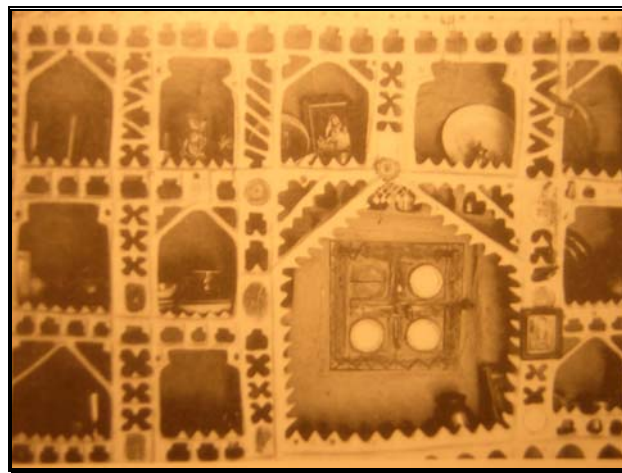


The intense pleasure which traditional civilization derive from manipulating ornamentation and conveying vital forces in potent signs, is expressed in the artistic attention lavished on their mud architecture. Engraved on the walls or applied in relief, it is in turn abstract, gestured, geometric, symbolic and figurative. Some of these techniques of mud building are relatively easy to master, enabling the inhabitants- either partially or entirely – to construct their homes themselves.



(Various applications in interiors)



Their walls are often protected by coatings consisting mainly of raw mud; these are traditionally renewed each year in the course of a ritual that follows the rainy season. The facades thus change annually and can vary infinitely as each individual expresses his creative impulses in the visual, tactile and sensual richness of the walls.



Entrance doorways



Mud construction is thus fused with artistic creation, for the ornamentation is as organically linked to the walls as it is to the society that produces it.

Inside and outside spaces

When a community uses clay for making homes, it uses it also for making many other objects of daily use. Like in the northeastern parts of India, where bamboo is the principal material, its application can be seen in every object created within the living environment. The inspiration for decoration and embellishment also comes from the immediate environment. Landscapes rich in flora, like in Kashmir, have generated more floral and organic forms and patterns in man-made objects, whereas desert areas always express stronger and purer colors with geometric patterns.

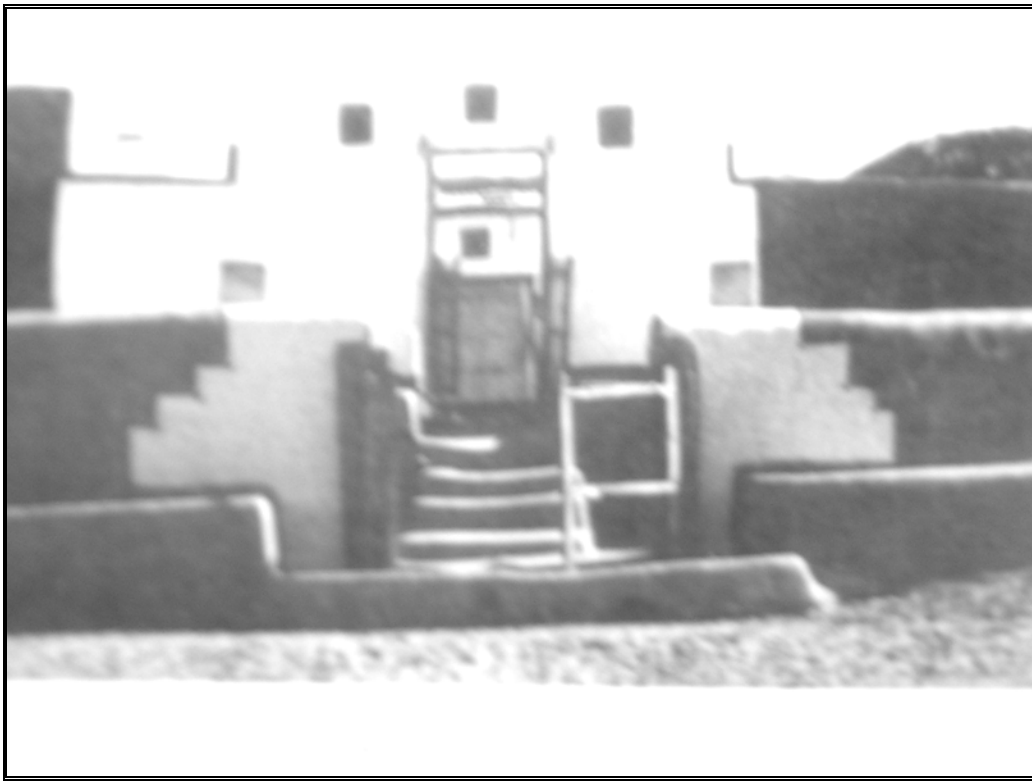


‘It is amazing that the building and its parts were structurally and aesthetically conceived as complete entities. A whole reconstruction of major architectural part in textiles was done to create a parallel super structure I soft material expressing love for drapery, hanging, cover lids and canopies. The reason for this may be discovered in the aesthetic background of the communities. The most elaborate and complete textile reconstruction of actual architectural parts is to be found in the village houses of the khatis and the Rajputs, the ordinary rural counter –parts of the ruling class of Gujarat.



The encasing with in textile if the entire living room of these communities is so complete that while sitting inside a complete building for example, there is distinct impression of being inside a tent. The majority of the of khatis and Rajput were exposed only to these tent architecture of their royal brethren which they adopted for their own living because it once brilliant, sophisticated comparatively, inexpensive and handy.

Local ponds and ditches in the vicinity of the village are the main sources of play. Every body from the village has a claim on these sports. Most of the clay work is done by women who transfer these skills to their daughters and there by keep the tradition alive. The training begins early in childhood, and they acquire proficiency by the time they reach marriageable age. How ever men who digs and helps in carry the clay from its source to the work side does the difficult part of the job.



The plain clay surfaces on the exterior of these built forms provide a contrast with the decorated work done in the interior. Many of these houses have this decoration, though these vary in magnitude and quality. Alcoves of different sizes are molded harmoniously with decorated relive work to create clay shelves for storage. There are many clay objects, which forms part of the living space. Often, these objects are also decorated with similar relive work in clay.



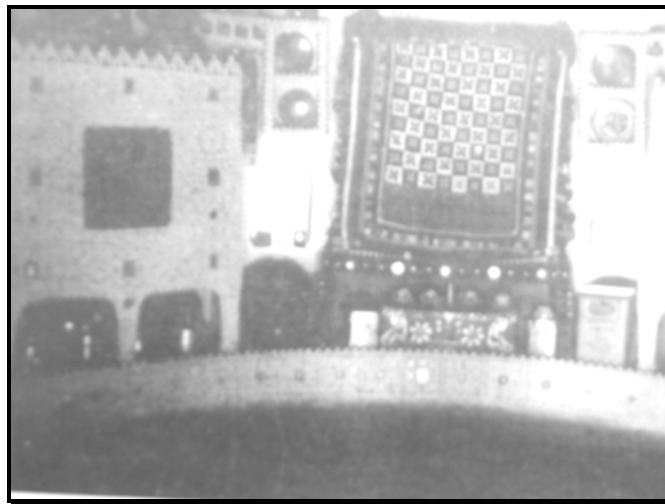
Harmony of spaces

One senses a wonderfully harmonious atmosphere in MUD houses. This is partly because the same material is used throughout the building, and partly because of the nature of the

spaces formed, and the architectural rhythms that are dictated by the nature of unbaked mud.



A physical and spiritual awareness and invigorating sensuality often emanate from these interiors, be they modest or princely. Since the same material is used for everything, sometimes even the furniture, the interiors are artistic environments linked to the pace of daily life; they are living sculptures, inhabited by men expressing their ornamental skills. This creative momentum takes on a different character in mosques, for there the space becomes a forest of massive pillars, which span the area of prayer and lend it an uncanny emotional force.



But the strength of mud architecture is not only spiritual; it is also physically comfortable. Mud buildings are cool in summer and warm in winter, for by their very nature the thick mud walls provide protection against extremes of climate outside, creating natural thermal regulation. This ensures very considerable savings in energy. The revival of mud architecture has enabled us to rediscover this ancient empirical knowledge, inherited from countless generation over the centuries.



The Grandeur of Garth Buildings

Unbaked mud construction can be not only very high, but also on a scale suitable for the communal activities of villages and cities. Although the majorities are individual homes, many ‘house of God’ are also built of mud, and some achieve monumental dimensions. These include chapels, churches, monasteries and even cathedrals such as that in Lima, Peru. In the USA, a tradition of vast naves in unbaked mud was established in the 18th century following the construction of the Mission San Xavier del bac at Tucson, Arizona. The Cristo Rey Church in Santa Fe, the largest modern building in unbaked mud in America, proves that this tradition has flourished up to the present day. The great mosque at Mopti in Mali, erected in 1935, is probably the largest and most imposing public building constructed in Africa in unbaked mud during this century, and its builders used only traditional building techniques in constructing this vast and majestic edifice; as such, it constitutes a monumental challenge to modern technology.

