, or "karuwa", or may live with relatives, and continue her economic endeavors. "A karuwa rejects the authority of both husband and kin. Typically a woman finds it easier to flaunt family authority from a safe distance and moves to another community to live as a courtesan."67 This status is not irreversible; a courtesan may marry and again assume the role of wife. Hausa women also have a degree of economic power, which is lateral, rather than vertical, which provides them with a connection to the public world of the street. They have the right to the proceeds of their economic activities, and their income may actually be enhanced by the spatial restriction of kulle.68 Very often, Hausa women process and cook food, which is sold on the street by their daughters of pre-puberty age. It is through the freedom of movement of these young girls that the kulle women remain in contact with the world

67 Saunders, op. cit., p. 77.

68 "The husband is obliged by Islam to support his wife, but has no claim on the income from his wife's private endeavors. Should he borrow from her, the loan must be repaid." Saunders, op. cit., p. 77.
outside the compound walls. Further, the woman's income may be used to provide her daughters with the dowry plates and bowls they will take with them when they are married.
In this chapter, four types of activities of significance to women are included under the general heading of house building. What is usually considered in house building has been expanded in this chapter to include the gender-relatedness of the processes and materials associated with building a house, the ornamentation of the house, the objects within the house which are fabricated and/or used by women, and the physical maintenance of houses by women. The investigations in this chapter are not as all-inclusive as those in the preceding chapter, in that they focus on the significance of the activities of woman in relationship to house building as the point of entry, rather than the totality of the relationship of the woman to her architectural environment.\(^1\) This is for purposes of emphasis. In fact, all the findings discussed in this chapter could be added to the investigation of women and architecture in a particular culture, and could elaborate upon the significance of the other identified elements of the script.

Although it is not appropriate in African cultures for a woman to construct her house in its entirety,\(^2\) a woman strengthens her identification with her house, as it defines her

\(^1\) The investigations in Chapter 3 focus on particular ethnic groups. This chapter uses examples from a variety of sources as models for how the processes of house building can be included in the use of the script-analogue.

\(^2\) An exception to this norm is to be found in nomadic architecture. "In the nomadic context, regardless of location, it is traditionally the women who have created, carried responsibility for, and exercised jurisdictional rights over the tents. All property, including the tent and its armature, the furnishings and domestic utensils, was created and owned by the wife. Even in those instances where women no longer weave the mats and tapestries and where they no longer tan the skins necessary for the interior leather furnishings, it is still the wife's family's responsibility to provide them, either as part of her dowry or upon the birth of her first child." Prussin, *Hatumere*, op. cit., pp. 47-48.
"place" in culture, by the efforts she contributes to its construction, and to its maintenance and cleanliness. The tasks involved in house building in traditional Africa are separated and delegated by gender. While the gender roles associated with constructing a house are not always identical cross-culturally in Africa, generally they are associated with processes specific to particular materials. Thus men may cut trees and fashion the wooden elements of buildings, both women and men may dig and prepare clay and earth for walls and floors, women most often cut grasses for thatch and plait or bundle the collected materials and fashion the roof, although there are exceptions to this division of labor. Women are generally primarily responsible for the plastering of exterior walls, the finishing of the floors and walls of the interior, and application of ornament, if any, to the facade. About the roles of men and women in building for the Batammaliba (Fig. 1), Blier notes that the "talent" for making architecture is inherited from a deceased elder. However, this talent is expressed in different ways for women and men. Men build houses, while women ornament the facades and plaster the floors and walls. A ritual performed at the funeral of an architect ensures that the talent will be passed on.

Among the Kikuyu, the thatching of the roof by women is a metaphorical "taking possession of the house" by women. As the women work, they may sing the following song: "You men, you lack the most important art in building, namely, thatching. A wall and an empty roof cannot protect you from heavy rain, not from burning sun. It is our careful thatching that makes a [house] worth living in." Kikuyu women carry the planks and

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3 The Hausa, mentioned previously, are an exception to the practice of facade ornamentation by women. Ornamentation of Hausa facades is done by male craftsmen.

4 Blier, op. cit., p. 22.

5 Kenyatta, op. cit., p. 80.
roof supports from the forest to the building site, collect thatching materials for the roof, thatch the roof after the framing is complete, and finish the interior by filling the interstices with cow dung.6

Tiv women do not build houses or thatch roofs7 (Figs. 1, 58). This work is done by men. But a woman is responsible for finishing the interior of the house, and in particular, preparing the mud floor and beating it to a smooth, even, finish with wooden paddles. A woman also assembles her cooking hearth in the center of the house and constructs a clay stand with depressions to hold water jugs.8 "In some of the 'Kparev' clans the women do more work on the construction of their own house. They mix the mud for the building, cut the corn-stalks, and help the men bring in the roof-poles and thatching grass. It is said that the women prefer to do this because it gives them a stronger claim to call the house their own, and to refuse admittance to whom they will."9

Thus, among the Tiv, the labor of house building is shared, and women's efforts strengthen their claim to their house. The men construct the building, and the women finish and organize the interior. Tiv houses are constructed of thick courses of mud, and thatched nearly to the ground with swordgrass. The labor division varies from region to region, but the primary house building tasks are done by men, including cutting poles

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6 Leakey, op. cit., pp. 139-143.

7 The Tiv are an agricultural people whose region occupies the savanna contiguous with the Benue River in northern Nigeria. Colonial Nigeria was arbitrarily divided into northern and southern regions, and the Tiv were located in the northern region near its southernmost border. Therefore, they were located in the same province as the Hausa. Akiga, Akiga's Story, translated and edited by Rupert East, (London: Oxford University Press, 1939, 1965), pp. 13-14.

8 Akiga, op. cit., pp. 53-56.

9 Akiga, op. cit., p. 60.
for the roof framework, and mixing mud for the walls. The women may carry water needed for the mud mixture; in this instance, the association of women with water may be seen as a corollary to the association of water and food preparation, also done by women. The woman is responsible for the fabrication and placement of certain articles inside the house, and the man for others. As we have seen in the Batamaliba example, the "beating" of the floor is the woman's task, and if it is done skillfully, it evokes positive comment from those who see it.

Among the Mossi of Burkina Faso\(^{10}\) (Fig. 1), it is also traditionally a male occupation to build houses, although a woman may participate, particularly in households where young men have left to seek employment. The building is fabricated of mud bricks, made by combining earth, straw and millet husks (Figs. 59, 60). The bricks are laid in two or three tiers at a time, with a layer of wet earth between. When this layer is dry, another two or three layers are added. When complete, the walls are rubbed with a mixture of cinders, dung, and earth, which seems to partially waterproof the structure. The same mixture is used for the interior floor and the courtyard. This mixture, after application, is finished by groups of women who beat it with wooden paddles until it is hard. It forms a dense, almost glossy surface. The building is constructed as a cylinder, and the door is cut after the walls are erected.\(^{11}\)

\(^{10}\) The Mossi are a Sudanese people who live primarily in the Republic of Burkina Faso, formerly called Upper Volta (Fig. 1). They are a large ethnic group, comprising at least half the population of their country, and numbering over 2,200,000 people. The Mossi belong to a larger group of culturally and linguistically related peoples, including the Dagomba, Senufo, Gurunsi, Lobi, Bobo, Dogon, Somba, and Tallensi. Elliott P. Skinner, The Mossi of Upper Volta. (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1964), p.2.

The activities involved in the construction of houses in traditional Africa involve a multiplicity of rituals which reaffirm what a house metaphorically "means" within culture. The house itself is most usually regarded, among other metaphorical associations, as the embodiment of male and female principles, (as was seen in Chapter 4) which are metaphorically replicated in the male and female principles found in African cosmologies. For the Mossi, the house is "the core of a complex symbolism in which the divinity, the world, and the individual play parallel and concomitant roles. With its door and lock, the Mossi hut represents the divinity conceived as a four-faceted being, that is, doubly male and female." (Figs. 61, 62) "Domestic rhythm is engendered by the man and the woman, who are themselves represented by the posts of the house's framework; the cosmic rhythm is created by the male and female principles, and these are evoked by the system of closing the house."

In reference to the script-analogue, the actions of a woman in contributing to the fabrication of her house is framed by the set of rituals, specific to each African sub-culture, which are necessary for the siting, construction, and completion and habitation of her house. Her participation in building is thus ritualized, and her identity is metaphorically represented by the female principles which add to the significance of the house.

Prussin writes: "Ritual performance projects spatial expression on to the natural landscape by means of an elementary organizational schema: the establishment of

12 ... it is not surprising that in almost all African cultures the organization of the cosmos is felt in terms of kinship, beginning with the sun-moon couple. The two celestial bodies sometimes appear as brother and sister, sometimes as husband and wife ... " Zahan, op. cit., p. 77.

13 Zahan, op. cit., p. 70.

14 Ibid.
centers or places (proximity), directions or paths (continuity), and areas or domains (enclosure). Eventually, the built form becomes the stage for ritual behavior, replicating and recalling the spatial order established by ritual itself.15 The built form upon its completion is a "stage" for the performance of ritual, but the actions involved in its construction also have metaphorical content in their performance. For example, among the Batammaliba, the correlation of Butan (the Earth Goddess) with nurturing is metaphorically presented in rituals associated with building the foundation of a house, where an egg is placed in the earth of the foundation (Fig. 57). The egg metaphorically refers to Butan's protection of the house and its inhabitants, and to the reference to Butan as a "hen" who covered and protected the eggs of creation.16 Thus a relationship can be seen among metaphors associated with femininity: the egg as an archetype of fertility and procreation, the house as embodiment of female and male principles, the Earth goddess, associated with women, and women's role in the construction of the house.

When facade ornament is present in traditional African domestic architecture, it is almost always executed by women. Not all women ornament their facades, and in some regions facade ornamentation is no longer done; in others, it is emerging as a vital and thriving art form.17 For example, Hausa women do not ornament their facades, but

15 Prussin, Hatumere, op. cit., p. 53.

16 Blier, op. cit., p. 246.

17 Xhosa and Ndebele women, of southern Africa, for example, are particularly renowned for their mural painting. A woman prepares the colors and designs and executes the murals on her own house; as with other African art forms, a well designed and executed facade painting is taken as a sign of proper moral behavior and strength of character. Ndebele facade murals are striking and innovative, in that no two houses have repeated or copied patterns. The designs are geometric and reflect the designs found in traditional Ndebele beadwork. The woman and her house represent a close link between identity and design, and a skillfully executed design brings honor to the woman who produced it. For discussions of Xhosa and Ndebele facade ornament, see Matthews, "A
their placing of the plate at the apex of the dome completes it, and the woman's action has attached to it a network of references, among which is the reference to an earlier age when women were the owners and makers of their houses.

Among the Gurensi of northeastern Ghana (Fig. 1), plastering and ornamenting of walls is exclusively a female activity. A Gurensi compound is similar to a Mossi compound in that it resembles a walled city, entirely bounded by a wall and including circular mud buildings which are adjacent to and/or incorporated into the compound wall. The space enclosed by the encircling wall may be subdivided by walls which delineate areas associated with individual families. As with the Mossi, the Gurensi compound may house polygynous families, or a large extended family.

Gurensi wall decoration is executed by cooperative co-wives and may be coordinated by the senior wife of each compound section, called "deo". The wall is divided into vertical and horizontal sections, and each woman will paint her designs in one or more sections (Fig. 64). The designs are generally rectilinear and non-figurative, although some women may paint scenes of people and animals, deriving from personal experience. Some patterns are standardized, but "... it can be said that every Gurensi woman has developed her own repertoire of motifs, her own sense of composition and her own style within the fairly fluid parameters of local and ethnic style." The colors most


18 The Mossi do not ornament their facades.


20 Smith, op. cit., p. 41.
frequently used are black, red and white. Wall ornament reflects a woman's individuality and personal style, and her interest in making the compound more attractive. Whether or not the walls are ornamented, and the extensiveness of the ornament, reflects also the wealth and prestige of a woman's husband, in that only a prosperous man could afford to allow his wives to take time from other duties to paint the facade.

For the Batammaliba, there is a direct, metaphorical correlation between the facade of the house, the body of a woman, the earth and agriculture, procreation, and the facade ornament executed by women. "Each facade is covered with a fine silt plaster, which is incised with delicate scars. . . similar to those made while cultivating the earth (Figs. 65, 66). Not only do these scars recall Butan's role in providing house nourishment, but they also reinforce her identity with women because women have similar cicatriziation marks, which are said to ease the difficulty of childbirth. Like the cicatriziation signs on the women, the incised markings on house facades reinforce the role of Butan in facilitating delivery and offering protection for new children in the family." "According to N'tcha Lalie, 'After the house has been born, the time arrives for it to have its cicatrization. Houses also should enjoy their youth and beauty. That is

21 Although the specific, metaphorical meanings ascribed to colors vary in African cultures, the most commonly used colors are black, white, and red. For example, among the Batammaliba, when used in reference to "world elements, red suggests fire, white signifies air, and black alludes to water. . . " "When designating animals, white, red, and black are the identifying colors of fur and feathers." "The descriptive and metaphoric qualities of color. . . play an important role in dress. Red cords. . . are worn by adolescent girls; black cords. . . are worn by a woman during her first night with her husband. White cords, in turn, are worn by the woman when she returns to formally join her husband and publicly assume the role of wife." Blier, op. cit., p. 287.


23 Blier, op. cit., p. 96.
why one puts the beauty of women on them. We incorporate the beauty of women into the house to show what women do. One imitates these women in showing that the house is a person.\textsuperscript{24}

The association of women, the earth, the egg as metaphor, the village, the house, and ritual, is shown in the following passage:

"A different path is followed during the ceremonies that mark the beginning of planting. On these occasions, the village Earth priest and other elders trace out the body of the village Earth goddess as they walk along the length and breadth of the village terrain. Participating priests begin at the symbolic head of the Earth goddess (the founder's house and first cemetery) and terminate at her toes (the village border). As they progress, they place eggs in the forest groves that define the major parts of her body. The sacred images that these paths create on the surface of each village are central to the identification of each community as one comprising a terrain that is supernaturally protected." "The concept of the path is equally critical for the understanding of signs in facade decorations. Most such signs are identified with deities or sacred powers and represent the paths that the supernaturals are said to take in returning to the house for ceremonies."\textsuperscript{25}

Thus, in African culture, house building and facade ornament comprise an important component of what a house "means" within its cultural context, and analysis indicates that this meaning is inextricably linked with the identities of women. The rituals and

\textsuperscript{24} Blier, op. cit., p. 128.

\textsuperscript{25} Blier, op. cit., p. 82.
metaphors surrounding the construction of houses can be seen as the active and transcedent components of a script which can be used to analyze a particular event and form, and can also reveal the means by which that event and form is embedded in a cultural network which links the specific with a larger cultural pattern that includes not only other events, forms, and individuals within culture, but also with past, present and future time. That the components of the script-analogue are indivisible is evident in the following statement by Peter Hammond in the introduction to Yatenga: "...the manner in which the technology [including the construction of houses] is integrated with the natural environment must be comprehended. This integration must be assessed in terms of its historical and contemporary relations to the development of the other core aspects of culture: the economic system, the social organization, the political system, and religion."26

Household Objects Fabricated or Used by Women.

Martin Buber defines "primitive" people as "those who have remained poor in objects and whose life develops in a small sphere of acts that have 'presence.'"27 The "presence" of the "sphere of actions" is enhanced by the significance of, and relationships among objects, in this case, the furnishings and utensils associated with a traditional African dwelling. The presence of mortar and pestle, vessels, ladles, and other utensils near the hearth, or elsewhere in the house, denote the areas that are the most intensely "feminine" (Fig. 67). This association of object, place, and identity is enhanced by the woman's use of things that she has made, from fibers she has grown or gathered, and clay

26 Hammond, op. cit, p. 1.

she has dug and molded (Fig. 68). The continuity of female and cultural identity can be seen in the use of things similar to those used by a woman's mother and other women, and perhaps accumulated as a part of her dowry.

Following the construction of a Tiv house, and the smoothing and polishing of the floor, the woman constructs the primary furnishings of the interior. The woman selects three large stones for the hearth and places them in three holes she digs in the center of the house. The stones are settled into the earth, water is added, and the earth beaten so that the stones will not shift. The outside of the stones may be coated with mud. Two other articles are fabricated by Tiv women for the interiors of their houses: the stand for water pots, and the string holder.28 The care which is taken in making the stand is related to the importance of the woman who makes it. A crude version may consist only of stones on which water jugs are supported, and a refined type is a high, oblong, clay stand with depressions to support the pots, made by women of high social standing. Beside the stand is a small stake from which the water dipper is hung. The string holder is used for hanging cooking utensils. It is made of plaited "icen" grass, cut into sections, and looped and hung from the rafters.29 The identity of the woman and her claim to "ownership" of her house is strengthened by her fabrication of household objects, and her social standing relative to other women in the community is indicated by the care she takes in the making of these things.

In the African division of labor, it is traditional for women to make vessels of clay, and for men to forge iron. Marriage between a potter and a blacksmith is common.30


29 Akiga, op. cit., p. 57.

30 "Usually potters are women. In some areas of the Sahel they are the wives of the smiths, in others, members of guilds or specialist families." Roy Sieber, African
For example, for Tiv women, there are a set of activities related to manipulating clay or earth. The association of women with the earth begins with their agricultural work and extends to their mixing of earth with water and using the mixture for the floors of houses, and the building of clay objects within the house. This association of women and earth also implies association with fertility, with food production, and human procreation (Fig. 69). A metaphoric presentation of this association is seen in the Tiv ceremony called the "idyugh" (meaning "taking out"), performed after a woman conceives, to ensure a safe childbirth and a healthy child. The ceremony is conducted in front of the door and under the eaves of the house. The fabricated components of the ritual include a stake of applewood driven into the ground around which are constructed six small cones of earth. On top of each cone a pot-sherd is placed. During the ritual, lumps of earth mixed with water are placed on banana leaves, and a portion of this mud is smeared on the woman's stomach. Relationships can be found among metaphors of earth, fertility, and container in the reference to pottery, formalized in the context of a ritual associated with pregnancy.

The link between women and the earth's fertility, and women and human procreation is explicit in many African rituals, in the symbolic association of women and vessels made of clay. There are many examples of this metaphor, among them the designation of 'Moombi", the Kikuyu founding mother, as "one who molds" (Kikuyu women are renowned for their skill as potters, and the word moombi means to mold with clay), in the placement of milk vessels on the Nandi initiation arch, in the pot-sherds placed on

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31 Akiga, op. cit., pp. 296-300.

32 Kenyatta, op. cit., p. 4.
the Tiv shrine and the anointing of a pregnant woman's stomach with earth, and in the pottery vessel placed on the Mossi "female" earth shrine (Fig. 70). Among the Batammaliba, when a woman is pregnant, it is said, "the pot is full". . . "In contrast, stillbirths and abortions are referred to be the metaphor of a pot that has broken."33

In a script which facilitates an analysis of African architecture and women's identity, the inclusion of household objects used by, and often fabricated by women adds to an understanding of the relationship between the house which contains them and the woman who uses them. An evaluation of their importance can be seen by the implications of their absence. Shirley Ardener writes: "Objects are affected by the place in space of other objects, not only their presence, and their position, but even their absence, or 'negative presence', may be important."34 If, for example, containers made of contemporary materials, purchased rather than fabricated, were substituted for vessels of clay made by women, the metaphorical connection between women, the earth, nutrition, and procreation could be weakened.

Maintenance of Houses by Women.

Labelle Prussin, in writing about women's role in nomadic architecture, stresses the importance of the "maintenance" of the structure, in reinforcing ownership and the identity of the woman. "In a tent structure, small scale changes do not require major investment, so that the process of identity is more readily realisable in a kinetic structure. The requisite repetitive assembling and demounting is equivalent to

33 Blier, op. cit., p. 111.

perpetual maintenance which itself intensifies the generation of the creative act (Figs. 71, 72). Space is also personalised through continual animated maintenance.  

Most African facade ornament is an expression of women's identity, and is an affirmation of her role in society; however, many African cultures do not incorporate ornament into their architectural facades. Although a woman may not decorate the facade of her house, the care and maintenance which she gives to house and yard can be seen as a statement about her place in society and her commitment to her role as wife and mother. The senior wife of a man of high rank is expected to behave as a model for the family and community, and it is through the size, orientation, and maintenance of her house that this status is expressed.

In Return to Laughter, the anthropologist Laura Bohannan describes the varying degrees of cleanliness of house and yard among the Tiv, and points out that marginal and low status families could be identified by littered yards, unswept floors, and houses in disrepair, in contrast to the chief's compound, where his wives' maintained and repaired their houses and kept yards free of debris by regular sweeping. The status and virtue of an African woman can be, in part, measured by her acceptance of, and pride in, her traditional role; the visible manifestation of her moral condition is the care she gives to her physical surroundings.

For the Batammaliba: "Each house accordingly rests on a small, cleared, circular yard that is sometimes called 'bupe', the same name as Butan's spirit counterpart. These circular yards constitute the richest, most fertile land anywhere in the village because of their constant refertilization by domestic animals and refuse. The circular house


bupe . . . not only marks the boundaries of each terrain, but also encloses therein the richness and fertility associated with Butan.\(^{37}\) Butan, the Earth goddess, is represented metaphorically by a circle, which is seen in circular groves of trees, the circular village, and the "still larger circle that delimits Butan's primary sign, the circular Earth of the world."\(^{38}\) "Family offerings to Butan are placed on this yard, which daily is swept clean by the women of the house."\(^{39}\) The relationship of maintenance and cleanliness to moral values is presented in this example, where the prosaic activity of sweeping the yard is metaphorically ritualized into an action which interconnects the territories of house, grove, village, and the Earth and its fertility, and the ritual action of leaving offerings to the Earth goddess. Although the preceding discussions have focused on the actions of women in building and embellishing houses, fabricating and using household objects, and maintaining architecture, it is evident that every element of the script is interrelated by metaphor to every other element, and that further investigations could lead to these other metaphors and elements.

\(^{37}\) For the Batammaliba, the "circular tomb and cemetery are the places where 'bupe', the spirit aspect of the Earth and underworld deity, 'breathes.'" The area around the house is similarly called 'bupe'. Blier, op. cit., pp. 43, 94-95.

\(^{38}\) Blier, op. cit., p. 94.

\(^{39}\) Ibid.
CHAPTER 6

WOMEN AND THE "LAND"

In Chapters 4 and 5 the commemorative and orientative relationships of women to houses, to house building, to the furnishings within the house, and to the maintenance of house and yard were discussed. The relationship of a people to the land in terms of territory, cultivation and use, and metaphorical representations of land is indicative of their manner of dwelling. In this chapter, the "land", the primary example of "designated" architecture, is discussed with reference to its role in the script. This investigation can be used as a model for clarifying the ideas which could be considered under the category of designated architecture as an element of the script.

Women and the Earth.

In African spirituality, the earth is portrayed as feminine, often as part of a duality with the male principle of sky or sun. Women's work in agriculture, the importance of procreation, women's role in providing nurturing and nutrition for the family, the relationship between women and vessels of clay, are all conjoined in metaphors about the female earth. Zahan writes: "Woman's enigmatic and impenetrable character results first from her physical constitution, which is so different from that of the male. In her entirety, the woman 'is' the earth, that is, the inert matter which encloses life within it
and supports all that is necessary for man's existence.¹ The earth is the most prevalent metaphor in the African mythologies collected by folklorists.²

Among the Kikuyu, the earth is sacred and is associated with the female, motherhood, and nurturing. The most binding and sacred oath of the Kikuyu is to swear by the earth, "Koirogu."³ The earth is the "mother" of the agriculturalist Kikuyu. The products of the earth nurture the people, and after death the earth nurtures the spirits of the dead.⁴ Although the earth is metaphorically designated as female, this does not necessarily imply that women always play a central role in African religious practices. For example, a Mossi woman's role in religion, and her relationship to sacred spaces, may be a peripheral one politically, although the primary Mossi shrine, the "tenga", is associated with the female principle of the "feminine " earth. The priests are male and preside over the earth shrine and ancestral shrines, although a priest may perform a ceremony and sacrifice at the request of a woman.⁵

Seldom are the metaphors which refer to femininity in Africa seen without reference to male principles as well. The feminine is enhanced and delineated by the presence of the masculine. This dual expression of male and female qualities is

¹ Zahan, op. cit., p. 94.

² "... The special domain of [humanity] is, of course, the earth. It is the earth which predominates in the myths, stories, and legends collected by various specialists." Zahan, op. cit., p. 7

³ Kenyatta, op. cit., p. 21.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ "Like the shrine to the ancestral spirits, [the tenga] is located on a barren spot of earth, but is rarely enclosed by any sort of structure. Occasionally the area is marked off by a ring of small stones. The altar itself is composed of a pile of small stones, upon which is placed a clay vessel, 'tensaare', approximately a foot in diameter and eight inches in depth." Hammond, op. cit., p. 170. The marking off of the ring by a circle of stones is an example of designated architecture.
frequently "acted out" in ritual in traditional Africa. An example of this ritual expression can be seen in the Tiv ceremonies of propitiation, called generically "akombo." Akombo is a quality associated with the energy of the positive and the negative in fertility, disease, and natural disaster. Akombo ceremonies are a complex set of rituals whose purpose is to achieve balance or harmony.6

The Akombo "birth" rituals take place at the "ihambe icigh", a shrine which is (or was) the focal point of every Tiv compound. This shrine can be seen as a symbol which concentrates significance in terms of the role of women in the family. R. W. Downes writes that it indicates the family's "reliance in the unseen for their fertility and their means of livelihood in which the woman, as the producer, is the recognized source both in the home and farm."7 The shrine is located on a mound to the left of the "ate" meeting house.8 It consists of two or more wooden posts; the male element is represented by posts with pointed tops with a groove encircling them near the top, and the female posts have rounded tops and two encircling grooves (Fig. 73). Two pairs of clay pots are placed on the mound with the posts. The larger pots are upright and are called "male", and the smaller pots are placed with their mouths to the ground and are named "female." The other objects that comprise the shrine are an old corn-grinding slab and corn-grinding stones. Both objects are associated with women and food production. The left side is the female side, and the shrine is always located to the left of the ate doorway. An older location for the shrine was to the left of the door of the first wife's house.9

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6 Akiga, op. cit., pp. 176-188.
7 Downes, op. cit., p. 81.
8 Ibid.
9 A Tiv woman always sleeps on the left side of her house; and outside the house, on the left side, the placenta is buried after childbirth. Akiga, op. cit., p. 59, p. 302.
earlier version a carved wooden figure of a woman was used instead of the male and female poles and pots.

The rituals performed at the shrine involve pouring libations over it, sacrificing chickens, and making offerings of yams, fruits and grain. The purpose of the ritual is to “put things right” in the “tar”, or the land. . . in other words, to restore balance.¹⁰ This desired balance is metaphorically represented by the dual principles of male and female components of the shrine. In this example is found a complex relationship of metaphors which represent the importance of the woman in food production, human procreation, and in the “proper” complementarity of women and men. These metaphors refer back to the “tar”, or land, and its relationship to women and productivity. With reference to the script-analogue, any of these references could present a point of entry for analysis, which would necessarily lead into the network of rituals and metaphorical relationships just described.

The “taking away” of one of the elements of the script reveals the fragile nature of this network, as is demonstrated in the following passage: “It will now be understood why the abolition of exchange marriage struck such a heavy blow at the old structure of tribal beliefs. If a man could no longer take his sister by the same mother to exchange for a wife, when his mother died she had no representative to carry on her line, and the chain which bound the group to its maternal ancestors was broken.”¹¹ “Today, [in reference to 1939, when Akiga’s Story was written]. . . few understand ‘how’ [the old rites] are connected with the fertility of the race and the soil, or ‘why’ the emblems must be placed at the door of a true exchange wife.”¹² The element of the script which

¹⁰ Akiga, op. cit., p. 84.

¹¹ Akiga, op. cit., p. 103.

has been removed is "memory", in its commemorative aspect by the forms of the objects used in the ritual and their corresponding metaphors, and "orientation", in the location of the shrine. That which was commemorated, the connections with the past and with the maternal lineage afforded by exchange marriage, is no longer done, the rituals became form without substance, and their metaphorical content was no longer meaningful.  

As we have seen in the last passage, rituals are performed to promote the earth's balance. The wildness of the earth must be regulated to control its fertility in a positive sense, for the benefit of people; this is metaphorically seen in the ritual control of women for the same purpose, and in the designation of the earth as feminine. In other words, as the earth's productivity must be controlled through the mediation of ritual, so must the fertility of women be controlled. Many African rituals associated with female "circumcision" and marriage explicitly refer to the necessity for controlling women's "wildness" and potential promiscuity.

Women and Agriculture.

The women of Africa play a critical role in food production. Men may hold title to land, apportion land to women for their use, clear land of trees and brush to prepare new fields, but the continuous, repetitive effort by women contributes significantly to the feeding of their families. Their work and direct contact with land may be seen as a more

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13 This example can be compared to the hypothetical taking away of the Kamba Aiimu house in Chapter 4.

14 Among the Kaguru, "The [initiation] ceremonies for girls are said to cool the girl who is hot and disordered after the onset of her first menstruation..." Kaguru female "circumcision" is minimal, and does not involve clitorectomy. Beidelman, op. cit., p. 107.
tangible criteria of "ownership", if not the political one. Agricultural land and its
productiveness is the basis of cultural and physical survival for most African peoples.
The identification with "territory" provides a foundation for ethnic identity. For
example: "In studying the Gikuyu tribal organization it is necessary to consider land
tenure as the most important factor in the social, political, religious and economic life of
the tribe." For the Kikuyu and other African societies, identity is defined by personal
and familial relationships. A woman is identified as being someone's daughter, someone's
wife, and someone's mother. "The Gikuyu does not think of his tribe as a group of
individuals organized collectively, nor he does not think of himself as a social unit. It is
rather the widening out of the family by a natural process of growth and division. The
visible symbol of this bond of kinship is the family land."

Agricultural land is associated with femininity through metaphor, in, for example,
the preponderance of "female" crops, and in the mythological designation of the earth
as "mother." For the Kikuyu, the planting, growing, and harvesting seasons, "Mwaka",
extending from one rainy season to the next (about six months) are divided into nine
parts, corresponding to the nine months of gestation. The beginning season of each
Mwaka is called "Kihu", or "the big womb." A complex system of cultivation rights

15 The Tiv speak of a woman's farm, which is hers by virtue of the effort she has
expended on it.

16 Kenyatta, op. cit., p. 12.

17 Kenyatta, op. cit., p. 310.

18 The "gender relatedness" of crops is often seen in traditional Africa. For example,
among the Batammaliba, "... the female granary, with its female-associated crops (in
particluar, beans, earth peas, various fruits, and peanuts) is located on the north side of
the house." Blier, op. cit., p. 145. At Batammaliba funerals, "men bring male crops and
women bring female crops." Blier, op. cit., p. 279.

19 Leakey, op. cit. p. 173.
ensures that each woman has access to land. When a man clears a new field, it is
apportioned to the women of the household, who then harrow it and remove the weeds.

The man's mother and wives each have their own strips of land, and they rely on the
help of their friends to complete the preparation for planting. A man's widowed mother
has the right to choose the size of her land; and the man (as title holder to land)
apportions the rest of the land to his wives, the size of the plots depending on the number
of children each wife has. A new wife receives her own plot, in addition to portions of
existing plots belonging to co-wives. The new wife, in exchange, gives portions of her
new plot to her co-wives. The land and its use symbolize the interconnected and
reciprocal character of Kikuyu culture. Land is not owned collectively by the Kikuyu
people, nor privately by an individual, but is held and used in partnership with
relatives. The apportioning of land among co-wives is a physical example of the mutual
cooperation that is expected of them. By exchanging portions of plots of land, as
described, each women has a portion of virgin land to cultivate, as well as an older,
possibly more depleted portion, thus ensuring an equitable distribution of agricultural
productivity. In the same way, certain crops are associated with women and certain
crops with men, and these crops are interplanted in a mixture of "male" and "female"
crops, with the "female" crops in a larger proportion to ensure an adequate food supply
for each woman and her children.20 The interplanting of crops among co-wives, and of
male and female crops can be seen to have a functional purpose, to provide an equitable
distribution of food among members of an extended family, but is also a metaphorical
reference to the cooperation that is necessary among co-wives, and between a wife and
her husband.

A Kikuyu woman's place in her culture is further defined in a metaphor which refers simultaneously to her garden plot and her house. A woman's plot of land is marked by a natural boundary, a strip of thatching grass. This boundary denotes her province and symbolizes her architectural center of reference, her personal house. Traditionally, women grow, cut, and transport the roofing materials, as well as physically thatch their dwellings. Thus the thatched roof of a woman's house metaphorically refers to her connection to agriculture and the land she works, and the land and its perimeter refers back to her personal house. The connection between a woman, her land, and architecture is also seen in the metaphorical reference to the granary. At the beginning of each harvest period, a ceremony is performed; along the paths leading from the fields to the village, miniature granaries are erected, into which each woman places the first products of her fields as an offering to Ngai. The connection of ritual and metaphor occurs in this ceremony, with the miniature granary "standing for" the granaries of women which flank a Kikuyu compound entrance.21

Although women in Africa are primary food producers, it is rare for a woman to hold title to land. For example, Mossi women do not have the right to own or inherit land. They must depend on their husbands to provide enough land for them to use. Land can also be loaned to a woman by her husband's brothers or by her husband's father. If a woman's husband dies, and she elects to remain with her husband's family group, she usually is allowed to continue working the fields she needs for personal support. A woman may lend her fields only with the permission of the owner. In the extended family, the male household head has the final authority over distribution of land to be used by his wives and children.22

21 Leakey, op. cit., p. 189.

22 Hammond, op. cit., p. 75.
In much of traditional Africa, men's lives and women's lives are parallel but essentially separate. Emotional attachment to one's mate may occur, but is not necessarily a requisite condition of marriage, where the relationship is highly formalized and economically interdependent. An African woman's relationship to land, and to the house in which she lives has inherent contradictions. Women may participate actively in all phases of agricultural work, and exclusively in food processing and cooking, and yet they are infrequently allowed to own land, and must therefore depend on their husbands or other male relatives to allocate land for their use. A Mossi woman leaves the village of her birth when she is married, and resides in her husband's homestead and village, where she is subservient not only to her husband, but to his father, brothers, and mother. A woman may never feel "at home" in the location where she lives most of her adult life. A widow who is no longer an active participant in farm work will often return to the village where she was born, to live with her own kin group.

The infrequency with which a woman holds title to land, and her sometimes tenuous connection to her husband's village does not necessarily indicate powerlessness, or lack of identity for African women. The value placed on children and family continuity, and women's agricultural labor often places women in an inherently powerful position. That this power is a component of African culture is revealed in myth and ritual concerning the qualities and behaviors that define female identity.
A COMPARISON OF THE SCRIPT-ANALOGUE TO FOUR THEORETICAL MODELS USED FOR THE ANALYSIS OF AFRICAN ART AND ARCHITECTURE

From among the recent literature about African architecture, four works have been selected to compare and contrast to the script-analogue. These are *Hatumere: Islamic Design in West Africa*, by Labelle Prussin, *African Art in Motion*, by Robert Thompson, *The Anatomy of Architecture: Ontology and Metaphor in Batammaliba Architectural Expression*, by Suzanne Blier, and *Space, Text and Gender: An Anthropological Study of the Marakwet of Kenya*, by Henrietta Moore. These four books were chosen because each of the authors has recognized the need for the development of theory appropriate for the study of African traditional art and architecture, and each has significantly advanced knowledge in the area of African studies. Three questions were asked with reference to the material. 1. Do the authors clearly identify their theoretical premises and their methodologies? 2. Do their theoretical frameworks facilitate the analysis of their material within its cultural context? 3. Do their theoretical models address the means by which culture and form are interrelated? These works are presented in detail here, and their similarities and differences with respect to the script-analogue are discussed.


With regard to the first question, Prussin does not make explicit her methodology, although she indicates that it involves "innovative interpretation" and partakes of the methodologies of several disciplines. She specifies several theoretical assumptions, which respond to the difficulties of transferring Western architectural theories to the
African context. Her formulations about the relationship of culture and form do not specifically identify the metaphor as a means by which this relationship occurs, although she frequently analyzes her material with reference to its metaphorical associations. The following is a discussion of Prussin's theoretical framework, her methodologies, and the implications in her work about the means by which architecture and culture are related.

_Hatumere_ is a definitive work on Islamic design in West Africa, and is not limited to the investigation of architecture. Prussin's major contribution to her field, in addition to the many findings resulting from her research, has been the "legitimization" of the study of African architecture, and by example, the architecture of other traditional peoples. Her theoretical framework eludes identification, because it is not one, but many. It seems to partake of many ideas from anthropology, art and architectural history, and philosophy. From anthropology she uses the techniques of ethnographic fieldwork, and terminologies deriving from the social sciences. For example, she writes, "We attempt to relate a range of artifactual material to socially functional behavior patterns and to the conceptual imageries that have been generated by them."¹ About architectural history, she says, "Although the emphases of this study _Hatumere_ reflect a Western bias and training, they are equally a revolt against that bias."² She writes that Western architectural history has emphasized monumental works and singular authorship, and has considered non-permanent structures, such as nomadic architecture, as peripheral and of minor importance. About her first book, _Architecture in Northern Ghana_, she says that the biases of her education, which stressed

¹ Prussin, _Hatumere_, op. cit., p. xx.
² Prussin, _Hatumere_, op. cit., p. xix.
architectural functionalism, influenced the formulation of the questions addressed in that early (1968) research.³ For example, she writes that her premise was that, "ingenuity of environmental and structural technology governed design judgement.,” and "applied ornament, long considered an aesthetic crime, was never, until recently, acknowledged as a functional component."⁴ Hatumere questions her own earlier assumptions, and includes investigations of, among other artifacts, architectural ornament and nomadic architecture.

Prussin seems to adapt some of the philosophical ideas of phenomenology in her study, in that she uses the material world as the starting point for her analysis, and refers to a sense of "place" as defined by the material. "If we assume, however, that the man-structured, man-built physical environment mirrors society, then material observation provides what is in some ways the most accurate evidence by which patterns of behavior in space and time can be reconstructed."⁵ Prussin suggests that a methodology for investigating "the totality of the man built environment" should use spatial referents to formulate a method concerned not with chronological, but processual time. It is a sense of "place", not "stability", which is essential, and "space, rather than shelter, offers the utmost germane, all encompassing, non-restrictive point of departure."⁶


⁴ Prussin, Hatumere, op. cit., p. xx.

⁵ Prussin, Hatumere, op. cit., p. 22.

⁶ Ibid.
Prussin has been able to deal with material which is not easily accessible to analysis. She writes, "Yet, it is often out of this very challenge that innovative interpretation is born." Therefore, Prussin draws upon her experience and the breadth of her knowledge of the methodologies of several disciplines, and weaves these together into what she calls "innovative interpretation." It would seem that the primary difference between "innovative interpretation" and the application of the script-analogue theoretical model is that Prussin's method of analysis and the resulting findings are not, in a sense, replicable by other researchers. The findings thus generated cannot be evaluated by repeating the steps she has taken to generate them, because these steps were generated out of Prussin's unique and multi-disciplinary way of working. The script-analogue, in contrast, presents a specific formulation for a way in which the researcher can investigate African architecture. However, this being said, it must be acknowledged that Prussin's work has added considerably not only to the validation of the study of African architecture, but also to our understanding of it.

In answering the question of whether or not Prussin's methods facilitate the analysis of the material within its cultural context, it can be said that the necessity for analysis of African architecture within its cultural context has been a primary theme in Prussin's recent writing. "How" this can be accomplished is not explicitly addressed by Prussin, although her innovative interpretation succeeds in this respect. Prussin cites

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7 She writes: "History has traditionally depended on the written and physical record; it has often consisted merely of arranging names, dates, and places in chronological sequence. In Africa, the minimal written documents are full of bias, oral traditions are veiled in a fabric of myth and legend, materials and artifacts are mutable and perishable, and the archeological record is still in its infancy." Prussin, *Hatumere*, op. cit., pp. xx, xi.

a "new and urgent interest in fundamental principles" in architecture to include the
totality of the relationship of people to their architectural environment.⁹

Prussin offers some formulations about the relationship of architecture and culture,
although this has not been the primary thrust of her work. In the introduction to
Hatumere, Prussin traces a development of thought in architectural historiography, and
discusses the impact of this development on the study of African architecture. Early
thought about society and its products were essentially evolutionary, where cultures
were compared to a biological model of evolution. Natural laws were also utilized as
criteria for aesthetic judgement.¹⁰ Superseding the biological model were criteria
based on "functional expression." These criteria naturally led to "environmental
models", where "structural honesty" in the use of materials was a basis for evaluating
aesthetic quality. "The Vitruvian model used by the Western world was reinterpreted
into a canonical set in which permanence, monumentality, the technological ability to
enclose space, and singular authorship endowed with 'intuitive artistic judgement'
emerged as the governing criteria for the existence of 'architecture.'"¹¹ None of these
models offer formulations about "how" architecture and culture are related. Prussin
frequently correlates language with visual arts, and in this respect she is investigating
language and material things as manifestations of the same cultural pattern.¹² The

⁹ Prussin, Hatumere, op. cit., p. 22.

¹⁰ Prussin, Hatumere, op. cit., p. 20.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² "The structure of much West African poetry and ritual incantation involves
repetition of singular phrases, varying slightly to incorporate the continuum of content
to which they address themselves. In like fashion, Islamic prayer often consists of
piously repeated phrases. When translated into a graphic image, the abstract design
often captures, by its multiplication, this same repetitive quality." Prussin, Hatumere,
op. cit., p. 77.
script-analogue specifically identifies language, and in particular, metaphorical language, as the principle means by which the linkage between artifact and the individual within culture occurs.

The script-analogue suggests that ritual, as metaphorical action, is a primary mechanism by which culture and architecture are interrelated, due to its functioning as a connector to other cultural elements of significance. Prussin also identifies the importance of ritual as a connector, but suggests that it can be replaced by "constancy in the landscape." Her reasoning is as follows: Ritual "is an important spatial construct bridging the gap between behavior and emotion. Through its repetition over time, ritual provides a constancy that is essential to identity and emotion. Space itself, defined in man's mind by place, also has an invariant quality; constancy in the landscape can serve as a surrogate for ritual behavior in men's minds, since it offers many of the same properties of identity as ritual behavior provides."\textsuperscript{13} In other words, RITUAL (invariant over time) is ANALOGOUS to CONSTANCY IN LANDSCAPE, and can be replaced by it: CONSTANCY IN LANDSCAPE \textless\textless SURROGATE for RITUAL. Prussin's model does not provide, however, the mechanism by which the individual within culture and the world of artifacts interrelate, other than to say that ritual can be translated into a graphic image, and does not account for the potentiating of this interaction by ritual and metaphor.

The central concern of Prussin's book is the investigation of the pervasive impact of Islam on the arts of West Africa, and the presence of ritual in the personal/architectural relationship is a recurring theme upon which she elaborates. For example, she writes about ritual in West Africa: "An emotional association is established between the ritual

\textsuperscript{13} \textit{ibid.}
behavior and the bounded space, expressed through identification with the wall surfaces that envelop the action."\textsuperscript{14} As Islam overlaps with, and often dominates, the traditional religions of West Africa, there is a corresponding transformation of ritual spaces. "The introduction of the Ka'ba as a second center for the universe laid the basis for translating traditional West African concepts of space into the objective, geometrical rationale of Islamic space."\textsuperscript{15} Thus the architectural spaces change with reference to the changes in cultural pattern, from traditional African to Islamic. Metaphoric references to spatial geometrization are abundant in Islamic sacred literature. Prussin refers to the early writings of Sufist scholars, where "the geometrization of the human body and its relationship to the hierarchy of the Muslim universe are marvelously revealed."\textsuperscript{16} Prussin continuously reinforces the identified "meaning" of architectural spaces with analogous meanings found elsewhere, primarily in Islamic documents, and in this respect, one of her working methodologies seems to be related to iconology. Although ritual is continuously involved in the relationship of people and architectural spaces, ritual is used in Prussin's analysis as a bearer of "meaning", equivalent in importance to those found in Islamic texts. In the script-analogue, ritual has metaphorical content, but is also the dynamic element which cannot be replaced by "something else", for example, constancy in landscape, if it is to function as the process by which human actions and architectural spaces are mutually related.

\textsuperscript{14} Prussin, \textit{Hatumere}, op. cit., p. 62.

\textsuperscript{15} Prussin, \textit{Hatumere}, op. cit., p. 67.

\textsuperscript{16} \textit{Ibid.}
African Art in Motion, by Robert Thompson.

African Art in Motion does not include the analysis of architecture, but has been used for comparison with the script-analogue because of the strength of its methodology. As with Prussin's work, Thompson has addressed the necessity for including cultural context in the analysis of traditional art, and has offered a precise means by which this may be accomplished in the investigation of art and dance in West Africa. African Art in Motion has a clearly articulated methodology, which begins to provide a foundation for a theory of African art. This theory can be seen as a set of ideas which could serve as a base of operations for further research, and includes the criteria for esthetic judgement in African art and dance which were generated as a result of Thompson's research. Thompson's findings about the "proper" presentation of the human form, in West Africa, in posture, movement, and facial expression were compared in his work to analogies found in sculpture. Whether or not these same analogies could be drawn in a comparison to architecture is problematic, due to the greater complexity of architecture as physical form having metaphorical content and also as constituting the environment in which human actions take place.

The premise of African Art in Motion is that critical evaluations of African art should be derived from the criticism used by Africans in making aesthetic judgements about their own arts, rather than through the superimposition of Western methodologies. Thompson writes, "The road to understanding, as always, lies within the commentary of indigenous connoisseurs." To accomplish this goal, of determining the criteria which are operational in traditional African cultures, Thompson has used the anthropological techniques of fieldwork, including the use of informants, as experts in African arts.

17 Thompson, op. cit., p. 126.
Specifically, the method used in Thompson's study was the observation and videotaping of African traditional dance. Critical evaluations were elicited about the dancers' movements. This was done intra-culturally, although criticism was sought from villages other than the one represented, and cross-culturally, where evaluation was sought from members of ethnic groups unfamiliar with those represented on video-tape. Ninety-six ethnic groups were included in this study. The criteria which resulted from Thompson's investigations were arrived at through his synthesis and interpretation of the recorded critical commentaries.

Thompson suggests "how" art and dance are related, but does not explicitly address how culture and its products are interrelated. He writes that propriety in attitude and gesture is derived from African cosmologies. "When dancers enact in the round the ancient motions, the forms of flexibility and communal strength, it is an act of tacit reincarnation." Thompson has identified postural and gestural modes as points of emphasis which are related to a cultural pattern, in terms of aesthetic quality in African art. "... Tradition selects those bodily positions which come to define lordliness and command in human interaction: standing, sitting, riding on a horse. Tradition also emphasizes gestures set at symbolically descended levels of submission and respect. These are: kneeling, supporting, and balancing objects upon the head." Each of these postures is discussed as a theme, where their ideal modes form the basis of critical evaluation. However, although Thompson makes frequent references to the

18 Thompson, op. cit., p.47.
19 Ibid.
20 Thompson also relates the characteristics of African music to artistic patterns found elsewhere in West African culture, in weaving, sculpture, furniture, and in traditional uses of color. Some of the themes identified are: 1. suspending the beat, in musical and other patterns, where the interruption of the expected becomes a powerful pause or void, which draws attention to the expected by its absence. 2. "ephebism", or "the
metaphorical content of these themes, he does not elaborate on the means by which metaphor functions as a cultural connector.

One of the primary differences between Thompson's methodology and that suggested by the script-analogue, is that the script model focuses on the processes by which architecture is given cultural significance, and is not used to evaluate esthetic quality. The script-analogue does not represent a set of criteria, but instead facilitates the identification of elements which must be considered in the analysis of architectural significance, and is a framework which delineates the manner in which its elements are related. Thus the focus of Thompson's study is more upon the interpretation of products of culture and the standards by which to evaluate them, while the script-analogue emphasizes process.

There are inherent limitations in the modification of Thompson's criteria for use in the evaluation of significance in architecture. The first, as was mentioned, is that Thompson is attempting to formulate standards for esthetic evaluation, while the script-analogue does not search for fixed points of esthetic excellence, but rather, for whether or not a work of architecture is culturally important. The second point is that, one may assume that the fundamental orientations of a culture are embedded in its architectural environment. Sculpture and dance take place "within" an architectural setting. One may ask, what is the architectural "posture" on the landscape, and what is its relationship to the activities being performed there? Thompson's work raises many other questions, with reference to the ideas presented in the script-analogue theoretical model. For stronger power that comes from youth." 3. strength or vitality, where every note of music is equally strong, as is every color in textile patterning. 4. flexibility. 5. "descending direction in melody, sculpture, and dance, and, 6. multiple meter, where a complexity of rhythmic layering is found in dance, music, and sculpture, as well as in other arts". Thompson, op. cit., pp. 5-14.
example, "where" does African dances take place? What is the metaphorical significance of its setting?

Thompson does not address the differences of male and female sub-cultures. Is there a shift in the significance in the dances performed by women? Do the dances of women and the ideal postures represented in women's dances have a metaphorical difference from those performed by men? For example, the photograph of an Ashanti (from Ghana) sculpture of a Queen Mother, when shown to a Suku man in Kinshasha (Zaire), elicited the following commentary: "She is purely there. She gives milk to the child. She secures his body with the other hand. She is sitting well, like a person of character." One can speculate, do the metaphors which describe ideas about what is valued differ for men and women, and if so, how is this difference expressed?

That the standards of esthetics are similar for African ethnic groups who are unfamiliar with the dances being shown to them is an interesting finding, particularly in that these cultures may speak different languages. Why are these similarities present? Perhaps, within the context of the ideas in the script-analogue, the answer may be found in the general African cultural pattern, which displays similarities in cosmologies. The specific events portrayed in these cosmologies may be different, but they share similar metaphorical references. For example, African cosmologies include references to architecture; the ideal of the house as anthropomorphic; the house as center for female identity; and the balance of male and female principles in references to the house, are metaphors which are prevalent in African cultures, despite linguistic differences.

21 Thompson, op. cit., p. 48.

This book about the Batammaliba of Togo and Benin Republic, concerns the meaning of their architecture with reference to its expression of Batammaliba "cosmogony, religion, psychology, society, politics, and theater." The Anatomy of Architecture was written as a result of Blier's fieldwork (from 1976 to 1978), which involved interviews, photographs, and drawings. Her theoretical premises are clearly articulated, in that she stresses the importance of cultural context for her analysis, and the importance of the metaphor in language to discoveries of meaning. Her methodology is also clearly presented. It involved observation of the Batammaliba's building and use of architecture, and the discovery of the metaphors within Batammaliba culture which are the means by which they "know" what their architecture "means". She then relates metaphor to form in her analysis.

Of the four examples used for the comparison to the script-analogue, Blier's work is the most closely aligned with many of the ideas in the script-analogue model. The "script" also uses metaphorical references to architecture for analysis. Blier pays particular attention to the recording and analysis of Batammaliba ritual, as a source for the metaphorical references for architectural "meaning". As is the case with the script-analogue, cultural context and the activities of people as they build and occupy architecture is regarded as an essential component to architectural analysis. Blier writes, "Architecture is integrally identified with human activity, experience, and expression, for in ordering space, architecture also orders human action." A further

22 Blier, op. cit., p. ix.

23 Blier, op. cit., p. 2.
similarity with the ideas of the script-analogue model is Blier's recognition of the
metaphor as an activator of cultural relationships, not merely as a fixed location of
meaning. "Ontology and metaphor thus are complementary aspects of an object's (or
idea's, or structure's) significance. One conveys the reality defined in actual
experience; the other extracts from this reality, transferring its meaning to other
forms and ideas. Each complements the other in conveying meaning and symbolic
intent."24

However, the script theoretical model differs in several important respects from
Blier's work. There is a difference in intention in the script-analogue and Blier's work,
in that she attempts to discover what architecture "means" within a specific cultural
context, while the script-analogue seeks the discovery of architectural significance
within culture. Meaning and significance are not analogous. Meaning implies that there
is a more or less fixed reality which can be discovered. Significance is relative.
Something is important in relationship to something else. In the context of the script-
analogue, significance refers to whether or not a work or orientation of architecture is
embedded as an integral part of a cultural pattern, or has little or no impact on anything
else.

Blier attempts to discover what architecture means to the Batammaliba, and
interprets that meaning for people other than the Batammaliba. By doing this, Blier is
interpreting a cultural "text" into the text of the historian. The script-analogue is not
engaged in interpretation. It is describing a process which can be used to indicate that
which is significant and than which is not, and how the process of the relationship of
architecture to culture "works", within its context.

24 Ibid.
While Blier suggests that architecture should be investigated as a process, she does not explore the implications of the "way" that process works. Phrased in terms of a question, one may ask, if the metaphor has been discovered as a vital tool for analysis, then what are the implications of this discovery for future research or applications in other contexts? She has used the metaphor in Batammaliba language to analyze her material in order to record the meaning of a type of architecture, the Batammaliba house, within Batammaliba culture. Her findings, thus generated, will add to our knowledge and understanding of African architecture, and in a sense may be regarded as historical preservation, in that Batammaliba culture is already undergoing a process of change due to contact with the Western world. While the findings generated by the application of the script-analogue may add to knowledge and understanding, they are secondary to its articulation of how culture and architecture are interrelated. Said another way; if you know "how" something works, rather than, or in addition to "what" it is, the implications are farther reaching. What are the implications of identified architectural "meaning"? How can this knowledge be "used", other than its obvious importance in recording material about a culture and its architecture? The script-analogue asks, is this element important? If it were changed or removed, would the change or loss have cultural implications? Who would the change or loss affect? The possibilities for the use of the script-analogue are diverse and extend beyond the realm of what has historically been regarded as architecture.25

Blier does not ask if particular metaphors have a different significance for women and men. She also does not ask if some metaphors are more significant for women, and some more significant for men, and if so, what are they? Blier recounts categories of

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25 Some of the various situations to which the script-analogue could be applied are presented in Chapter 8, in the conclusion to this dissertation.
metaphors which are operational for the Batammaliba, but does not take into account that there may be gender-based differences in emphasis or interpretation. In investigations of architecture which acknowledge the necessity for including the actions of the occupants of architecture within a contextual frame, "who" is performing the actions must also be considered. Perhaps the necessity for discovering sub-cultural differences in "who the actors are" has been clouded in this case by the difference in perceptions of individuality for Western and African culture, and the relatively less important value placed on individuality in Africa. This may have caused the researcher to make an assumption about cultural uniformity which is not necessarily the case.

That the Batammaliba may "know" the metaphors within their culture, but that these metaphors may have varying significance for women and men, can be illustrated in the following example. Blier recounts funeral rituals where the talents for "building" are passed on to the children of the deceased. "To assure that this talent is passed on, every funeral for a deceased elder includes a special ritual at the cemetery in which the deceased's son and daughter are asked to kneel on the newly plastered terrace in front of the tomb. This ceremony, Kwaku N'kue, as Liteni noted, is performed, 'so that when the deceased gives birth to another, he also will know how to build. If it is a woman, she will know how to plaster the walls and house floors.' 26  This example reveals that the significance of what it is to be an architect, and the skills which are needed, are not identical for women and men. In another example, the ritual of burying an egg in the foundation of a house under construction, may have different significance for women and men. "This egg helps to assure Butan's (the Earth Goddess) protection of the house and its children. The egg also refers to the henlike qualities associated with Butan in her

26 Blier, op. cit., p. 22.
role in covering the eggs of creation so that they would hatch."  

There is a relationship here among metaphors associated with femininity: the egg as an archetype of fertility and procreation, the house as embodiment of female and male principles, and the Earth goddess, associated with women. It can be assumed that women experience a less abstract connection with these metaphors, due to the female experience of pregnancy, childbirth, and the role women play in nurturing the family, as well as the female identification with the Earth Goddess. This identification gives significance to women's identity, as a vital element in the male/female cultural complementarity valued by the Batammaliba.

_Henrietta Moore's book, Space, Text and Gender, is an investigation of the relationship of the Marakwet men and women to their spatial environment. She limits her investigation to the analysis of household space. Her goal in this work is: 

"...to understand one particular form of cultural representation, how it is produced and how it changes." Her "broader aim is to discuss the relationship between symbolic forms and the social and economic conditions within which those forms are produced, maintained and ultimately transformed." She writes that her methodology has been to

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27 Blier, op. cit., p. 246.


29 The Marakwet are a sub-set of the Kalenjin ethnic group of Western Kenya (Fig. 1).

30 Moore, op. cit., p. xi.
use "the idea of a 'cultural text' to construct an analytical framework and to try and pursue some of the theoretical issues raised by such an enquiry."31

It is interesting that although Moore's analysis draws from the concepts and terminology of post-structuralism, she does not identify her work as post-structural. However, she rejects a structural or semiotic approach on the following grounds:

"(a) In stressing the importance of ideas and meanings not enough attention is paid to the social and economic contexts of symbol systems or to the determinate historical and cultural conditions which govern their production and transformation.
(b) The concept of culture as a pre-given set of meanings -- to which all action and discourse must be related -- makes it very difficult to provide a theory of change or to understand how human actions both produce structures and are in turn structured by them.
(c) The analysis of symbolic forms must acknowledge the interpretation of social actors as other than simply contingent explanations."32

Moore's analysis is related to post-structuralism in that it acknowledges the contextual necessity for the interpretation of the meanings of symbol systems within culture, not with reference to a pre-ordained and rigid structure which provides a map of meaning, but rather in the meanings which can be "read" in the reciprocity of human actions and cultural patterns. She further postulates that the interpretations of meaning given by the participants of culture are central, not peripheral, in importance in explaining symbolic forms. She also focuses on the differences between the dominant

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31 Moore, op. cit., p. xi.
32 Moore, op. cit., p. 6.
culture (male) and the "muted" culture (female). This identification of "difference" is a common theme in post-structural writing.

Moore states that her purpose in her book is to develop theory, not to write an ethnography of the Marakwet. Her writing operates within a post-structural theoretical framework in many respects, and it is difficult to tell which of her ideas are original, and which are directly post-structural. In her resistance to the identifications of the origins of her premises, and to clearly defining her methodology, she is perhaps reacting to the post-structural avoidance of the issues of definitions and methods. "Deconstruction is avowedly 'post-structuralist' in its refusal to accept the idea of structure as in any sense given or objectively 'there' in a text."33 In other words, structure does not exist as an absolute which can be discovered in a pattern of mind. This pattern of mind is what is referred to in semiotics as the "invariant structures." Post-structuralism is not precisely an analytical tool, as a body of unified ideas, comprising a methodology, nor is it purely an "attitude" arrived at as a reaction to the more deterministic and "empirical" aspects of structuralism and semiotics.

Moore is perhaps participating in the perception that to extract methodologies from post-structuralism pushes it toward the "empirical" direction which it seeks to avoid. This avoidance among post-structuralists of anything having connotations of the pragmatic, complicates post-structural efforts to address the "how" questions. Although post-structuralism does not profess to have a singular indentifyable methodology, it is influential outside of its field of origin, and is used to analyze a wide range of cultural phenomena. For example, Roland Barthes has used a post-structural position to investigate, among other things, wrestling, photography, film, the Eiffel Tower, as well

33 Norris, op. cit., p. 3.
as literary works. Post-structuralism is in part, a collective (yet varied, in terms of the differences among proponents of post-structural thought) reaction to the "common sense" and pragmatic applications of structuralism in critical theory.

In Western thought, theory is often perceived as the "opposite" of practice or application. The theoretical writer regards his or her work as more pure than the work of the practitioner, it is a "work" in its own right, and can develop without having to accommodate the constraints of application. Conversely, those engaged in the applications of theory, not only for analysis, but also for interventions, may regard as "soft sciences" those which deal with a kind of research in the arts and social sciences which may advance knowledge, but does not address how that knowledge can be applied. Our separation, in Western culture, of theory and practice, may be seen as a cultural bias, one that clearly draws the lines of opposition and in doing so, passes implicit value judgements. Post-structuralism, with its origins in literary criticism and the investigation of language, has avoided making methods of application explicit, although these methods are implicit, yet varied, in post-structural work. The script-analogue is a theoretical model which invites application. The components of its diagram are not structurally "fixed"; they suggest the frame of a particular investigation, and also suggest the means by which the elements expand the parameters of what is usually considered in investigations of architecture and culture.

The term "script" attempts to clarify that which is meant by the "text" post-structural analysis, in the context of architecture. Moore uses a post-structural "text" analogue, and much of the theoretical sections of her book revolve around the meanings which are incorporated in her use of the word "text", and how the text can be read with

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34 These analyses are collected in A Barthes Reader, edited by Susan Sontag, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982).
reference to the issues under consideration. These issues concern gender relations among the Marakwet, social change, and social organization as it "both re-works and is a re-working of conflict and tensions which exist within the society and which arise as a result of conflict between different interest groups."\(^{35}\) She writes: "To treat the organization of space as analogous to a text is to begin with the assumed interdependence of parts with the whole, of sense with reference, and of structure with action. This assumption permits a text to be approached in two ways; either it can be analysed and explained in terms of its internal relations ("langue", sense), or it may be interpreted as process, as the actualised product of social actors in a particular context ("parole", reference). Both approaches are valid....and both belong to the activity of reading, which must be understood as a dialectic between them."\(^{36}\) A text can be seen as a narrative, in that reading a story is meaningless if the story is broken down into its component parts, of sentences, words, and phonemes. "This is because, although the 'text', as work, preserves the properties of its individual elements, it produces them in such a way as to demand a particular sort of interpretation."\(^{37}\) However, she also writes, "In this discussion I have argued that the existence of ideological conflicts and tensions within a given text helps to account for the multiplicity of potential interpretations to which that text is open."\(^{38}\)

Moore further develops and elaborates upon her use of a text analogue, in that interpretation of texts of all kinds depends on the act of reading. She then presents a

\(^{35}\) Moore, op. cit., p. 90.

\(^{36}\) Moore, op. cit., p. 80.

\(^{37}\) Ibid.

\(^{38}\) Moore, op. cit., p. 90.
lengthy discussion of "what activity is to be considered equivalent or analogous to the act of reading." Moore presents convincing arguments with reference to these questions, it seems that the meaning of what is "text" and what is not "text" shifts with reference to the situation under consideration, in this case, politics and social change, gender based spatial relationships, and the "working out of social tensions," and must continuously undergo a process of rediscovery. The use of the text analogue requires a process of definition, redefinition and reworking, a process which becomes progressively more unwieldy as the analogy moves further from the realm of text as literary product.

Post-structural discourse is multi-faceted and will continue to unfold in diverse directions. The script-analogue is congruent with the post-structuralist positions regarding the indeterminancy of meaning, and the fact that meaning does not reside in a fixed center or location (multi-valence). Architecture and its relationship to the identities of individuals within culture, is never entirely contained within the script, but exists in the relationship of the elements of the script and the metaphors which are

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39 Moore, op. cit., p. 82.


41 Moore, op. cit., p. 84.
present in a larger cultural network. The script-analogue is not intended to be a streamlined variety of post-structural critical theory, although, as has been discussed, it shares in some of the qualities of a post-structural approach. It was designed as a methodology for the interpretation of significance in works of architecture in their cultural context, and for the evaluation of architecture with regard to its importance or unimportance within a cultural pattern.
CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

The script-analogue theoretical model has implications for the analysis of a broad range of material. It can be used for further investigations of African architecture and African women, and of the architecture of other traditional people. The script-analogue could be used for the prediction of possible outcomes of Western "interventions" in traditional cultures, or for interventions generated within a culture. Very often, for example, the design of low-cost housing does not consider its implications for women, who may be perceived by default as members of a culture identical to that of men. In the African context, an investigation of the cultural significance of house forms and orientations, and built and designated architecture, as revealed through metaphor and ritual, can indicate important gender-related differences which should be taken into account. When particular projects succeed or fail, the use of the script-analogue model could be used to better understand the reasons. The script-analogue may also have applications for the analysis of modern architecture. This concluding chapter includes a discussion of these ideas and their implications for future research.

The unity of the components of traditional cultures which is addressed by the script-analogue strengthens the argument for contextual research in architectural history, theory, and criticism. To investigate a work of architecture in isolation from the human actions which take place there presents an incomplete picture of its significance. The ideas put forth in this dissertation are in disagreement with the line of thought found in many texts about the African arts and architecture. For example, Andre Malraux wrote in the preface to the exhibition catalogue, Masterpieces of Primitive Art: "... the ethology which 'explains' Dogon myths has no effect on our relation with the
Hermaphrodite in the Rockefeller collection or the Antelope Mask in the Musée de l'Homme. Our rapport with these figures will always owe less to our knowledge of what they represent, i.e. the Dogon myths, than to our own concept of the Museum Without Walls. Whatever the primitive arts may henceforth suggest about ahistorical, proto-historical, mythic man [sic], they represent to us, first of all, an attitude, little known in the West for centuries but known today by every artist: the will to create."1 The "will to create" may lie behind the making of every work, however, there is no advantage to be gained by viewing works in isolation from their cultural context. The script-analogue presents a means by which contextual research may be accomplished.

If knowledge is to advance in the fields of art and architecture, an understanding of the "place" of a work of architecture within its cultural context is a necessary component of this knowledge, as well as is the means by which architecture is related to culture. While the goal of the use of the script-analogue is to discover architectural significance, its application in research will also generate findings about what architecture "means" to a given culture through investigations of rituals and metaphors. These discoveries will not be in an absolute sense, but will add to a depth of understanding. An investigation of architecture which attempts to be contextual will be enhanced by the application of the ideas involved in the script-analogue model, because it outlines a process by which architecture and culture are linked.

In the investigations of traditional architecture, it is often difficult to identify cultural biases which may impede understanding. In The Invention of Culture, Roy Wagner writes: "It is necessary, of course, for a research worker to be as unbiased as possible insofar as he [sic] is aware of his [sic] assumptions, but we often take our

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culture's more basic assumptions so much for granted that we are not even aware of them. . . 'Absolute' objectivity would require that the [researcher] have no biases, and hence no culture at all."\(^2\) That these biases are deeply embedded in culture and its representation in language is revealed by Wagner's use of male pronouns even as he stresses the need to overcome such biases.

A culture's most significant themes can be found by looking for their representations in metaphorical language. The discovery of metaphorical significance within the culture under investigation can be a way to mitigate bias. For example, the positive connotations attached to individuality by the researcher grounded in Western thought may distort perceptions of the connection between architecture and the individual in African culture. Individuality is not regarded as a positive condition for the traditional African. In *Facing Mount Kenya*, Kenyatta writes, that for the Kikuyu: "... nobody is an isolated individual. . . First and foremost he is several people's relative. . . His life is founded on this fact spiritually and economically, just as much as biologically. . . His personal needs, physical and psychological, are satisfied incidentally while he plays his part as member of a family group, and cannot be fully satisfied in any other way."\(^3\) The discovery of the significance of individual and group identity for the African can, for example, be made by investigations of metaphors in African cultures.

Historically, investigations of architecture have been done under the assumption that metaphor is a secondary attribute of architecture. As Prussin has pointed out,


\(^3\) Kenyatta also writes that in the Kikuyu language, individuality is associated with black magic. Kenyatta, op. cit., pp. 297-98.
architecture has been often regarded as a response to environmental factors. It has been seen as attempting to optimize a set of limitations, such as technical and material limitations. The script-analogue suggests a reversal of this line of thought, in that culture " privileges" certain technical or material responses, within technological and material constraints.

The discovery of the ideas metaphorically represented in architecture necessarily provides an avenue for relating them to the ideas represented by other processes and products generated by individuals as members of culture, and adds to an understanding of the themes of a particular culture. Further, due to the metaphorical associations of architecture, what a building represents may not be the same for all individuals as members of sub-cultures, such as those of gender, or ethnic sub-cultures within a dominant cultural pattern. It is reasonable to assume that not only is the researcher hindered by cultural bias, but that the biases inherent in being of one gender rather than the other may color the researcher's perceptions. However, if the architecture under investigation is more significant to some sub-cultures, and less so to others, that difference will be seen to be operational within the sub-cultural metaphorical network, even if that network is sometimes at variance with the dominant pattern. Carol Gilligan writes, about the necessity for methodologies which will gives us access to the sub-cultures of gender:


5 What a house means to an African man does not necessarily have an identical metaphorical relationship to what a house means to an African woman, although there are congruencies based on their membership in the larger African cultural pattern.
"The failure to see the different reality of women's lives and to hear the
differences in their voices stems in part from the assumption that there is a
single mode of social experience and interpretation. By positing instead two
different modes, we arrive at a more complex rendition of human experience
which sees the truth of separation and attachment in the lives of women and men
and recognizes how these truths are carried by different modes of language and
thought."  

The script-analogue opens opportunities for the analysis of art and architecture
produced and used by women, by asking; what are the metaphorical references attached
to this work, and for whom do they have significance? The researcher may not perceive
this difference, and assume that the dominant culture is uniform. In *Space, Text, and
Gender*, Moore acknowledges the critical difference between the experiences of women
and men: "The contemporary view of culture, . . . is a holistic one and gives priority to
collective values which form the basis of society. . . The ruling or dominant groups in
society always present their culture both as natural and as the 'culture of the whole
society.'"  

Further, it cannot be assumed that if the researcher is a woman, she will
necessarily understand important gender differences in other cultures. The selection of
the title, *Daughter of Mumbi*, by Charity Waciuma  
for her autobiography exemplifies a

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6 Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University
Press, 1982), pp. 174-175.

7 Moore, op. cit., p. 74.

8 Charity Waciuma is a Kikuyu woman; Mumbi refers to the founding ancestress of the
Kikuyu people.
. she thereby places it and her notion of self-existence in a very different world from
the world occupied by Western autobiography. It is, of course, true that an
autobiography written by a Western woman might conceivably be called Daughter of Eve.
. . . but how totally different are the connotations of feminine frailty and individual
waywardness contained in that title from the connotations of ancestral strength and
group unity implied in Charity Waciuma's title."9 About another example of African
autobiography written by a woman, Baba of Karo, Olney writes: "Particularly
prominent in Baba's version of the woman's point of view. . . and it is significant and
natural that it should be so. . . is her concern with the complex, protracted, and precise
rituals observed at childbirth and at betrothal and marriage."10

The script-analogue raises interesting questions for applied research, and the
potential ramifications of cultural intervention, for example, in agriculture, housing,
technology, and religion. The question can be asked, how can the findings of
architectural theory bridge the gap to practice and application? That this separation
exists is in part due to the compartmentalization of knowledge in Western culture, and
the scarcity of interdisciplinary methodologies. Each discipline tends to privilege its
own stance. History and theory may be regarded as "pure", seeking the advancement of
knowledge for its own sake. Practitioners of architecture and planners may regard
history and theory as "soft sciences", if they are regarded as science at all. To design
theories for application is seen as somehow "tainted". To read theory with the goal of
applying it is rare. Further, the need to "prove" a hypothesis leads researchers in the
social sciences to narrow their focus to the proveable. Because the purpose of the

9 Olney, op. cit., p. 84.

10 Olney, op. cit., p. 50.
application of the script-analogue is to reveal what is important and what is not, it can generate findings which will aid the designer and planner in the context of interventions in traditional cultures.

If the goal of the application of the script-analogue is the preservation of that which is valuable in traditional cultures, it should be recognized that most traditional cultures are already in a period of transition, whether that transition is random or planned. This change can happen gradually, or abruptly from the introduction of a new technology, or the building of a road. As was pointed out in Chapter 4, in the example of the Kamba woman and her relationship to metaphors of mediation and the metaphorical function of her house and the miniature Aiimu house, the interconnectedness of the elements of the script and their metaphorical content is both the strength and the weakness of a traditional culture. If the elements are metaphorically related, the culture demonstrates a vital connectedness with both past and future. However, if a change were to occur in any of the elements, their metaphorical connections with other elements could cause the change to be felt throughout the culture. For example, in 1972, Prussin wrote about the low esthetic quality of the granaries of the Mossi, and offered the suggestion that this was due to a weakening of ritual. "Weakening of ritual is manifested not only by the absence of correspondences between religious and political jurisdiction, but also by actual conflict between the Earth priests and political authorities."11 "Such dichotomy would be reflected in a weakening of the cosmologic role assigned to the Earth's fertility and is indeed seen in the subordinate and auxiliary position of Ki Wende, the life force of the millet."12


One of the strengths of the script-analogue as an analytical tool is that it is a frame of ideas which help to overcome the biases which are perpetuated by language as it is commonly used and understood. Planners, designers, and other professionals who deal with the architectural environment could make use of the script-analogue in order to make judgements about the forms, orientations, and "designated" spaces in architecture. The nature of the appropriate role for the architect, planner, and other Western professionals who work in the area of Third World development must be carefully explored. Particularly in interventions in cultures other than our own, we must use caution in exercising our "privileged" position. The script-analogue could be used as an analytical tool for a designer or planner for evaluating the impact of particular changes within the context of his or her own culture. For example, a goal may be to preserve significant elements of the traditional culture (Fig. 74), or it may be the opposite, to intervene in the cultural pattern in order to effect positive change.

The impact of change on women has often been neglected by architects and planners. The script-analogue can be used to identify that which is valuable for women in traditional cultures, for the purposes of preservation, or to identify that which is negative, in order to alter it. The script-analogue can offer ideas about how change comes about with reference to architectural significance and culture. A change in any of its significant elements can effect change in the others, and in elements outside of the script. The forms and orientations of architecture may change. Or perhaps, one or more rituals may change or be eliminated. Language may also change, which can effect a change in metaphorical references.\textsuperscript{13} Or, perhaps the use and building of architecture

\textsuperscript{13} In the English language there are archaic expressions which no longer carry a metaphorical significance which links us to our cultural past. For example, "horse power" with reference to an engine, no longer carries with it associations of riding in a wagon or carriage, of the different durations necessary for a journey, and other associations having to do with horses which are no longer relevant, because the
may change with respect to who uses it, how it is used, and who builds it. The categories of the script-analogue can accommodate countless permutations of the specific.

The script-analogue model can suggest significance in architectural form, orientation, and the orientation of spatial subdivisions. It can also include designated architecture as a component of the architectural environment, and can allow the focus of a project to center on women (Fig. 75). The script model can also point the direction for linguistic changes, by indicating that change can occur through what something is "named", if that name has metaphorical significance. The following examples illustrate some of the points just mentioned.

The implications of cultural intervention may be of a positive nature. In a structural analysis of examples of urban housing in Kenya, Kamau's research would seem to indicate that although the architectural forms are modern, the designation of spaces by gender, and the gender-related functioning of spaces remains similar to traditional norms. Further, the metaphorical relationship of the furnishings of the contemporary African house to social standing have remained, in essence, the same, although their forms are not traditionally African. Modifications were made to these contemporary houses by their occupants, to bring them more into alignment with traditional conventions, as in, for example, the hanging of a curtain over an open doorway to conceal the kitchen and to maintain the privacy of the woman's food preparation.

The importance of the horse has been greatly altered in our culture. Conversely, when the Native Americans acquired horses, an associated set of metaphors, rituals, and visual symbols came into being, not artificially, but as the horse became culturally important.

In *Architecture in Northern Ghana*, Prussin includes a plan of a Dagomba compound (Fig. 76). In this plan, two of the compound's buildings deviate from the traditional circular building type. In the text accompanying this plan, Prussin speculates that the rectangular plans of these two buildings, used as bachelor quarters, may symbolize "urban life", in that they are a proclamation of the worldliness of their occupants. The buildings are used by young men who have migrated to cities in Southern Ghana, and have returned with the cash to purchase corrugated metal for the roofs of their houses.¹⁵

The Dagomba rectangular house, then, may have metaphorical content which exists in relationship to a set of ideas about what it means to be urban and modern. With respect to materials, one does not roof a circular house with corrugated metal. Of particular significance in the Dagomba plan is the orientation of the rectangular buildings in the compound as a whole. This orientation is one which is traditional, in that the unmarried sons are separated from the open space which is the core of the compound. Prussin writes: "The entrance to their sub-compound, immediately adjacent to the ante-chamber, enables them to bypass the domestic activity centered at the cooking stones."¹⁶ The separation of unmarried men from the domestic activities of women is not disrupted by the Western design of the young men's houses because their orientation in the compound remains traditional. One may speculate that the combination of Western house design and a linear or orthogonal arrangement of buildings would fail to preserve

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¹⁶ Prussin, *Architecture in Northern Ghana*, op. cit., p. 35. It should be pointed out that there exists in West Africa a rectangular traditional house type. As with the Nabdam example in Chapter 4, the builders and occupants of the rectangular Dagomba houses in this plan had recently encountered the modern rectangular building type of the more urban southern Ghana. This exposure to modern architecture was more likely to have been the generator of the rectangular form, rather than the adoption of a rectangular traditional type.
the important cultural values surrounding propriety in gender roles and the corresponding places where activities are performed. This example is not meant to imply that the orientation of buildings is necessarily more culturally significant than their forms. An investigation of layers of metaphors may reveal a multiplicity of references, all of which are interrelated to that which is important in culture. Further investigations could reveal which forms and orientations can be changed without altering the cultural pattern, and which cannot.

A critical component of the script model is the expansion of the definition of what is usually considered to be architecture. In a case study done for USAID in Nairobi, of the "Use of Open Space in Low Cost Housing: Umoja I", the landscape architect Frederique Grootenhuis writes: "Very little is known about the actual use of open space, residents' expectations and attitudes, or existing problems in relation to open spaces within and around low-cost housing. Traditional low-cost housing planning gives considerable emphasis to a vast range of technical problems and very little emphasis to the user's preferences. Usually open spaces occupy 'left over' spaces."\(^{17}\) It can be assumed that the architects of this project did not consider "open space" to be architecture. The recommendations generated by the Umoja study included, under "garden allotments", that, "Umoja inhabitants demonstrated a strong inclination to have a space to cultivate besides their plot in a formal (legalized) way. The practical implications and possibilities of this option are worthwhile investigating."\(^{18}\) As we have seen in the applications of the script-analogue to agricultural land, crops are gender related, and women's crops provide most of the food for the family. One can assume that the inclusion

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\(^{18}\) Grootenhuis, op. cit., p. 15.
of garden plots for women, and access to the seeds of the appropriate plants for women, would enhance not just the welfare of women, but that of their children and other family members. The failures of this and other projects to include appropriate "open space" in their designs leads to speculations about the implications of our perception of what architecture is, and what landscape architecture is, and leads to the question: why was this project based on a European model rather than an African one?

The possibilities for applications of the script-analogue raise many other questions. For example, is it possible to "make" something important by changing how it is described? It would seem that this could be done if the way in which it was described was metaphorical, and hence related to cultural values. The advertising profession has been particularly successful in this respect. The introduction of new technologies in Africa has most usually disadvantaged women. An article entitled "Female Farmers: the Doubly Ignored" outlines the failures of development strategies for agriculture in Africa, in that they have emphasized the production of export crops rather than food production. "It is . . . extremely disconcerting to find that many discussions of Africa's food crisis either ignore or misconstrue women's crucial roles in current patterns of food production. As a result, most policy interventions are either consciously or unconsciously directed at men, even though men are rarely the principal economic agents in traditional food farming, nor, in most cases, do they want to be." The traditional role of women in food production is often misunderstood due to the cultural biases of Western researchers and planners: the "farmer" is assumed to be male.

19 For example, "Classic Coke" metaphorically refers to tradition, which exists mythologically in our culture, if not often actually. The soft drink is "important" because it is "classic".

rich farming areas, for instance Western Kenya, there are now tractors in use. But on every tractor sits a man, while the women laboriously work with their hands, bent over hoes, many with babies strapped to their backs. In traditional Africa, skills and technologies are most usually gender related, as are crops. Perhaps if a new technology were given a term similar to one traditionally used by women, it would be perceived as being accessible to women.

The script-analogue may facilitate the answering of many other questions of importance for women in Africa. For example, Hausa women of Niger and northern Nigeria are disadvantaged from participation in the modern world, in that their seclusion behind compound walls denies them access to education and often to medical care. If access to education and medical care is seen as positive by Hausa women, how can they bring about a change in the practice of the female seclusion? The seclusion of women is metaphorically referred to in the Koran, and elsewhere in Islamic culture, and a linguistic change is not feasible. Perhaps women could effect a change in the formal representation of the metaphors referring to seclusion, in for example, the substitution of the veil, not used in Hausa culture, for the enclosing walls of the compound. Thus women would be able to leave their residences, and still maintain metaphorical seclusion, as is done in many Middle Eastern countries. The ideas framed by the script model can provide points of entry and direct thought in many areas of application not mentioned in this study.

The Script-Analogue and the Analysis of Modern Architecture.

In traditional cultures, the range of choices available to the designer/builder is more limited than in our multi-dimensional, modern Western society. Amos Rapoport writes that in our society, tradition as a regulator has largely disappeared, and building codes and zoning ordinances have replaced the social regulation that comes with a commonly accepted and more restricted range of possibilities. Hassan Fathy writes about the "advantages" inherent in the art of design within a traditional context, where a shared knowledge of the formal model, or type, exists for both designer and user. The advantage lies in the fact that "tradition releases the artist from distracting and inessential decisions so that he can give his whole attention to the vital ones."23

Some ways in which the script-analogue can be used for applications in the traditional context have been outlined in the above examples. The findings generated by the script-analogue could also suggest design possibilities for traditional cultures co-existing with modern culture in America, such as Native American cultures. If subcultures in this context identify a desire for cultural preservation, the script-analogue could suggest means by which architectural forms and locations could be culturally enhancing rather than disruptive.

Many questions can be raised about its possibilities for the use of the script-analogue in modern culture. These are offered as speculations for future investigations. Can we identify significance in modern architecture, using the singular work as point of entry rather than a "type" which consists of a number of similar works? Can we give greater


significance in our analyses and criticism of architecture to "where" a work is, in relationship to site, neighborhood, community, and region? Can we identify differing significance for women and men in the forms of architecture, and differing significance in the zones of a house, with respect to whether or not they are represented metaphorically? If the singular work, the location of architecture, the perception of architecture as the un-built (designated) as well as the built, and the differing significance of architectural forms and locations for sub-cultures is addressed and investigated by use of the script-analogue, could then these discoveries be used by designers? It would seem that if architectural significance, indicated by the use of the metaphor in language, is not uniform for women and men, and for various sub-cultures within the modern context, that the nature of these differences could suggest possibilities in design which have not been previously perceived.

Marshall Berman writes, in All That is Solid Melts into Air:

"To be modern is to live a life of paradox and contradiction. It is to be overloaded by the immense bureaucratic organizations that have the power to control and often to destroy all communities, values, lives; and yet to be undeterred in our determination to face these forces, to fight to change their world and make it our own. It is to be both revolutionary and conservative, alive to the possibilities for experience and adventure, frightened by the nihilistic depths to which so many modern adventures lead, longing to create and to hold onto something real even as everything melts."24

Modern culture places value on change itself, as the reference "All That is Solid Melts into Air" indicates. The "memory" which is activated by ritual does not extend into an unbroken past, but is measured in brief increments. Can any of the disjointedness in our culture, and loss of "place" described by Berman be better understood using the script-analogue as an analytical tool? One can speculate that ecological disasters are not significantly "felt" by people not immediately affected by them, due to our lack of metaphors about what it means to take the lives of animals or destroy vegetation, unlike Native Americans who have rituals for hunting and the cutting of trees. Can this lack of cultural integration be addressed or redressed through design?

The contrast between the significance for individuals of much of the modern environment and that of traditional Africa can be seen in this quotation: "In the eyes of the African, who valorizes it to the utmost degree, in fact . . . almost as much as [she] does [herself], the cosmos does not constitute a fixed, cold, and mute world. On the contrary, it is a world charged with meanings and laden with messages, a world which 'speaks.'" The "taking place" of ritual is the critical element which allows the potentiation of memory and the individual within culture. Perhaps the contemporary architect operating within culture, modern; and sub-cultures, whatever they may be, will be able to utilize some of the ideas suggested by the script-analogue to discover that which is metaphorically significant in modern culture, and use those findings to make an architecture which is better informed about the preconceptions which are given shape through architecture.

25 Zahan, op. cit., p. 81.

26 The discoveries of metaphors which connect idea to idea in our culture may facilitate the discovery of their presentations in ritual, or perhaps in the traces of ritual which are present in daily life.
Figure 1. Map of Africa
Figure 2. An example of "designated architecture". A Mofu diviner sits inside a double ring of stones.

Figure 3. Plan of a Nabdam compound, Northern Ghana.


Figure 4. Traditional configuration of a Nabdam household.

Drawing, the author. From Archer, p. 49.
Figure 5. Plan of a Nabdam compound showing rectangular buildings.

Drawing, the author. From Archer, p. 53.
Figure 6. Traditional facade ornament, on a Nabdam "first wife's" house.

Figure 7. Unornamented facade on a Nabdam wife's rectangular house.

Drawing, the author. From Archer, p. 54.
Figure 8. Kamba house.


Figure 9. Kamba house, "old form".

Figure 10. Plan of the "old form" Kamba house.

from: Andersen, p. 67.

Figure 11. Section of the "old form" Kamba house.

from: Andersen, p. 67.
Figure 12. A Kamba family in front of their house.

from: Hobley, Plate XII.

Figure 13. Kamba village, with the "old form" house, second from the left, among more recent traditional house forms.

From: Andersen, p. 66.
Figure 14. Kamba house under construction.

From: Hobley, Plate XI.

Figure 15. Kamba woman's stool, "kitui".

From: Hobley, p. 38.
Figure 16. Stool pattern, "kitui", representing the framework of a house.

From: Hobley, p. 36.

Figure 17. Kamba woman cooking at the hearth.

From: Andersen, p. 73.
Figure 18. Kikuyu house.

From: Andersen, p. 75.
Figure 19. Kikuyu house.

From: Andersen, p. 80.
Figure 20. Kikuyu house plan. The woman's sleeping area is to the rear, and slightly to the left. To the right of that is a storage area. The three hearth stones are in the center of the house.

From: Andersen, p. 85.
Figure 21. Kikuyu house section.

From: Andersen, p. 85.

Figure 22. Kikuyu house plan.

Figure 23. The construction of a Kikuyu roof. "x: Short corner roof supports. y: Corner roof supports, 3 in. longer than x. z: Main roof supports, longer than x and y. a-b and a'-b': Rafters, put in first. c-d and c'-d': Rafters, put in second. r 1-8: Main rafters. q: Poles to support verandah in front of hut."
Figure 24. Kikuyu homestead plan. The head of the household's house is at the far right. On its left, is the house of the first wife (I.), on her left, the second wife's house, (II.), followed by the third and fourth wives' houses. The granaries are to the front of the compound, flanking the entrance.

From: Leakey, p. 133.
Figure 25. Kikuyu homestead plan. "The layout of a homestead of a man with four wives, a widowed mother and three married sons." This plan follows the pattern of Fig. 24, with the wives' houses arranged from right to left based on their seniority. Behind the first, second, and third wives' houses are the homesteads of their sons.

From: Leakey, p. 136.
Figure 26. Kaguru settlement.


Figure 27. A Kaguru husband and wife.

From: Beidelman, p. 68.
Figure 28. A Nandi house, with center-pole finial.

From: Andersen, p. 200.
Figure 29. A Nandi house, with center-pole finial.

From: Andersen, p. 203.

Figure 30. A Nandi family outside their house.

From: Andersen, p. 199.
Figure 31. Nandi house plan. The room to the left is the sleeping room. The cooking area is to the back of the house, and slightly to the right. The left side of this room is used to stable goats and calves.


Figure 32. Nandi house section.

Figure 33. Kipsigis house. The Kipsigis are closely related to the Nandi, regionally and linguistically. This house displays a prominent roof finial.

From: Andersen, p. 90.
Figure 34. Kipsigis house, with embellished roof finial.

From: Andersen, p. 91.
Figure 35. Iraqw house.


Figure 36. Iraqw women in the doorway of the house.

From: Thornton, p. 41.
Figure 37. Plan and section of Iraqw house.

Figure 38. The Iraqw house and its immediate environment. "The house and grass sward surrounding the house constitute an integral part of the domestic group's living area."
Figure 39. Kano, Nigeria.

Figure 40. Hausa compound in Zaria, Nigeria. The dome of the "zaure" can be seen behind the entrance.


Figure 41. "Zaure", entrance building.

From: Prussin, Hatumere, p. 212.
Figure 42. A Hausa woman in the interior of the compound, Zinder, Niger.

From: Gardi, p. 184.

Figure 43. Hausa facade ornament, Zaria, northern Nigeria.

Figure 44. Typical plan of a Hausa compound. Building letter "a" is the zaure, or entrance building. "b" represents the "shigifa", which is a second entrance building, and is the transitional area from the male-oriented fore-court, or "kofar gida", and the "cikin gida", or women's area. "e" is the apartment of the head of the household, and "g" represent his wife's houses.

Figure 45. Hausa compound plan in Zaria, Nigeria. In this plan, the round zaure is seen, in contrast to the other rectangular buildings. The wives' apartments are in the right rear corner of the compound. Their dowries are located on shelves in their private rooms, to the rear of their apartments.

From: Schwerdtfeger, p. 64.
Figure 46. Hausa compound plan, Zaria, Nigeria. In this plan, the newer buildings are rectangular.

From: Schwerdtfeger, p. 66.
Figure 47. Hausa compound plan, with round zaure, Zaria, Nigeria.

From: Schwerdtfeger, p. 72.
Figure 48. Hausa compound plan. This house is located in a densely built area of Zaria, Nigeria. The zaure building does not maintain the circular form, nor does the compound follow the norm of having a single entrance. Here, there is a second entrance from the workroom (shop).

From: Schwerdtfeger, p. 65.
Figure 49. Hausa facade ornament.

From: Gardi, p. 194
Figure 51. Hausa facade ornament.

From: Denyer, p. 182.

Figure 52. Repairing the facade.

From: Gardi, p. 200.
Figure 53. Wall ornament in relief in Hausa woman's apartment within the compound.

From: Schwerdtfeger, p. 70

Figure 54. Cylindrical zaure building.

Drawing, the author. From: Schwerdtfeger, p. 70.
Figure 55. Hausa dome, with a plate at the apex.

From: Gardi, p. 223.
Figure 56. Plates and bowls, as part of Hausa woman's dowry, arranged on shelves in her private apartment.

Drawing, the author. From: Schwerdtfeger, p. 70.
Figure 57. Hausa women threshing grain, with granaries in the background.

From: The Smithsonian Museum of African Art, photo archives.

Figure 58. Tiv village.

Figure 59. Mossi village.

Figure 60. Mossi house and yard.

From: Hammond, p. 65.
Figure 61. Mossi house, with door and lock.

From: The Smithsonian Museum of African Art, photo archives.

Figure 62. Mossi door and lock.

From: the Smithsonian Museum of African Art, photo archives.
Figure 63. The Batammaliba Earth priest placing an egg into the kitchen foundation of a house.


Figure 64. Gurensi facade ornament.

Figure 65. Batammaliba facade ornament.

Figure 66. Batammaliba field plowed for planting, with furrows that resemble facade ornament, and cicatization on women's bodies.

From: Blier, p. 9.
Figure 67. Mossi woman's kitchen, with clay pots.

From: Hammond, p. 55.
Figure 68. Pottery displayed at a women’s pottery market, Niamey, Niger.

Photograph, the author.
Figure 69. Songhai granary, near Ayourou, Niger.

Photograph, the author.
Figure 70. The "tenga", the Mossi earth shrine.

From: Hammond, p. 167.
Figure 71. Batammaliba woman replastering the terrace of her house.

From: Blier, p. 147.

Figure 72. Mossi women and men farming.

From: Hammond, p. 31.
Figure 73. The Tiv "ihambe", with the "male" and "female" posts, and the corn grinding slab.

Figure 74. An example of contemporary African architecture with a traditional form which resembles Hausa residential architecture and facade ornament; the Musee Nationale de Niger, in Niamey, Niger.

Photograph, the author.

Figure 75. Women getting water from the Niger river in the evening, with the village of Ayourou, Niger, in the background.

Photograph, the author.
Figure 76

LITERATURE CITED


Thornton, Robert J. Space, Time and Culture among the Iqaw of Tanzania. New York:


The literature discussed in this survey can be grouped into three categories: 1. Literature whose focus is African architecture, including that which attempts to generate critical theory in this field. 2. Literature which, although not specifically focused on African architecture, presents metaphors of importance in African culture. 3. Literature resulting from anthropological fieldwork having sufficient data about African architecture, culture, and women to be useful in testing theory.

The development of a critical theory for the analysis of traditional African architecture necessitated an extensive literature search. The identification of important literature in the field of African art and architecture was facilitated by the acquisition of two major bibliographies. The first, entitled *Bibliography on Traditional Architecture in Africa*, compiled and edited by Mod Mekkawi, was generously provided by Dr. Labelle Prussin. The second bibliography, by Labelle Prussin and David Lee, also provided by Dr. Prussin, is titled *Architecture in Africa: An Annotated Bibliography*. Selected Bibliography: Women in Africa of the Sub-Sahara was provided by Dr. Mary Rojas. This bibliography has been valuable for its references on African women. In addition to

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these compilations of sources, the resources of the Smithsonian Library of African Art and the Eliot Elisofon Photo Archives at the Smithsonian Museum of African Art were utilized.⁴

Literature focusing specifically on African architecture is very scarce, and among the existing material, only three works could be identified which analyze African architecture within the framework of a theoretical model. They are: Hatumere: Islamic Design in West Africa, by Labelle Prussin, Anatomy of Architecture: Ontology and Metaphor in Batammaliba Architectural Expression, by Suzanne Blier, and Space, Text and Gender: An Anthropological Study of the Marakwet of Kenya, by Henrietta Moore. These were used to contrast and compare with the script-analogue model. A fourth book was also selected, for purposes of comparison: Robert Thompson's African Art in Motion.⁵ While this book is about African art, and dance, and does not investigate architecture, its theoretical framework is very strong, and could be adapted to the analysis of architecture.

Hatumere and The Anatomy of Architecture are recently published, in 1986 and 1987, respectively, are both major works, and fill a significant need for research in the field. Hatumere represents a synthesis of many of the topics and ideas which have concerned Prussin during her career, a career which has produced a large number of important works, primarily in the form of articles.⁶ Prussin's book is concerned with the entirety of Islamic design in West Africa. The Anatomy of Architecture, in contrast

⁴ Acquisition of material from these sources was made possible by a Title XII. Grant for Research in International Development.

⁵ These comparisons appear in Chapter 7 of this dissertation.

to Prussin's book, is a monograph which deals with the architecture of a single ethnic group, the Batamaliba of Togo and Benin Republic. Moore's *Space, Text, and Gender* investigates the organization of space, and spatial relations for the Marakwet of Kenya.

The following books, while important works which add to the understanding of African architecture, were not used for the purposes of comparison with the script-analogue theory. *Shelter in Africa*, edited by Paul Oliver, was not used, because, as a collection of essays, it does not represent a unified theoretical model. Anderson's *African Traditional Architecture* is a survey of architectural types in sub-Saharan Africa, and is not analytical. Andersen's book of the same name is a survey of the architecture of Kenya, and does not attempt analysis. Gardi's *African Indigenous Architecture* is primarily pictorial, and not theoretical. Hamman Tukur Saad's dissertation, *Between Myth and Reality: Aesthetics of Traditional Hausaland*, which presents an extensive discussion of Hausa architecture, is theoretically weak. In the chapter on methodology, it is stated, "We have tried to adhere to the research paradigm which says, 'less theory, better data, more facts better theory'. . .We can only raise questions on certain issues and generalize within given cases and not across a spectrum of cases."  

Among the more generalized studies of African architecture, Prussin's article, "An Introduction to Indigenous African Architecture" provides a comprehensive survey, and raises interesting questions about the origins of architectural types in sub-Saharan Africa. *African Arts Magazine* has been a valuable source for material about African architecture, primarily in the form of topical "micro-studies" concentrating on

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analyses of the architecture of particular African ethnic groups. The articles used in this dissertation are listed in the bibliography.

It was necessary to identify material which presented the metaphors which are important elements of the script-analogue. Thus, collections of African folktales, accounts of African cosmologies, and contemporary African literature were used. The myths and folklore of Africa have been collected in abundance by travelers, missionaries, anthropologists, and folklorists. Anthologies, such as _African Folktales_ by Abrahams, _Nommo: An Anthology of Modern Black African and Black American Literature_, edited by William Robinson, and analyses of African literature, such as James Olney's _Tell Me Africa: An Approach to African Literature_, facilitated the accumulation and categorization of metaphors.

Other material not specifically useful in the context of African architecture, but significant in illuminating African culture, was used in this work. The primary source in this category was the anthropologist Dominique Zahan's _The Religion, Spirituality and Thought of Traditional Africa_. Zahan's work provided a structural unity to other sources more limited in scope. African spirituality exerts a profound influence on every facet of African culture, and the interrelationship between the arts and religion is explicit or implicit in much of the literature. Zahan's book was of particular value in the search for the metaphors which are an integral component of the script-analogue.

In the writing of this dissertation, the position has been taken that there is a cultural unity among African ethnic groups which transcends regionality and ethnicity. The assumption that there is a cultural unity within the African diversity, and that beneath the multiplicity of ethnic groups and the superficial diversity of religious practices in Africa, there exists a unity of spiritual attitudes that is distinctively African, is explicit in the writings of Zahan. In _African Art in Motion_, Robert Thompson illuminates the
inherent unity of African world view through cross-"sub-cultural" (African to African) comparisons of African esthetic sensibilities in sculpture, dance, textiles, music, posture and movement, ornament, household utensils, and language. Thompson found that the members of various African ethnic groups were able to make judgements about esthetic quality in performance and artifacts produced by ethnic groups with which they had had no prior direct contact. Thus, he discovered that there was a pattern of cultural values which transcended regional and ethnic boundaries.

James Olney, in Tell Me Africa, presents theories about the nature of African literature, specifically African autobiography. He also supports the existence of an African world view. He writes, "Unity... is there not far beneath the surface of diversity." He cites African authors who have advocated an "African personality", among them W.E. Abraham, Boubou Hama, and Jomo Kenyatta. Other scholars have also acknowledged patterns of culture and conventions in art which transcend the boundaries of localized ethnic groups. William Bascom wrote, "Both simplifications and exaggeration are stylistic conventions that are widely employed in African art for the purpose of emphasis." Rene Bravmann has written that, "... open frontiers are in fact a key feature of African cultures in their artistic traditions..." His premise is that African art can "move between cultures both over space and through time."

The application of the script-analogue theory comprises a part of this dissertation. The material on African women and African architecture was selected by the application

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of a set of criteria, as follows: 1. Literature was identified which was based on ethnographic research in the field, 2. which concerned the ethnic groups of East and West Africa, 3. had sufficient data on architecture, and 4. sufficient data on women. The following books were selected which corresponded as closely as possible with these criteria:


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