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Lessons from the Osun Shrine, Nigeria

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My ACS6 paper is available on the ACS website,
with hotlinks to references.
I have posted 211 images of the Osun Shrine on Flickr/qibender.
This PPT updates events since then. Their lessons are still valid.

However . . .

EVERYTHING has changed!

A new doorway has opened.

1. How many of you have studied calculus?

(Everyone)

How many of you have ever USED calculus?

(No one)

Calculus was added as a REQUIREMENT in architecture schools in the post-Sputnik 1960s to be properly "techie".

Excluding those working from their hearts not just their heads, in both architectural practice and education, harmfully skews our profession.

2. *Quantum physics states that <u>ALL</u> in our universe is instantly and totally informationally interconnected.*

Isn't it curious that our physics adamantly ignores the logic of this . . . Which assertsnthe existence of an integral universal consciousness within EVERY cell of our bodies and every grain of sand?

3. How many of you have:

Taken LSD? Firewalked? Danced Sun-Dance?
Sufi-danced? Had a near-death experience?
Dug a grave? Taken ayahuasca?

(No one raised their hand)

Even if we have, we're told not to mention it,
or our OBJECTIVITY will be questioned.

WE ARE NOT OBJECTS!

Interestingly, the global English language
is based on nouns, or "objects".

EXPERIENCING

is an essential element
of awareness, understanding,
and ability to create and empower
our places
and our lives.

SO, perhaps the greatest 'conflict'
we have to deal with in ACS
is between OUR culture and training
and the reality of the universe
of which we are part.

- *Architectural exclusion of technophobes*
- *Physics' adamant ignoring the logical implications of quantum physics*
- *Denial of existence of the life-force energy realm*
- *Pervertive perceptions about sexual energy*
- *Replacement of direct experience of the sacred with religious institutions*
- *Assumptions of the absolute 'rightness' of literacy, wrongness of emotion*
- *Refusal to experience what lies outside our heads and this 3-D realm (just for a few examples)*

"RAW EXPERIENCE
is something we've almost totally forgotten
in our love affair with verbiage."

- Scott Teitsworth

Alberto Villoldo suggests
that we start with a *new* assumption -

that oral traditions
are speaking
TRUTH,
not myth.

Even today,
traditional African
lives and culture

directly inhabit . . .
and move between . . .
multiple spiritual realms

with depth and experience
far surpassing
our own “3-D Material World”.

Malidoma Somé's *OF WATER AND THE SPIRIT*, reveals the profoundly different spiritual/cultural existence of traditional Africa. He states that: "Traditional education consists of three parts:

- enlargement of one's ability to see
- destabilization of the body's habit of being bound to one plane of being
- the ability to voyage trans-dimensionally and return

Enlarging one's vision and abilities has nothing supernatural about it. Rather, it is "natural" to be part of nature and to participate in a wider understanding of reality."

To READ that is one thing . . .

To EXPERIENCE it

is mind-bogglingly different!

I had a divination
recently
from
Burkina Faso elder Malidoma Somé:

No woo-woo.

He just looked
at the scattered items,
and started
to trance-speak:
- things about me
he couldn't know
from our realm of existence,
- that I didn't know,
- and some
that only I <u>did</u> know . . .

"There WILL come a time when your watery connection will demand that you do a certain kind of work with the beings - water "genies" - water-beings . . . .

They have an extension into the ground at a place that looks like a mountain.

That area is a sacred place. The ground meets the water . There is something about this encounter that makes you the gatekeeper or tender of this. Wisdom can be derived from that area . . . .

On the one hand, it looks geographically distinct. On the other hand, it is the whole planet! Which is why I can't pinpoint what it is. It is like this particular location is a gateway, through which you have access to the entire planet.

If that is the case, it is an extremely mythological dimension, where gods and goddesses meet this world, face up to this world. So this whole thing has a practicality that is purely otherworldly. . . . .”

OK . . . weird,

But even weirder, what he is describing actually DOES exist.

Here it is:

Table Rock Energy Portal

For scale, the rock is about 7' across.

It IS on a mountain, 300 feet above
where earth DOES meet the ocean.
My family ARE custodians of the property.

He continues, pointing at a particular stone . . .
"You have an imprint in you from another realm" . . .

SHIVA NATARAJ

"Funny thing is, I have difficulty verifying your prostate was removed. SOMETHING is there. I don't know WHAT it is!

My interest is this presence in you of this device. It almost looks physical, but has an energy, a glow. It seems almost breathing in or out. It is something otherworldly - a transplant/inplant that supersedes the removal. It doesn't replace, it supersedes it. It has its own phenomenology and anatomy, better than the previous one.

The frequency here is distinctly otherworldly, which is why your presence in nature and water is so functional that it supports this kind of dynamic - this kind of phenomena that is you."

There's no way he could know that forty-five years ago, this tantric sculpture of Shiva at the Ellora Cave Temples in India jumped off the wall in front of me in 3-D . . .

. . . or that Shiva now resides in my dan-tien.

He suggested some rituals to perform where the earth meets the water . . .

I shared this at our
Tikkun Olam - Healing of the Earth

Already, weird things are happening:

** 'Awakening' in the middle of the night,*
I saw that art piece hanging in the gallery
where it hadn't yet been hung . . .
pulsing white light.

** A friend, 'awakening'*
in the middle of another night,
arrived at Table Rock,
and went through the energy portal . . .
arriving at Rishikesh, India.

** Asleep, I 'watched' the exact video,*
in the exact multicultural space in ACS6 in
Toronto . . . long <u>before</u> going to Toronto.

Living and operating in these realms
occurs in many traditional cultures.
Marlo Morgan, in 'Mutant Message',
quoted the Australian Aboriginals as saying:

"We CAN'T lie.
We ALWAYS speak the truth."

Jean Auel, in her 'Clan of the Cave Bear' series
speaks the same of the 'Clan'.

In both cases, the older cultures clearly KNEW,
psychically, what was true and when someone
was not speaking truth.

These (qi energy) realms are core
to more than 65 cultures worldwide.

Working in those realms,
with that energy
is core in DESIGN
as well as health and spirit.

Our lives are re-opening now
into those multiple spiritual realms.

Watch a video of "hands-off" QiGong . . . see it start fires, burn a person's dan-tien . . . all from a distance

http://innersoundqigong.blogspot.com/2013/11/blog-post.html

Another element,
feared and banned
in our cultural and spiritual traditions -

SEXUAL ECSTATIC EXPERIENCE

- gives powerful direct access
to unity and spiritual oneness,

and is core in Africa.

For example, watch a 'non-touching" energy-based full-body orgasm: Sasha Cobra - Nitvana Energy Work

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=21aamIROUJs

OK. . . with different eyes, let's visit the

OSUN SHRINE AND SACRED GROVE

The shrines are actually secondary

. . . to the Grove itself.

Multiple energy realms are CORE, here also.

Sacred Groves in Yoruba Tradition

Natural sacred places, in all religious contexts, have always existed for the accumulation of metaphysical life-force energy. Unmolested nature generates energy intensities of various orders. Such energy nodes are in command of, and are commanded by, inner realities of all kinds. These include human, floral, animal, mineral, and ethereal realities; primordial ordinances, symbolic orders, and truthforms.

This residing energy in a Sacred Grove empowers ritual, whose role is to open up spiritual two-way-traffic from and towards the source of life.

Yoruba religious awareness is directed towards all kinds of meta-psychic and meta-intellectual proto-types and the gods, *Orisa*, which individuate from the boundaries between the physical and the metaphysical dimensions of life.

In such religious context, addresses to godheads are not prayers but means to energize one's mystic participation within the inner organism of sacredness. They manipulate primary exchanges between a devotee and their god. Sailing on these symbol-vessels, we are god, and god is each and all of us.

This phenomenon is made feasible by integral ecstasy and self-controlled trance. These unite both into oneness - "*Od'Orisa*" (he has become Orisa). And this is - thanks to the profound vitality of Yoruba Wisdom - true not only of humans, but also of all created life-forms; because all exists in all.

edited from Susanne Wenger, THE SACRED GROVES OF OSHOGBO. 1990

And raise a question,
'Is architecture necessary, relevant, or a distraction?'

Integral ecstacy
and
self-controlled
trance?

It would be
hard-on us
to assert
that
sexual energy
is not
core
here also.

Vaginal architecture ?

PORTAL OF THE VIRGIN

- her separate path to the fertility rites at the Osun Shrine

Fertility Dancers at our son's Tribal Wedding in Lagos in 2012

Our 'male' architecture excludes huge possibilities.

Susanne Wenger

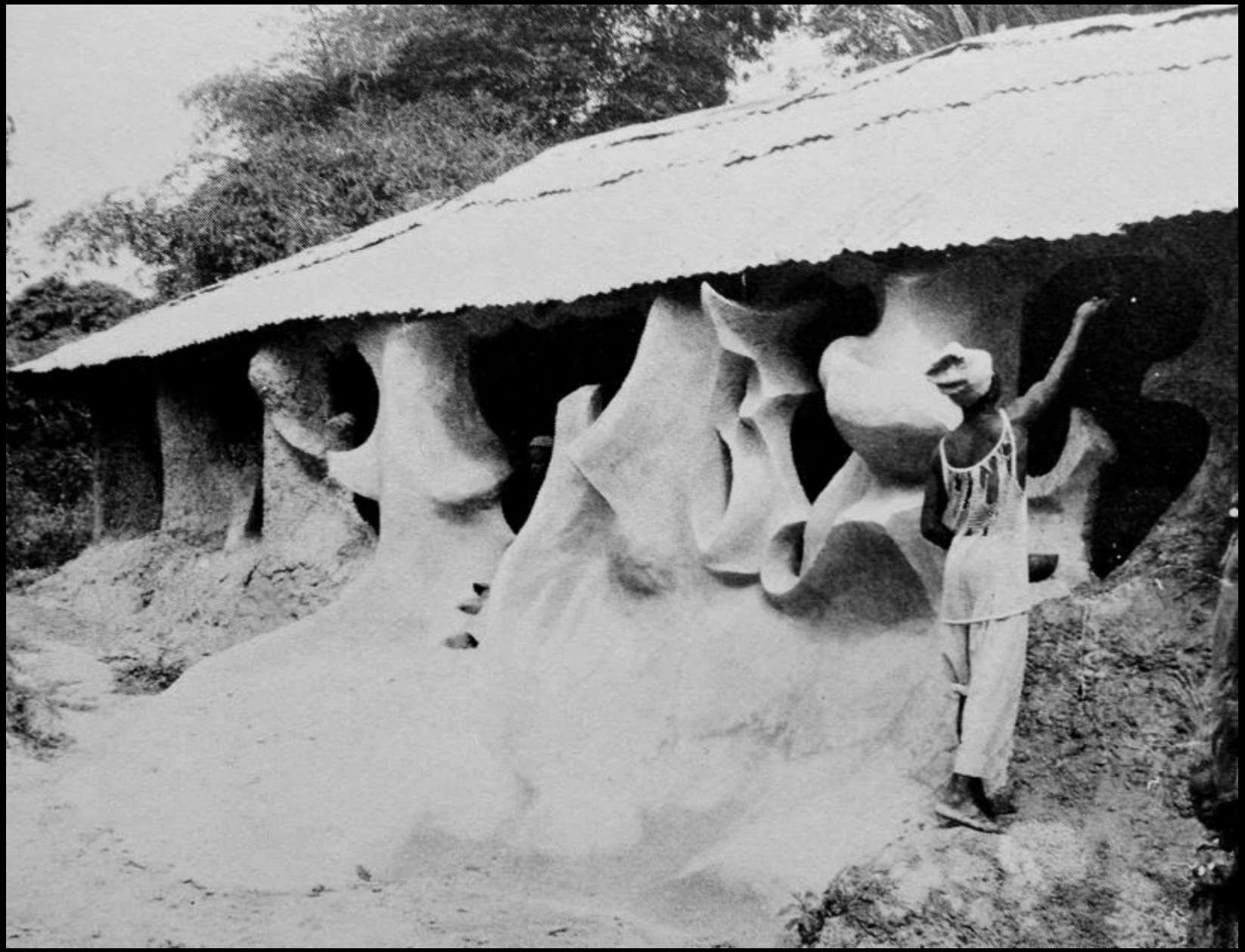
1915-2009

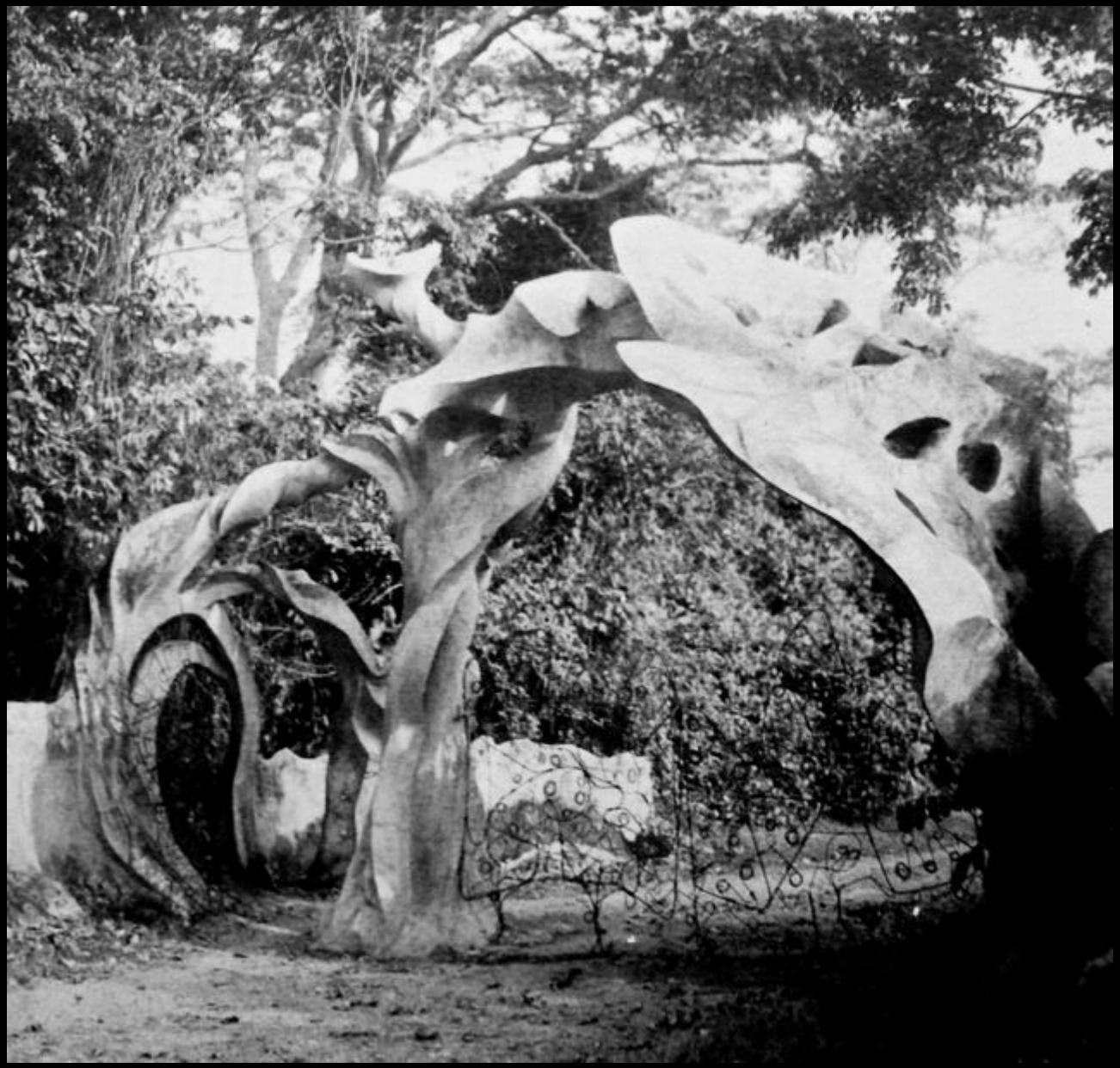
Moved to Nigeria in 1950, went into trance, and started channeling amazing things!

The delicate geometries
of Wenger's architecture

reveal a huge
esthetic and emotional void
in our culture
and architecture.

Aiyedakun @ Obatala Shrine complex - first major Wenger construction - destroyed by Muslim fanatics





Wenger's home in Oshogbo

- a treasure house of cultural artifacts

Some elements of the Shrine

see 'Flickr/qibender' for many more

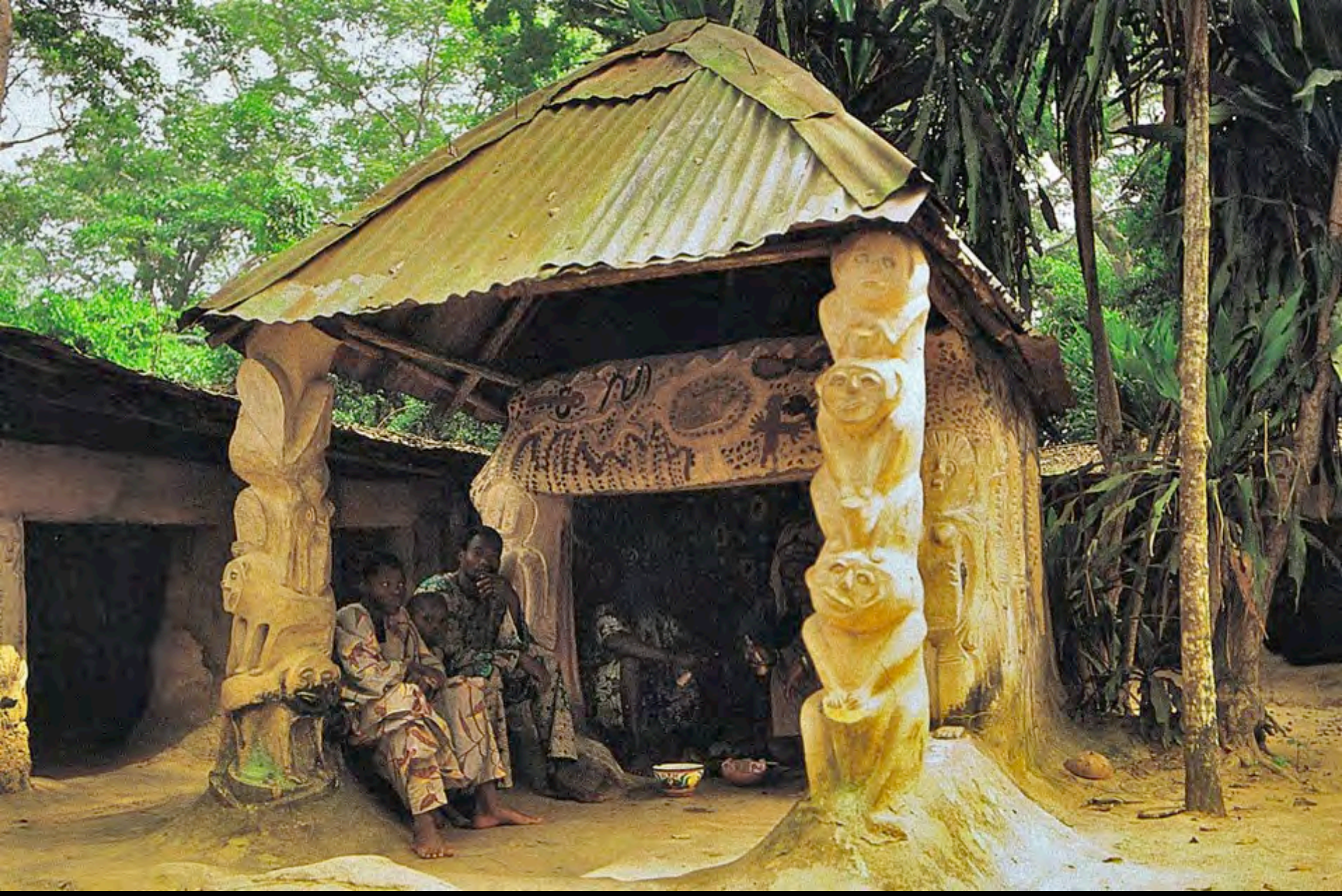
Aiyedakun @ Obatala Shrine complex - replacement
Mystical reunion of Obatala and Shango

Inside the Shrine of Orisa Aajagemo

Ile Iyemowoo - Portal of the Virgin

Ojubo Oshogbo

- inner shrine compound where you can meet with the shrine priests.



Osun (fertility goddess) at the river - Current, third statue to be there, by Saka

Entry to Igbo Ifa,
entered by initiates by backing through gateway.

Igbo Oro

Entering compound through back-heart.

Iya Moopo

Being restored in 2012

Spinal column,
and
stairs

Tortise Gateway - there are sometimes things even a beautiful gateway can't handle. . .

. . . celebrants arriving for August ceremony

Arugba Osun and her entourage, enroute during the August Osun Oshogbo Festival

New gate . . . 'Art', but less spirit?

Is making this

multi-dimensional spiritual world

"visible"

a good thing?

Arriving here
at night,
by firelight,
in trance
from whatever
mechanism,

being
'mind-blown'
rather than
familiar

may be a benefit.

Iledi Ontotoo - right wing - 'restored' in 2014. Does this 'restoration' have the same power?

The interaction of cultures is complex . . .
the 'village' exists now only on vinyl.

After a 3-hour Easter service, leading the wedding goat into the sanctuary for blessing.

eva

PHOSOPHENES *appear in "visual" experiences with integral consciousness, and then in their art, in many cultures. Here at Osun's Ojubo Oshogbo.*

And here with ayahuasca visions in South America

Similarly, the "decorative motifs" of the beautifully painted clan dwellings of the Tukano Indians have been laboriously copied and intellectually debated by archeologists and art historians. To date, however, they seem to have missed the main point – that the motifs are not artistically created but are recording and affirmation of what they have experienced in the spirit realms. As always, we can only grasp a fragment of those realms, fragments shaped and colored by our particular personal and cultural perceptions. They are, however, a vital dimension of existence from which our culture had closed itself off.

SO . . . what does a gift from spirit lose, when it becomes 'Art'?

And finally, if we DO consider that oral traditions are speaking truth, not myth . . .

it might be extremely interesting to research imagery from other cultures of their origin-ancestry.

. . . they may not be fantasy.

These alone, by Wenger, at Osun Shrine . . . .

So . . .

an amazing non-linear interweaving impact
of one woman, Susanne Wenger,
one shrine in Oshogbo, Nigeria,

and one man, Malidoma Somé, 400 miles away
in Burkina Faso, and then in Portland, Oregon,

is bringing our head-consciousness
back together with
integral consciousness and life-force energy,
opening a new and amazing world and future!

Thank you, Africa,
for opening our hearts and minds!

My architecture practice now becomes the replanting of our sacred coastal forests.

There is deep-rooted power and connection here, that transcends our one-dimensional architecture.

Resources:

- My Flickr/qibender images of the Osun Shrine
- SashaCobra.com
- Qigong videos
- Abiyamo article on Wenger
- QiPhysics DVD
- BenderBooks
- Sacred Architecture Index
- Osun Shrine video by SnapIt0ga
- ACS-6 paper - linked to above resources
- Sobonfu Somé, 'The Spirit of Intimacy"
- Malidoma Somé, 'Of Water and The Spirit'

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