

# FILIPINO VERNACULAR DESIGN: TRADITION, CHALLENGES, AND CHANGE

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## Abstract

**Purpose of the Study:** *The current design thinking and cultural set up among Filipinos is generally influenced from centuries of colonialization. Preference over westernized design ideas, materials, and methodology are among the manifestation of these colonial influences (Ogura, Yap, & Tanoue, 2002). Acculturation doesn't only happen through immigration, one can be acculturated through constant exposure of foreign influence (Redfield & Herskovits, 1936; Berry, 2005) – that is what happened to the Philippines. The purpose of this case study is to explore the influence of design acculturation on vernacular residential buildings in the Philippines on its development and quest for identity. This research hinges on the interior built environment of the residential design in the Philippines, and the blurred edges between westernized and the traditional aspects of residential design as addressed by vernacular architecture, are explored.*

**Method:** *A case study on Filipino residence was performed using data bases to explain and develop a comprehensive understanding of the multidimensional and dynamic development of acculturation in design as a process of change over time. Each approaches and protocol vary, others were random, and some are controlled. While the approach is largely qualitative, drawings and photos are used sequentially and analytically. Analytical points are grouped under themes and then discusses under thematic parts.*

**Results:** *The results show that most of the selected primary studies: (1) are composed of behavioral studies on how individual and communities adopt to new culture and trends; (2) consist of elaboration on the interior built environment in the context of vernacular architecture; (3) tend to be more historical narrative and; (4) include a few coarse-grained data on heritage conservation and resiliency.*

*The acculturation strategies (Berry, 2005) of integration and assimilation were evident in most of the studies, this can be attributed to the centuries of continual exposure and adoption of new lifestyle under a colonial rule. Although the Filipino residences have evolved from pre-colonial to contemporary period, the data gathered suggests that the materiality and structural elements may have change, yet the core of the Filipino style still follows the norms of the vernacular architecture of the Philippines.*

*A substantive research gathered on the residential design of the Philippines that characterized an ethnocultural multiplicity which tolerates cultural pluralism to exist juxtaposed with the rapidly growing metropolis that has certainly destabilized the long-standing construction practice of the traditional Philippine society. Preference over mechanical and equipment dependent residences against the natural passive cooling strategies of the vernacular design was favored among urban residents. In many places, the traditional bahay kubo (Philippine provincial cube house) and bahay na bato (stone*

house) was replaced by a more modern and light structured building despite the problems and adaptability issues. As a result, the vernacular design is being undermined and that the modern and westernized residences were over glorified as models and a status symbol.

This poster presentation will show the results of the analytical points on how Filipinos adopt to the acculturated built environment as a learned behavior that changed the residential landscape of the Philippines along with drawings and photos of the development of the vernacular design and the acculturation to the westernized residences which were extolled as ideals and an indicator of socio-economic status destabilizing the long-standing design practices of the traditional Philippines.

**Keywords:** *Design Acculturation, Interior Built-Environment, Residential Design, Vernacular Architecture, Filipino style.*

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