Documenting the Architectural Heritage in Samoa and Fiji. An Interdisciplinary Approach

The lecture will describe an interdisciplinary approach towards the documentation of the rich architectural heritage in Oceania, respectively Samoa and Fiji. Throughout a common field study undertaken by the disciplines of architecture (documentation of buildings and construction methods), surveying (simple architectural photogrammetric practices) and anthropology (interviewing, participant observation etc.) it was possible to trace a very broad spectrum of circumstances that define the traditional built environment. A technical approach alone is not sufficient to gain a holistic understanding of the very complex cultural heritage that is expressed in buildings. Only in relation with the social environment, ideologies, traditions, and rituals it is possible to document the traditional house in all its facets as a product of the particular cultural surrounding.

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