

# Habitat: transformation of vernacular architecture



## How to Cultivate Architects on Sustainability with the Influence of Traditional Buildings?

### Introduction

" *Vernacular architecture can be said to be 'the architectural language of the people'* with its ethnic, regional and local 'dialects,'" writes Paul Oliver, author of *The Encyclopaedia of Vernacular Architecture of The World*. Where do people prefer to live on this planet? It appears conspicuous that housing architects has shunned away from the aesthetic, yet prefers a minimalist type of villas that would be displayed on design magazines. As fascinating as it is to look at these kinds of dwellings, they do not exemplify what houses should look like more generally. Through *Architectural Review*, most houses are just an all-encompassing generic buildings. Most people adopt structures built in approach to the region's vernacular, interconnected to the traditional style that has been adopted from the area's climate and culture. Climate changes has always been a challenge, architects are relied on producing buildings that does not depend on despoiling the environment or exporting materials. On the other hand, they can make the best use of local and natural resources around the area. Unfortunately, there has been a drastic negligence for traditional architectural language due to the wide spread of modern building technology. Most building has lost its identity and cultural vibrancy. The essay will explore on issues on anthropology of architecture and climatology of specific countries such as Mauritius. The objective of the research is to appreciate the inventiveness of humankind to ameliorate the world for the future generation by reshaping built environment. However, the main issue is, what is modern today? As the young generations relies on

modern technology or prefers a different way of living. Does Architects need an aspiration or stylistic change in picturing traditional buildings?

## Abstract

Architects has shown an interest to the past as humans has been discovering inventive ways to address their desires through architecture. They believe that unsustainable construction that uses foreign materials could cause abiding dilemma to the environment. Alternatively, vernacular architecture has distinctively build in a way that response to materials and local climate. The design composition focuses on being eco-system friendly and energy efficient. The research aims to highlight important features that can be studied from the traditional forms of architecture.

## Literature Review

The challenging part for architects is to meet up the expectations of social aspirations . *“ It’s a generational thing - young people don’t want to live in the same (type of house) that their grandpa is living in.”* said Danish Architect, Bjarke Ingels referring to article vernacular 2. 0. The lack of interest in proposing pre modern living is refraining architects away, on the other hand, some are challenging themselves the idea of traditional architecture even though it is contradictory to progress. Most architects has adopted the idea of using glass, steel and concrete as architecture of high quality, whereas majority of vernacular construction methods are built in reed, peat moss or adobe, commonly associated as underdeveloped. While

rigid interpretation of residential vernacular architecture generally exclude buildings built by architects, for some people, the concept has come to surround any types of housing that is deliberated as ordinary, common, or distinguishing of a city or region. The heart of Vernacular Architecture is local materials. In Norway, builder uses turf to resolve thermal issues by using turf as roof covering, while rural Japanese houses are still made from wood. The suitability of local material may not matter, but local traditions may be. Architect Driss Kettani has exhibited with the Technology School of Guelhim in Morocco. Kettani says, he did not had a variety of choice but prefers to go for earthquake resistance concrete due to tight regulation on public buildings. Confidently, he and his partners Saad El Kabbaj and Mohamed Amine Siana has established other approach to incorporate with architectural traditions of the region. (CNN quoted by Holland, Oscar 2017). Ironically, using this suggested local system are way more contextually apprehensive and sustainable than the usual contemporary architecture as seen today, regardless of ongoing debates or talks about the importance of sustainability. As a consequence, a massive amount of cultural and architectural knowledge is gradually fading. Following to the humanistic fascination to be culturally affiliated to ones surroundings is reflected in an amicable architecture, a typology that is analyse under a specific region. In the Uros island of Lake Titicaca in the Andes, due to hollow stems of the housing, reeds were used to solve insulation issues. In Tonga, traditional curved roofs provides aerodynamic protection against cyclones or storms. In the alleyways of traditional settlements in southern Taiwan, the houses were built on east-west axis to gather cooling power of the island's prevailing winds. A good representation would be the Technology School of Guelmim, <https://assignbuster.com/habitat-transformation-of-vernacular-architecture/>

Morocco. The design proposition focuses mainly on providing a strong architectural form that was contemporary yet inspired by the framework in which it appears to be. The school building is arranged in a particular way to enhance the ventilation flow through the complex, producing a natural cooling system. Classrooms were constructed with large north-facing windows and small south facing to reduce the amount of direct sunlight reflecting into the school, also assuring that each classrooms also have enough of natural lighting. Without any doubt, these impressive vernacular innovation has shown that there is no need to install air conditioning in a particular building, regardless of the hot climate in North Africa. It was just a matter of common sense. There is no need to declare that we are doing vernacular architecture. It is somehow simpler than that, the answer is just in front of you, particularly when you are designing in a specific climate place with a strong heritage, said Kettani. But modern technology has disorganized millennia-old building traditions. An all-encompassing advancement to modernize and urbanize as architects has presented erected steel skyscrapers from Gulf to concrete apartment blocks in China, arguably, Westernize has invented new architectural ideals. And, they may be evidence that this movement is widely grasp internationally. For instance, UK government strived to reduce the construction industry's greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by the year of 2025, which is a great approach that explicitly focusing on the reduction of important building materials. Morocco's improved regulations would authorize the use of soil based materials instead of using concrete, if Kettani School were to be constructed again. The government themselves are to be are to be blamed for this movement as well. *With the (escalating) focus on sustainable resources and* <https://assignbuster.com/habitat-transformation-of-vernacular-architecture/>

*development goals, there's a whole climate change debate that will only grow."* said, Piesik, Vernacular Architecture for a changing planet, 2017.

Developers in construction industry will only embrace on sustainable buildings if it's beneficial at the end even if the change in attitudes results in materializing market forces and government taking action. The system has to work economically, whether this is an advancement on a larger scale or a new production of materials, small business enterprises or supply chains, there has to be growth in economic, apart from being just a great solution. A more comprehensive approach needs to be developed for the future. In parallel to glass skyscrapers, these behemoths are infamously inefficient, where glass exteriors trap sun rays during summers and haemorrhage heat throughout the winter. This system requires all year round climate control and air conditioning, said on The Conversation by David Nicholson-Cole, professor of architecture at the University of Nottingham. But the proposal of such buildings does not inevitably reflect an efficient construction or appropriate materials, it is a matter of culture. Vernacular architecture has been gradually forgotten in modern architecture, it is elementary to address human needs. Architects now, are bringing back cultural building traditions and regionalism provided that these structures are proven to be more sustainable and energy efficient.

## Methodology

In the effort of proper analysis, the most appropriate and accurate facts to match both theoretical and philosophical aspect is the evolvement of traditional housing that interrelates to vernacular architecture. The main issue of this research is how to cultivate modern day architects on

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sustainability with the influence of vernacular housing, a combination of primary and secondary resources will be used throughout this writing.

In order to achieve proper understanding, secondary resources such as books, articles, and online resources has been utilized and to study on types of vernacular traditional housing, the influence of climate on building design and materials, anthropological understanding to vernacular architecture and the capturing the knowledge on architects on how these buildings are effectively designed. The overall data obtained will benefit and capable to critique the different locations and factors that led to these changes. As for primary research such as informal survey will help me to gather some first-hand information about the research topic. I will emphasize on the “influential” aspect and tackle the type of change from vernacular architecture to modern design houses, focusing on what Architects in Mauritius feels about the changed in buildings.

## Conclusion

In this future generation of urbanization and technological advancement, architects has to thrive in traditional knowledge of vernacular construction. Vernacular Architecture complies with green architecture principles of energy efficiently, these buildings exploits on indigenous knowledge of how buildings can be sustainable as well as appreciating local materials. Through further research, I am astonished by the immaculate adapted design to its locale by adopting low technological method which has been ignored by prevailing architects.

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## Book:

- Habitat: Vernacular Architecture for a Changing Planet, By Sandra Piesik, Foreword by Tomas Chruszczow
- Lessons from Vernacular Architecture. By Willi Weber
- Architectural Regionalism
- Towards a critical regionalism collected writings on place, identity, modernity, and traditional.
- Architecture and Identity in a Globalized World, Book by Liane Lefaivre
- Tropical Architecture Critical regionalism in the age of globalization, Alexander Tzonis, Liane Lefaivre and Bruno Stagno