Architecture

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Anthropologists have shown an interest in architecture since at least the end of the nineteenth century, though not to the extent that may be expected given the prominent position that architecture plays in all human societies. Notwithstanding their relatively marginal position within the discipline, anthropological studies of architecture have made some significant contributions to our understanding of the dynamic and mutually constitutive relationships between architecture, culture, and environment. These contributions include the practice of making and its central role in the development of architecture over time; processes of change and how to understand and deal with them; and anthropology’s contribution to the study of architecture as a professional discipline. The anthropological study of architecture, defined as a continuous process of designing, making, and dwelling, requires a holistic approach that considers the diverse material, social, and symbolic registers of architecture, as well as its various scales. Such an approach can pave the way for more collaborative projects between anthropologists and architects that can explore the characteristics and possibilities of both existing and new forms of designing, making, and dwelling. Thus, this entry looks at the history of anthropology’s relationship with architecture to contribute to current debates about how both disciplines can forge new practices through making.

Introduction

Architecture is part of the history and everyday life of humanity. Not only do people live within architecture, they exist with it, progressing through life in a process of mutual constitution (Bugallo and Tomasi 2012). The very experience of living or dwelling ‘in, at, on, or about’ (Oliver 1987, 7) architectural environments and structures on a daily basis has led to a certain difficulty in comprehending what architecture is: it is difficult to define something that is so evident that it has become naturalised. Academic and professional discourse on architecture has tended to dissect the concept itself, separating the practices and experiences of, on the one hand, creating architecture and, on the other, using it. In the process, it has generated a rupture between its ‘material’ and ‘social’ or ‘immaterial’ aspects. As with the study of material culture in general, the anthropological challenge has been to dissolve a deeply ingrained dichotomy between subject and object (Miller 2005), and to focus instead on architecture as a totality, looking at its diverse material, social, and symbolic registers, as well as its various scales (Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995; Vellinga 2007; Buchli 2013).

Architecture, of course, can be defined in many ways. In this entry we approach architecture as a physical entity, constituted as a process and shaped by the amalgamation of sets of diverse material elements.

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These material elements, in turn, are produced using a series of technologies and are arranged in such a way that they conduct the flow of physical forces towards the ground, regulating and distributing the energies of the physical environment. For example, the relationships between beams, columns, and walls must be balanced so as to allow the structure of a building to support the load of a roof. The type of relations between these material elements and their intrinsic conditions emerge from a diverse set of environmental and cultural variables, and from a range of material, spatial, and technological choices and options, mediated by possibilities, restrictions, and socially constituted preferences (Bourdieu 1977; Lemonnier 1993). The arrangement of the material elements shapes three-dimensional forms, generates textures, and delimits and characterises places, creating interior and exterior spaces of diverse character. One might consider that, 'the spaces of dwelling are not already given, in the layout of the building, but are created in movement. That is to say, they are *performed*' (Ingold 2013, 85; emphasis in original). The arrangement of the material elements emerges from the ideas, needs, and expectations of a society. Social actors participate in the production and reproduction of architecture—inculcating societal norms as much as enabling disruptive and transformative actions within the physical entity (Bourdieu 1977).

Our focus in this entry on the physical existence of architecture is not accidental. On the contrary, it is based on the observation that both anthropology and architecture need to take this material condition seriously: as, indeed, do the people who produce, inhabit, or otherwise experience architecture. For anthropology, this involves looking at the way in which materiality participates in the shaping of life and engaging with the very making of things. For architecture, it implies an understanding that the objects that are designed and built are part of social networks, and that their production cannot be reduced to individual creativity.

Anthropologists and architecture

In general, anthropologists have tended to study architecture as 'a way into' a society or culture. Houses (or, more rarely, other building types) have been of interest because they allowed the anthropologist to study and understand social relationships, cultural values, and symbolic meanings; the cultural context was normally the real focus of attention, rather than the architecture per se. In this respect, anthropologists have approached architecture differently from architects, for whom the cultural context (when it is considered in the first place) has been mainly a means to understand architecture and inform future design (Vellinga 2016). This different perspective may have contributed to the overstated claim that anthropology has never paid attention to architecture. Rather than being uninterested in architecture as such, for much of the twentieth century anthropology showed little interest in the material aspects of architecture and was more focused on its 'intangible' features. What lay 'beyond' a building (that is, the cultural values, beliefs, and relationships that a building expressed or embodied) was seen to be more important than the skilled practices that enabled its design and construction, or the material features that resulted from them.

The central question, more often than not, has been ‘how are they [built forms, built environments and constructive processes] imbued with cultural significance at all levels (material, symbolic, social)?’ (Amerlinck 2001, 3). To answer this question, anthropologists for a long time tried to ‘read’ buildings as texts, documenting how age, gender, power, or status relationship were symbolically reflected in design features, spatial layouts, or decorative elements.

This perspective on architecture goes all the way back to the beginnings of anthropology as an academic discipline. Most famously, Lewis Henry Morgan’s classic *Houses and house-life of the American Aborigines* (2003) argued that extended family households, which Morgan believed to be typical of pre-colonial Native American societies, practiced what he called ‘communism in living’—a communal way of life that found expression in the design and spatial layout of multi-family houses found across the continent. For instance, the Haudenosaunee or ‘people of the long-house’ constructed a variety of houses up to 100 feet long, with a central hallway giving access to subdivisions about seven feet long, with shared fire pits to accommodate up to twenty families. Of course, how architecture was read could differ between anthropologists. To Morgan (1877), the design, materiality, and construction of pre-colonial Native American buildings were indicators of the comparative social evolutionary status of the societies concerned. On the other hand, to Pierre Bourdieu (1973), the Kabyle house in Algeria illustrated the way in which the cultural characteristics of a specific society, like notions of purity and pollution, were objectified in the spatial layout of homes. Traditional Kabyle houses were divided by a low wall that created two distinct, oppositional spaces. The larger one, about two-thirds of the area, was elevated and was reserved for humans, especially guests. The smaller, darker part was the place for animals, but also where sexual intercourse and childbirth took place.

Many other ethnographic studies in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries included information on settlement patterns, building forms, and spatial arrangements around the world to help gain an understanding of social structures and cultural value systems. For example, Raymond Firth studied the Tikopia houses in the Solomon Islands, noting that, even though ‘the external aspect […] has little to recommend it’, an analysis of its spatial arrangements ‘will lead us immediately to some of the most complex features of the native social organization’ (1961, 75). Gender and status relationships were expressed through the allocation of spaces, the names of building elements, and seating arrangements, amongst other things. Altogether, anthropologists have provided an extraordinarily rich ethnographic record of the various ways in which architecture is intricately related to cultural values, social identities, and political or economic relationships.

The second half of the twentieth century saw a renewed interest in the anthropology of architecture, especially in the study of houses. In line with more general anthropological perspectives at the time, much of this work was concerned with the analysis of symbolic meanings as expressed in architectural form, spatial organisation, or methods of construction. For example, various anthropologists commented on the fact that traditional houses across insular Southeast Asia were anthropomorphised structures, with

particular building elements (doors, façades, posts) symbolically referred to by their inhabitants as body elements (eyes, face, legs). This practice reflected a widespread tendency in the region to see houses as living entities (Waterson 1990). In the Amazon region, anthropologists noted that Indigenous longhouses expressed distinct gender relationships through the allocation and ceremonial use of spaces, with a clear axis separating a male end at the front of the house from a female end at the back (Hugh-Jones 1979). In all these instances, architecture was studied as an object, independent from any human interaction.

From the 1980s onwards, many anthropologists have been critiqued for treating buildings as fixed and finished objects and for ignoring the dynamic and contested nature of meanings and human behaviour, especially in the case of symbolic studies that treat buildings as 'microcosms' or structural models of cultural and cosmic orders. The process of 'making' architecture has commonly been ignored, whilst meanings have generally been assumed to be intrinsically present in buildings and to already exist prior to their objectification in architecture. In so doing, the agency of people (as designers, builders, and inhabitants, and as members of a community or society) and their ability to change or adapt architecture was disregarded at the same time as social and cultural relationships and identities were essentialised. In other words, 'an illusion of certainty and uniformity' was created that misleadingly suggested that buildings can ever be complete, and that architectural symbolism is arranged in exclusive and orderly ways (Ellen 1986, 28).

This renewed anthropological interest coincided with an increasing attention in architectural circles in the contribution that anthropology could make to the field of architecture; not just in relation to the so-called traditional or 'vernacular' architecture of the world (Oliver 1979), but to architecture as a design discipline (Toy 1996). An interest in the architecture of 'Others', the traditional subject of anthropology, had of course always been present in architecture (see Vitruvius 2012, Laugier 1977 and Semper 1989). However, the interest now shifted towards what anthropology could contribute to the discipline in terms of theory and methodology, and how both disciplines could collaborate more closely.

Building on the late-twentieth century studies that aimed to document and analyse specific building traditions around the world (mainly, though not solely, in southeast Asia and Latin America), attention began to shift to more thematic and theoretical issues during the early twenty-first century. Discourses around materiality, consumption, and agency gave rise to an increased interest in the anthropology of the home and on what goes on 'behind closed doors', inside architecture (Miller 2001; Daniels 2010; Pink et al. 2017). Expanding beyond the narrow focus on houses and homes, anthropologists also explored the processual nature of architecture and the way in which it may play a part in processes of political contestation, ethnic identification, or social gentrification. For example, among the Minangkabau in Indonesia, the construction of increasingly larger and more decorated traditional houses, using modern materials and technologies, was shown to help renegotiate long-established social status relationships, revealing the active, rather than passive, role played by the house in the constitution of society (Vellinga

2004). Conversely, Melanie van der Hoorn (2009) studied how the active destruction of unwanted buildings helped redefine national identities, both in times of conflict (as during the siege of Sarajevo in former Yugoslavia from 1992 till 1996) and post-conflict (such as after the collapse of the Soviet Union).

In line with similarly burgeoning interests in the relationship between anthropology and design, studies of craft, skill, and technology began to explore the role of 'making' and design in architecture (Ingold 2013), while ethnographic studies of architectural firms aimed to analyse the culture of professional architectural practice (Yaneva 2009; Yarrow 2019). Much of this work involved collaborations between anthropologists and architects. Altogether, it has given rise to ongoing discussions about what architecture is, about how it can be studied from an anthropological perspective, and about how the relationship between anthropology and architecture should be conceptualised (Amerlinck 2001; Jasper 2019; Stender et al. 2022). The publication of a number of textbooks that aim to introduce the anthropological study of architecture, written by both anthropologists and architects, indicates that the subject finally 'arrived' in anthropological discourse at exactly the time when anthropological approaches, in parallel, have entered architectural discussion and practice (for example, Buchli 2013; Lucas 2020). As will be seen, however, the characteristics and scope of this disciplinary 'encounter' still require exploration.

Making architecture

The word 'architecture' comes from the Greek words *arkhi*, meaning 'master' or 'chief', and *téktōn*, meaning 'carpenter' or 'builder', referring to the skills for making a building. 'Architecture', then, as a concept, refers to the physical process that constitutes a building. A building is formed through the transformation of materials and their particular arrangement in space, using a variety of technologies, and by actions that emerge from the ways in which the physical skills of the craftsmen join with the materials (Ingold 2013). Understanding architecture as a physical process implies a recognition of 'making' as a practice that is sustained over time. Buildings are not made after they have been designed and before they are used—the process of constructing them is continuous. Unlike architects, anthropologists problematise the distinction between design, construction, and use (RIBA 2020). For example, a 1998 ethnography of Aymara communities in Bolivia proposed that the act of building houses is an 'art of memory', whereby relationships with the ancestors of the household group are reproduced and strengthened through the process of making and the songs that are sung during the building process (Arnold 1998). Once the buildings are made, they continue to be adapted, repaired, or extended.

A concern for manual building practices and crafts was very prominent in the second half of the nineteenth century, mainly due to the influence of the Arts and Crafts movement and in particular William Morris's position in favour of artisanal work and the collective experience of production, in contrast to the alienation of mechanised production systems emerging from the Industrial Revolution (Sennett 2008). In anthropology, an early interest in the practices involved in the creation of buildings was shown through the

documentation of building materials and techniques (Boas 1966; Malinowski 1935). Later, a more systematic approach towards an 'anthropology of technology' emerged in France around the figure of anthropologist Marcel Mauss (1935; 1968), whose concept of 'total social facts' encouraged anthropologists to see technology and social phenomena as deeply intertwined. Building on Mauss's writings, anthropologists began to see technical practices such as sawing, cutting, binding, or moulding as embodied thoughts rather than mere mechanical actions. André Leroi-Gourhan (1964) introduced the concept of 'operating chain' (*chaîne opératoire*), a methodological tool for the analysis of processes of making. More recently, this concept has been problematised for its sequential and fragmented character. Instead, some anthropologists propose an understanding of making processes as flows: 'an unbroken, contrapuntal coupling of a gestural dance with a modulation of the material' (Ingold 2013, 26).

The process of decision-making has also been at the centre of anthropological enquiries into making, starting discussions of the social and cultural reasons for 'technological choices'. Pierre Lemonnier (1992; 1993) proposed this framework as a critical counterpoint to prevalent ideas of 'technological determinism', the notion that technology is a primary influence on social relationships. As in other fields, the use of the notion of 'habitus' (Bourdieu 1977)—the habits, skills, and tastes through which people with shared cultural backgrounds perceive and experience the world—has been proposed as a way to overcome the apparent dichotomy between the unconscious reproduction of structural patterns and purely subjective action. Specifically, anthropologists have shown that builders have margins of action within a wide, though not infinite, universe of available options that emerge from the material conditions of the actions and demands that produce them. They choose from these options based on their habitus. Thus, within the multiplicity of ways of making in a given place, it is possible to recognise 'family resemblances' among different procedures (Dietler and Herbich 1998). Roof structures in traditional Indonesian houses, for example, are made in a number of ways, resulting in distinctive roof forms in different parts of the archipelago that are far from identical, but that are nonetheless closely related to one another (Waterson 1990).

The collective nature of making has also been prevalent in recent anthropological thought. The apprentice-style ethnographic work of Trevor Marchand, who worked as a novice under the expert guidance of master builders in Yemen (2001) and Mali (2009), and who used this specific learning experience to collect ethnographic information, has shown the importance of training and knowledge transfer in the development of craftsmen's practical skills, know-how, and values around discipline and commitment. Marchand's work shows the importance of action in ethnographic research, as opposed to pure verbal communication, in a context in which 'the builder's apprenticeship served to enhance concepts and judgements regarding space and assembly through training, practice, and inhabiting the "process of making"' (Marchand 2001, 243). By actively producing mud bricks, constructing walls and ceilings, and sculpting roof crenelations, Marchand gained first-hand knowledge of construction practices—knowledge

that would be difficult to gain otherwise or to convey in words alone.

Collective or collaborative making is also explored anthropologically, focusing not so much on the relations between the craftsmen but on their relationship with the materials. The actions of the builder operate *with* the material, rather than on it, insofar as their forces meet in mutual recognition. Materials and builders are in a continuous and sensitive movement within a shared process of making, 'like melodies in counterpoint' (Ingold 2013, 107). Caroline Gatt and Tim Ingold invite anthropology to engage in what they call 'correspondence' with materials and architecture: to participate 'in building relationships and making things' so as to enable both disciplines to grow based more on improvisation rather than on innovation (2013, 148).

Architecture and change

In keeping with recent attention to making and collaboration, recent scholarship has shown how architecture is not static, but is instead a creative and ever-evolving process through which people—as active agents, and using their past experience, knowledge, skills, and crafts—create environments that become places for dwelling or other purposes. Architecture evolves in line with changing cultural contexts, as well as dynamic environmental contexts (which were hitherto largely ignored in the anthropological study of architecture), and with current needs, ambitions, and requirements. In most instances, this process involves material construction, and it is this material aspect of architecture—the fact that it is made of stone, wood, steel, or earth—that often gives the impression that it is fixed and 'concrete'. In reality, the materials that architecture is made of are as fluid and temporal as the cultural relationships that it embodies and the environments that encompass it (Ingold 2007). In time, the mechanical or chemical properties of architecture may transform in response to temperature fluctuations or physical forces; they may move, harden, or disintegrate, for example. In response to such material changes, as well as to larger environmental or cultural transformations, buildings may be adapted, moved, conserved, restored, or demolished. Consequently, at no point in time is architecture ever truly complete or finished (Maudlin and Vellinga 2014).

The dynamic nature of architecture is not only evident from the material-making process, but is also manifested in the activities that take place within it. Early anthropological studies, especially those that regarded architecture as an embodiment of cosmological relationships, often described spatial patterns of use in a rather static way, correlating particular activities (and the categories of people that performed them) with certain buildings or particular parts of them. Thus, a kitchen might be identified as the domain of women who use it to cook, or a monastery as the exclusive preserve of the members of a religious order. A famous example of this approach is provided by Clark E. Cunningham's study of the Atoni house in Indonesia (1964). Postulating that a house is 'a mechanical model of the cosmos as conceived by a people' (66), Cunningham argued that the use of space was strictly defined in terms of a number of dualist

oppositions (male-female, high-low, old-young) that determined who could use which space at what time and for what purpose. Often, as in the case of the Atoni, such patterns were seen to be customary or traditional and were believed to have been handed down from times immemorial. As such, they were implicitly perceived as fixed and repeated in the same way in the same location.

Recently, anthropological scholarship has put more emphasis on the dynamic and changing nature of the activities that take place in architecture. The things that people do in or around buildings (cooking, meeting, working, worshipping, cleaning, socialising, sleeping, and so on) are processes through which everyday life is continuously constituted and reproduced (Cieraad 1999; Miller 2001; Daniels 2010). While human activities will often be regulated and rather routine, they are never exactly the same every time they are performed, nor do they always take place in the exact same place—even if the people who perform them think or say they do. At the same time that environmental and cultural contexts change, so too will the activities that take place in or around architecture be adapted through continuous modifications and improvisations. In their study of energy demand reduction initiatives in the UK, Sarah Pink et al. (2017) showed that people might sometimes move their activities to different parts of a house to enable them to do two things at the same time: for example, a kitchen would be used to prepare food but might simultaneously also become a place to catch up on an urgent work email. New mobile digital technologies have played an important part in this, enabling people to more easily 'move' through buildings as they live out their lives. Functions of spaces may change, furniture and other objects may be rearranged, and activities may be relocated in response to events, challenges, or opportunities, making architecture 'an ongoingly changing digital, material, sensory, emotional and atmospheric environment' (Pink et al. 2017, 70).

Of course, the on-going changes in the things people do are intimately related to changes in the material aspects of architecture. 'The most fundamental thing about life is that it does not begin here or end there, but is always *going on*' (Ingold 2001, 172; emphasis in original). This has led to the adoption of a 'dwelling perspective' as opposed to a 'building perspective' in the anthropology of architecture. The latter is the perspective of the architect, where a building is designed and constructed and consequently used. From this point of view, a building will be 'finished', and ready for use, once the design and building stage are over. A dwelling perspective, on the other hand, sees the design, construction, and use of architecture forming a continuous process of 'dwelling in the world' (Ingold 2001, 185). As people dwell, their activities take place in the context of architecture, which partly defines them but is also defined by them; in the process, architecture, in its material form, may be designed, constructed, inhabited, adapted, renovated, conserved, abandoned, or demolished, as needs, opportunities, or requirements change, as part of an on-going process. These changes are creative and meaningful even if they are not always recognised as such, and often have no clear beginnings or endings. The dynamic nature of dwelling impacts the use and meaning of the architecture and forms part of its on-going state of becoming. Architecture, as such, does

not have a clearly defined starting point, nor is it ever finished (Maudlin and Vellinga 2014); it is ‘a process that is continuously going on, for as long as people dwell in an environment’ (Ingold 2001, 188).

The continuous nature of architecture raises questions about how to deal with change. Changes may be manifold and take many forms that may interrelate in all kinds of ways. Physical alterations to architecture may or may not combine with changes in use or shifting meanings. They may raise questions or concerns about identity, heritage, and authenticity, or they may be applauded and encouraged as signs of development and progress (Orbaşli and Vellinga 2020). The way in which communities deal with such changes can reveal the significance of architecture in their lives. Anthropologists have studied architectural change in a number of contexts. Most of them have considered the impact of modernity on traditional buildings in the form of, for instance, new materials or technologies, and studied the ramifications of change in terms of status or gender relationships (Schefold et al. 2003). They have also studied architectural change in relation to heritage management and conservation. For example, a study of the city of Djenné, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Mali, identified contrasting perspectives on how the city’s building heritage should be managed: that of the local participants, to whom the city is an everyday place to live in, and that of (international) heritage experts, who regard it as universal heritage to be preserved (Joy 2012). Similar discrepancies in perspectives have been identified all over the world (Tomasi and Barada 2021). Interestingly, the development of new architectural forms as a result of processes of cultural change (for example, multi-generational homes, communal living experiments, or so-called ‘tiny houses’) has received less anthropological attention thus far.

Architecture as discipline

The anthropology of architecture has also been affected by the disciplinary institutionalisation of architecture. This has involved the emergence of the role of the architect, separated from the role of the builder, the former being the designer or creator of a set of design concepts and the latter being the maker who materialises those ideas. Both architect and builder work in a hierarchical relationship in which the former dominates the latter (Carpo 2011, Ingold 2013). The beginning of this distinction can be located in the European Renaissance and goes hand-in-hand with the contemporary idealisation of Greco-Roman antiquity. From the seventeenth century onwards, architecture was institutionalised by the arts Academies (particularly the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris), which acted as the principal institutions for artistic education and took the lead in the provision of architectural training (Stevens 1998).

One way in which anthropology has problematised the increasing professionalisation of architectural practice, and the subsequent hierarchical nature of relations between builders and architects, is through studies of how construction practices, even in traditional contexts with supposedly more symmetrical relations, are characterised by hierarchies, expert knowledge, and strict power relations, without being explicitly mediated by professional roles (Marchand 2009, 2012; Tomasi 2012). Through professionalisation

of the discipline, the architect is commonly presented as a kind of external, expert mediator between people and their spaces, restricting the margins of action of others. However, as previous stated, the architect does not absolutely determine the ways of dwelling (De Certeau 1984). Many other actors, including owners, builders, ritual experts, and, in modern societies, planners, insurance companies, and mortgage lenders, play major parts in the development of houses and other buildings. Within this paradigm, recent anthropological approaches have shifted their perspective from studying 'architecture without architects' (Rudofsky 1964) to studying 'architecture with architects' (Stender et al. 2022). An early, ground-breaking study of the social foundations of professional architectural prestige, success, and taste argued that successful architects do not owe their success so much to genius as to their social background: going to the right schools and aligning themselves with influential colleagues appeared to be more important than talent (Stevens 1998). Along the same lines, a number of ethnographic studies of design processes in mainstream architectural studios have shown how architectural design is less of an individual pursuit characterised by moments of brilliance, inspiration, and innovation—as it is often portrayed—than it is a collaborative, routine, and sometimes slow process of improvisation, and the recycling, repurposing, and rescaling of existing ideas and practices (Yaneva 2009; Yarrow 2019).

Considering that the establishment of national architectural canons was based on European models and became a central part of imperial 'civilising' projects in various parts of the world, current discussions have also aimed to rethink the relationship between architecture and anthropology, seeking new forms of mutual transformation and disciplinary action in design processes, as part of a decolonisation of practices (Stender et al. 2022). Decolonisation cannot undo the systematic stigmatisation and transformation of other, local, or Indigenous forms of architecture that became part of the ideological projects of many nation-states; however, efforts to decolonise look to local and Indigenous architecture to make visible the perspectives, demands, and struggles of diverse oppressed or minority groups. Local vernacular architecture is also often seen as a source of inspiration in relation to discussions about architectural sustainability (Vellinga 2013).

Finally, architecture has pursued new disciplinary roles that transcend individual creative genius and that move towards more collective forms of production (Blundell Jones et al. 2005). Thus far, anthropology has had very limited involvement in such pursuits, beyond occasional collaborations such as that between the anthropologist William Mangin and the architect John F.C. Turner during the 1950s and 1960s in Peru (Mangin and Turner 1969). Similar collaborations are today found in the field of design anthropology (for example, Gunn et al. 2013; Drazin 2019), which aims to imagine new forms of co-creation and collaborative production. In turn, what distinguishes an 'anthropology of architecture' and an 'architectural anthropology', as has been proposed in recent years (Stender et al 2022), is moving beyond the study of architecture that already exists towards the generative possibilities of an anthropological perspective that seeks to modify the world we inhabit (Ingold 2022). The challenge of 'corresponding' between disciplines

requires a reflection on respective disciplinary biases and assumptions as well as a willingness to engage in forms of communication that focus on the architectural object and the practices related to its production. For architecture, this cannot be limited to the use of 'ethnographic tools' without the application of an interpretative theoretical framework, as noted by Marie Stender (2017). For anthropology, it requires an intention to move beyond studying what people do and an engagement with materiality and processes of making.

Conclusion

One of the foci of this entry has been what we call the 'continuous becoming of architecture', or how architecture is comprised of a constant process of designing, making, and dwelling that presents a relative stability within dynamic flows of people, materials, and environments. For decades now, these flows have been at the centre of an anthropological enquiry to understand 'how the things that people make, make people' (Miller 2005, 38). As in the case of material culture more generally, it is a dialectical relationship, in which architecture, culture, and environment mutually constitute one another. Architecture is not simply a way into cultural values or a response to environmental conditions that already exist; rather, it plays an active part in their formation and reproduction, just as much as the cultural values and environmental conditions help define the design, use, and meaning of the architecture.

The question of the relationships between people and their architecture continues to be at the core of anthropological interest in architecture. Such discussions require a holistic view that does not divide that which in our daily lives operates simultaneously. We design, build, and inhabit in overlapping moments. We seek shelter from a natural and social world, we arrange spaces that provide us with comfort and pleasure, and we define and present ourselves as persons through architectural actions that we cannot separate, nor prioritise, in clearly defined ways. Architecture can be designed and built, conserved or revived, or imposed or demolished to shape cultural identities and influence environmental conditions. It can be a place of comfort and protection, a model of the cosmos, a tool in environmental revival, and a source of pride, as much as it can be a prison, a place of fear and abuse, or a source of environmental damage.

Recognising the dynamic totality of architecture is a necessary starting-point for any shared project between architecture and anthropology. Such projects cannot be limited to understanding what already exists; rather, they should explore more egalitarian and collective approaches that allow for the creation of new forms of architectural production in pursuit of more diverse, inclusive, and sustainable ways of dwelling.

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