



Traditions in Architecture: Africa, America, Asia, and Oceania

By Dora P. Crouch, June G. Johnson

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Traditions in Architecture: Africa, America, Asia, and Oceania is the first wide-ranging, one-volume study to examine the architectural achievements of diverse cultures outside the Euroamerican tradition. In contrast with traditional chronological surveys of architectural history, this volume is arranged thematically to show the basic commonalities of all human communities. In order to provide a basic understanding of the cultural heritage defining these diverse groups, both vernacular and monumental works are discussed. The book is divided into five major sections, each of which addresses specific topics fundamental to all societies. The authors discuss these topics in terms of particular architectural solutions, comparing and contrasting geographically separated buildings and construction traditions. For example, the issue of architectural meaning is studied through symbolic gardens in China, verbal ornament in the Islamic world, and the wall paintings of Ndebele women of southeast Africa. Beginning with an investigation into the ways in which the continuity of traditional forms is maintained, the authors then explore practical issues such as housing and food structures, climate and ecology, building materials, and architectural forms and methods. Architectural goals and purposes, which determine what is built, vary from culture to culture and are given special attention. Planning and design-ways in which space is used in patterns of organization-range from urban plans to landscaped settings. The authors conclude with an examination of cultural values, investigating the way in which architecture interacts with social relations, traditional theories, decision-making, and the economics of building. The book is enhanced by over 200 photographs, maps, and charts, as well as a glossary and full bibliography. This unique study will enlighten students and open new avenues of research for scholars.

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Review

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About the Author

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