



Vernacular Buildings: A Global Survey

Allen Noble

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The face of the world is changing and nowhere is this more evident than with vernacular buildings. They disappear or are extensively changed for a variety of reasons, from natural causes such as fire, storm and earthquake, to a wide variety of cultural causes including obsolescence and changes in fashion, function and lifestyle. All of these factors, subtle and not so subtle, work to alter the material culture of our planet. But change and constancy are two fundamental qualities of vernacular buildings and dwellings. Constancy permits the evolution of types and characteristics to be identified, even in widely spread locations. It helps trace the origins of structures, despite later modifications. And change allows one to trace the effects of difference in environment, fashion, cultural ideas and economic influences. Change and constancy operate together, although one or other may dominate at a particular time and place. In *Vernacular Buildings* Allen Noble extends the global survey contained in his earlier highly successful *Traditional Buildings*, to cover vernacular buildings and dwellings around the world. In a truly comprehensive account, he ranges from the farmsteads of pioneer Brazilian settlers, the Masai dwellings of Tanzania and the gothic houses of Shanghai, to Virginia Hall and Parlor houses, the thatched dwellings of the Eifel region of Germany and the three-decker houses of New York. Acknowledging the value of archival research the author is also firmly convinced of the importance of field observation and the book is extensively illustrated with photographs from his own personal collection. With a comprehensive bibliography, and incorporating new material from cultural geographers, historians, folklorists and anthropologists, *Vernacular Buildings* is a unique survey that will be welcomed by specialists and enthusiasts alike.

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