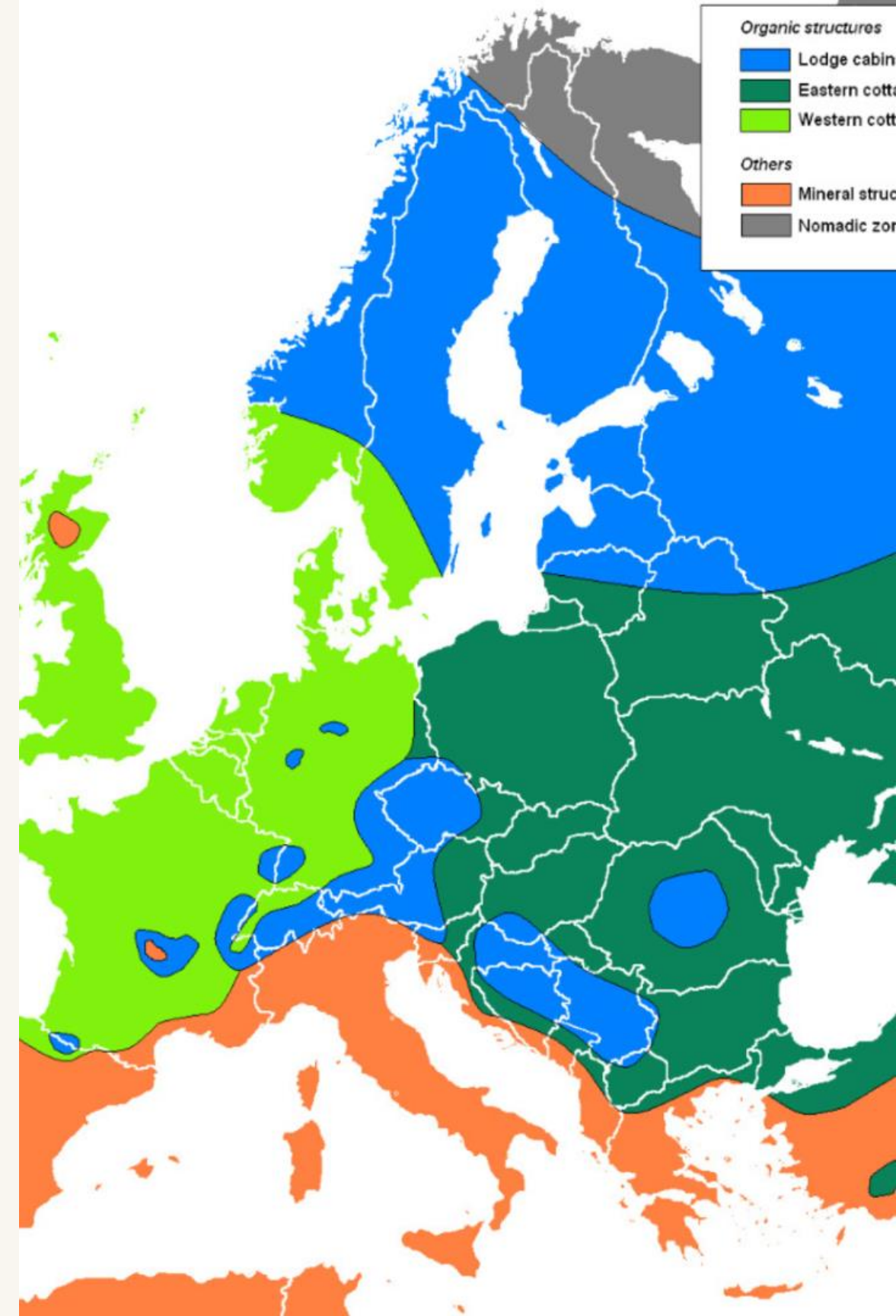


# Tishk International University (TIU) Vernacular Architecture

Lecturer : Darbaz Pirot

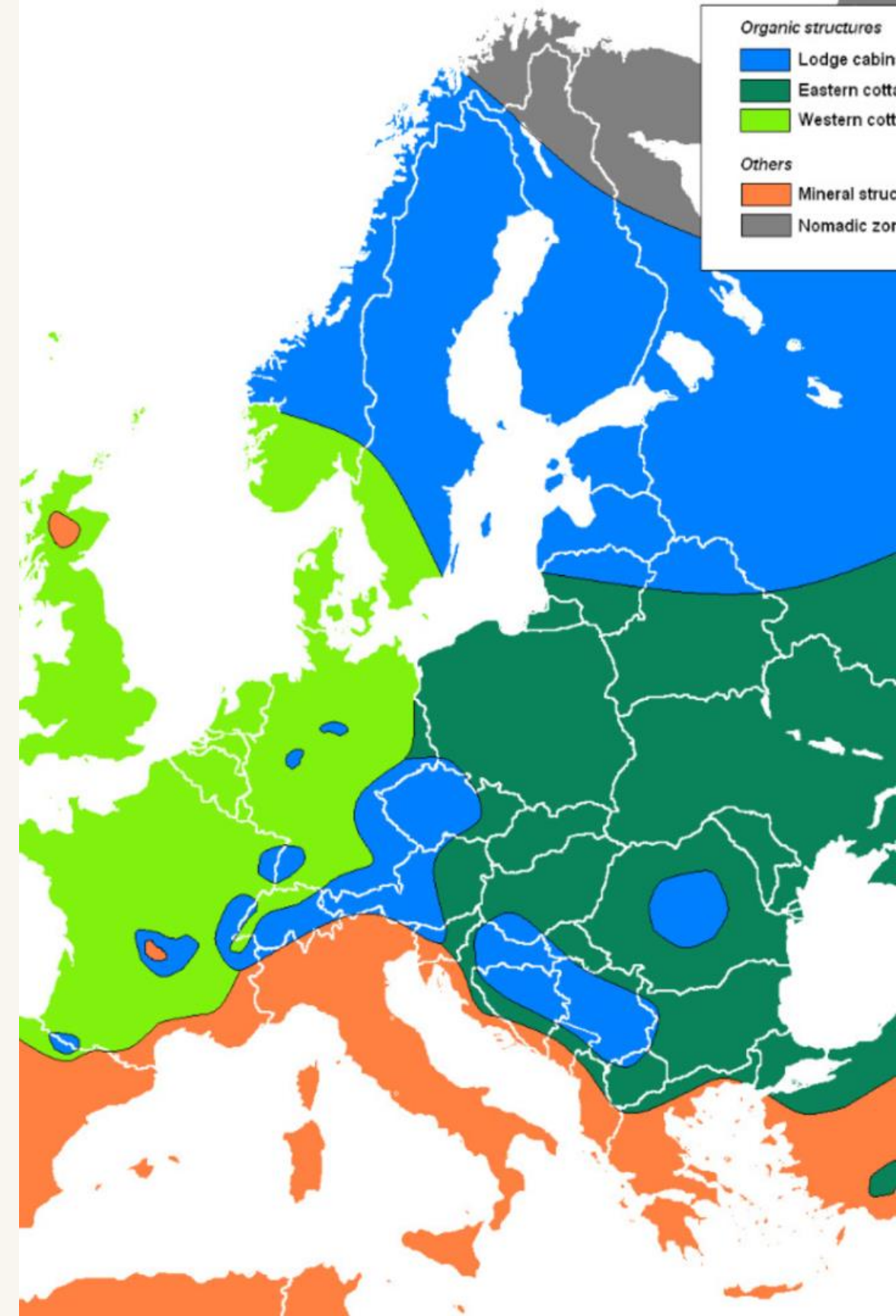
2025-2026

Lecture 2: Vernacular Architecture Across the Globe



## Outlines

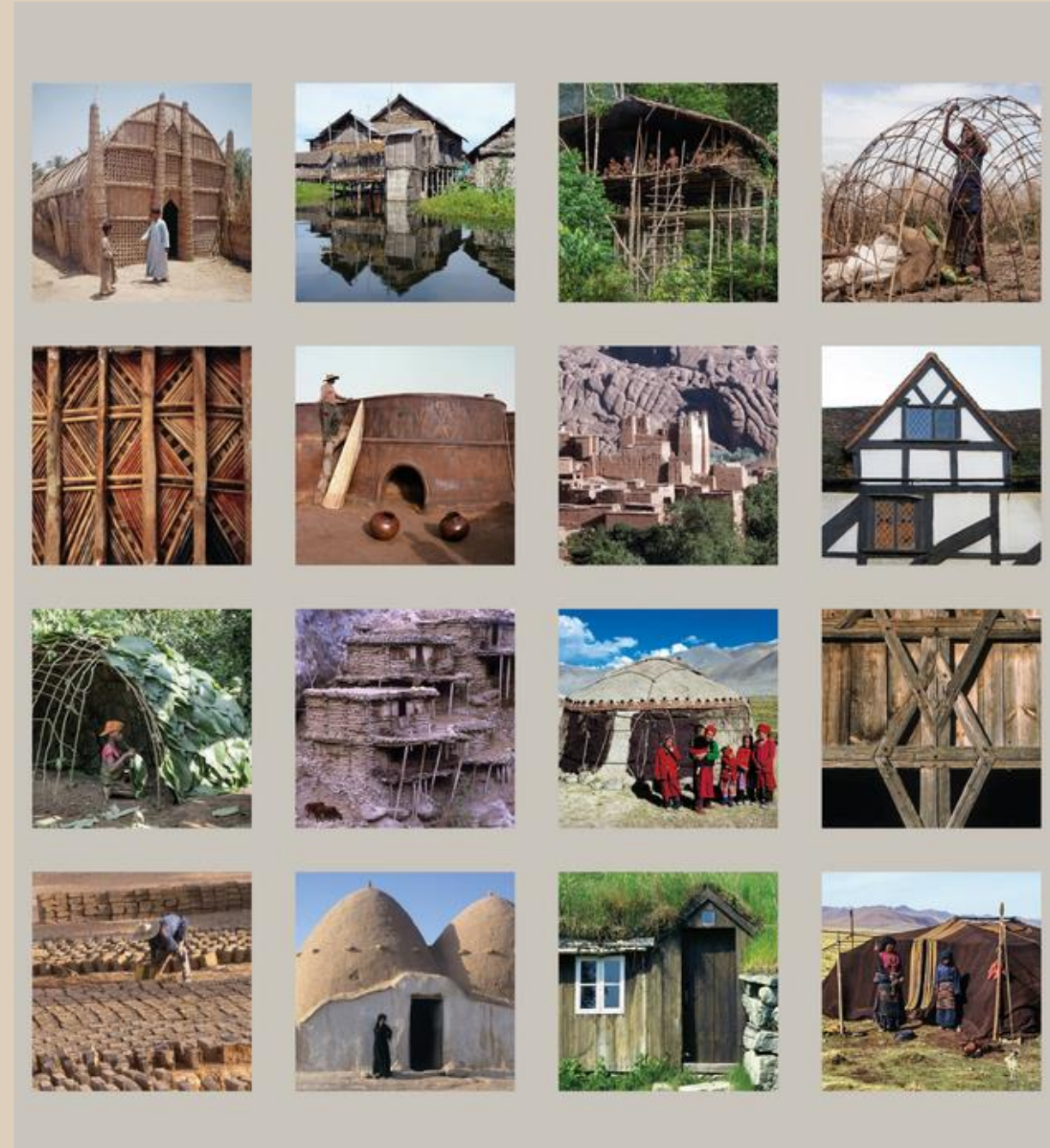
- Vernacular architecture across the world
- Vernacular architecture in Europe
- Vernacular architecture in Africa
- Vernacular architecture in Australia
- Vernacular architecture in South America
- Vernacular architecture in North America



# Vernacular Architecture Across the Globe

Exploring the unique characteristics of vernacular architecture within **various continents**, from the traditional **structures in Europe, Africa, and Australia**, to the indigenous designs found in South and North America.

Additionally, when we look **closely at the vernacular building styles** in this countries, we can see how the **buildings are influenced** by the **materials available** in the area and the **cultural background** of the people **who built them**.



## Vernacular Architecture Across the World

Vernacular architecture naturally fits into its surroundings. It changes over time to reflect the specific qualities of the local area, like the weather, culture, available building materials, technology, and the knowledge gained from many years of people living and building together in that community.

It is this evolution that gives rise to the Uniqueness of vernacular architecture in each region across the globe, with every area showcasing a particular set of characteristics that define its indigenous architectural practices.



# Vernacular architecture in Europe

**Vernacular architecture:** The traditional and indigenous building styles that are specific to a region in Europe.

**Europe's diversity:** Europe's vernacular architecture reflects its cultural diversity and history.



# A log cabin in Sweden

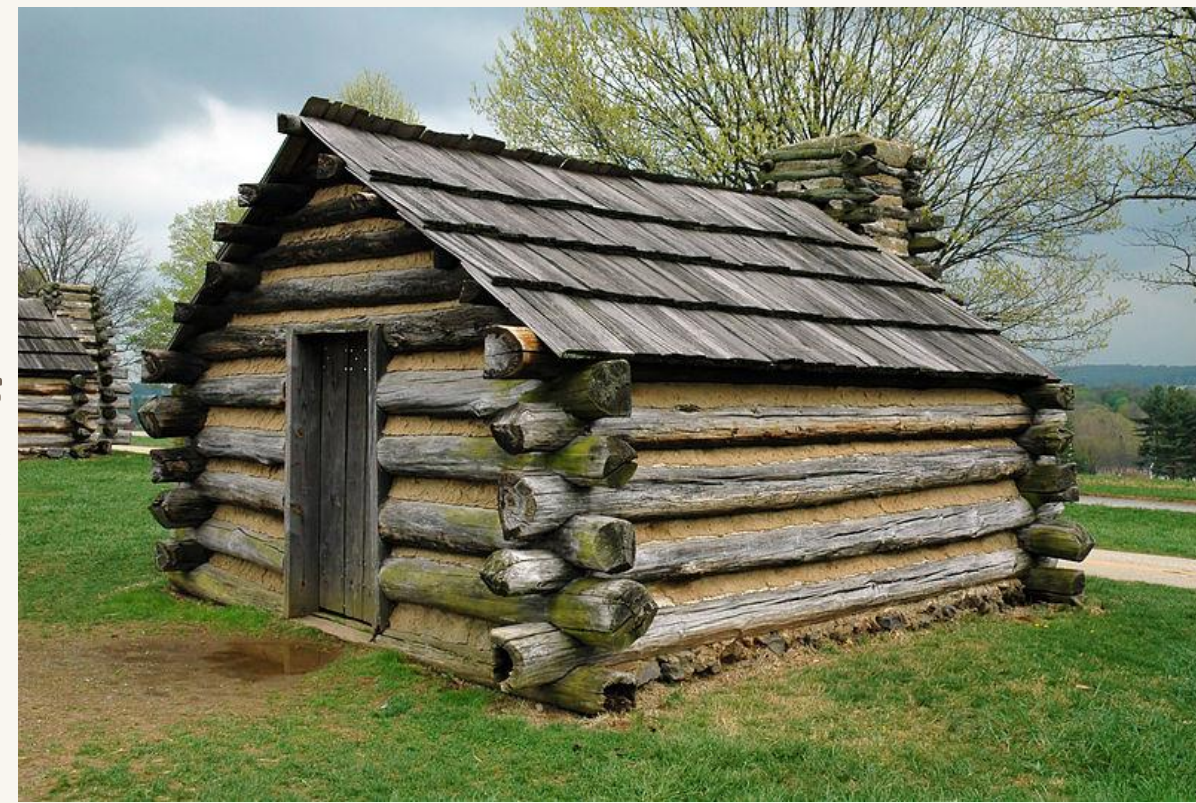
A log cabin is a **small log house**, especially a **less finished** or **architecturally sophisticated structure**. Log cabins have an **ancient history in Europe**, and these **types of dwellings** were constructed **without the use of nails**. They were built by **laying logs horizontally over top** of each other and **filling in the gaps with "chips and mud"**. This technique allowed them to derive their **stability from simple stacking**.

Such houses have several **forms and different methods of corner timbering**, and they utilized both round and hewn logs.



# A log cabin in Sweden

Back in medieval times, log cabins were seen as something you could move around, almost like a piece of furniture. This is shown by what happened with Espåby village in 1557. When they wanted to **move the village**, they didn't **build new houses**. Instead, they took apart the existing log cabins, **moved them**, and then put them back together again. Also, if some of the wood logs got damaged or rotted, they would just replace those specific logs. This kind of thing was **common when they moved these cabins** to different **places in Europe**.



# Vernacular architecture in France

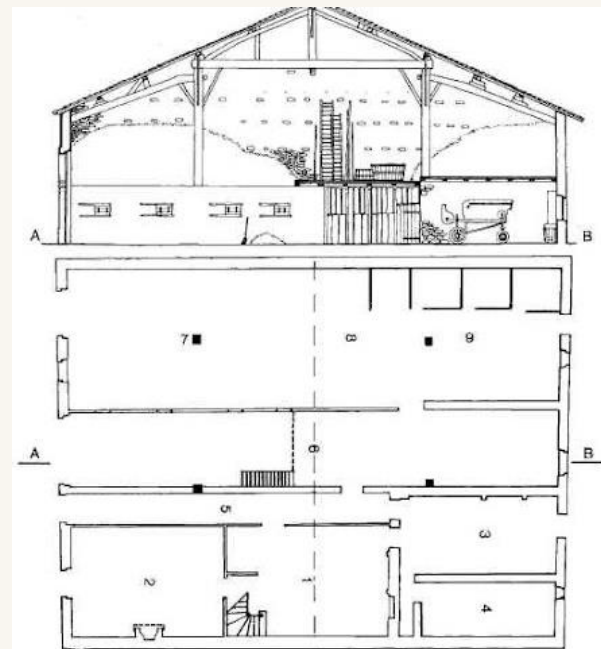
## Rural Vernacular Diversity

Most of the French vernacular houses can be seen in the French countryside, showcasing the rural vernacular architecture's great diversity. As one travels from one region to another, even within the same region, there is a host of morphological differences.



## Distinctive Features

Differences are evident in the building materials used, the pitches and volumes of roofs, the surrounds and locations of openings, and the decorative features chosen. These elements contribute to the unique character of each house.



## Commonality in Plan-Forms

"Houses may have diverse styles and appearances externally, but inside, their floor plans often follow similar designs, Showing that inside, many houses have a similar basic layout, despite how different they look from the outside



# Vernacular Architecture in France

## Classification Basis

On the scale of the entire country, house plan-forms may thus serve as a basis for the classification of farmhouses.



## Distinct House Plan-Types

According to the most recent publications the Frances vernacular houses can be divided:

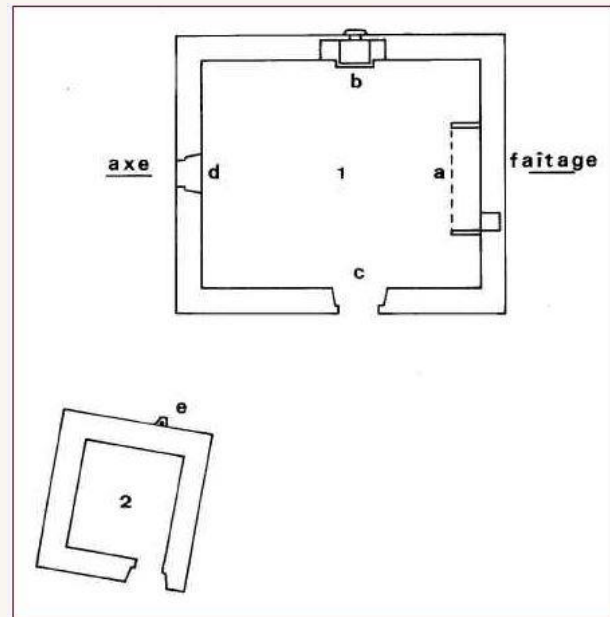
- 1. The single-room house,**
- 2. The lengthwise house or "longère",**
- 3. The upper-floor hall or "salle haute",**
- 4. The house with central-corridor plan,**
- 5. The depthwise house with nave and aisles.**

All these house-plans exist in elementary as well as derivative forms.,

# Vernacular Architecture in France

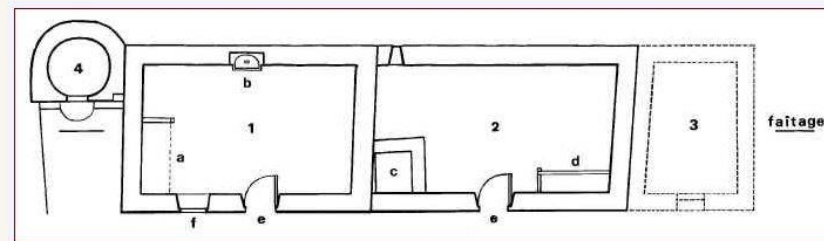
## THE SINGLE-ROOM HOUSE

Characteristic of Europe's vernacular architecture, the single-room house is a traditional form that reflects simplicity and functionality.



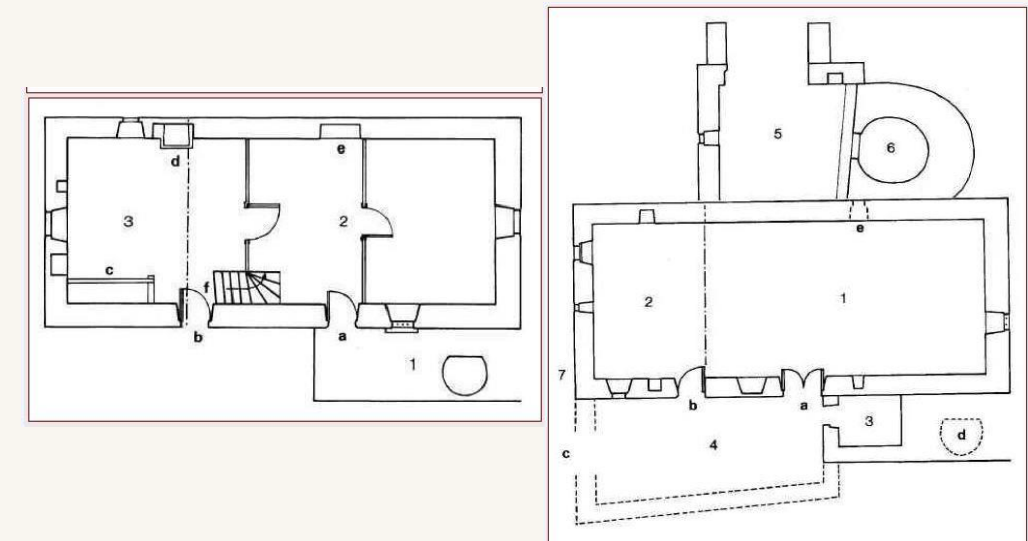
## THE LENGTHWISE HOUSE OR "LONGÈRE"

The "longère" is a type of lengthwise house that is symbolic of French rural architecture, often seen stretching across the landscape.



## THE UPPER-FLOOR HALL OR "SALLE" "SALLE HAUTE"

In contrast, the "salle haute" represents an upper-floor hall, design that denotes a different aspect of vernacular living in France.

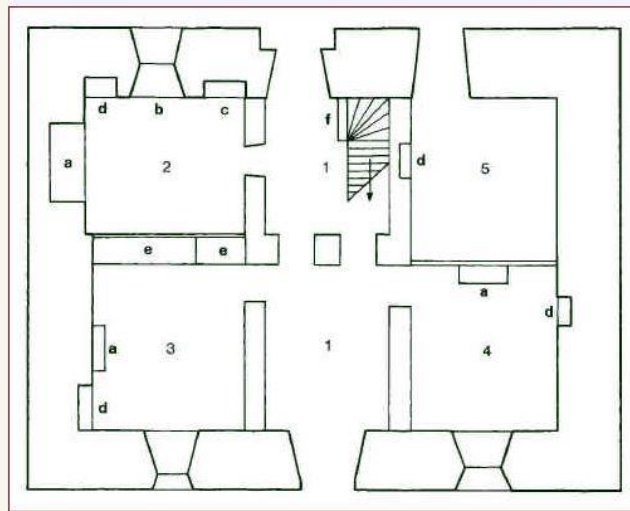


# Vernacular architecture in France

Europe has a rich tradition of vernacular architecture, which refers to methods of construction that use locally available resources and traditions to address local needs and circumstances.

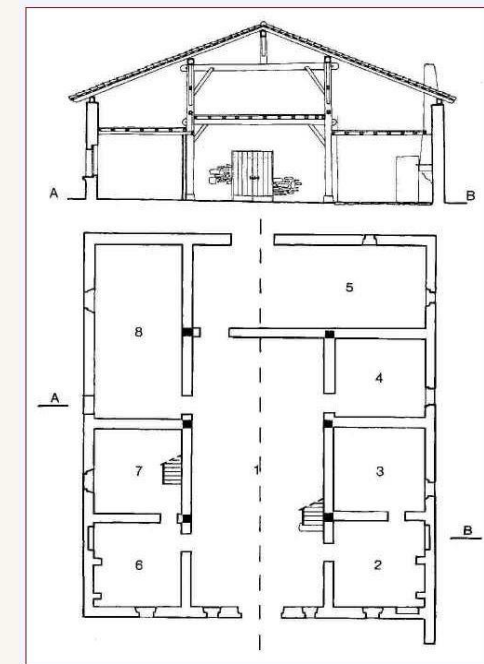
## The House with Central-Corridor Plan

One notable example is the house with a central-corridor plan, a design that has been a Principle in French vernacular architecture.



## The Depthwise House with Nave and Aisles

Another is the depthwise house with nave and aisles, which showcases the adaptability and variety present in traditional French building styles.



# The Construction Method and Building Material

These structures, **built without modern materials like blocks or cement**, use **local stone** and specially mixed mortars of **lime, gypsum, and local sands**.

This method, **dating back to pre-industrial times**, reflects traditional European construction techniques and contributes to their region's distinctive architectural heritage.



**A Traditional Turf House in Iceland**

This is one of the traditional turf homes in Iceland. Turf houses provide good insulation compared to buildings only made from wood or stone.



**Robust (Strong) Foundations**

The houses have a large foundation made of stone with a wooden frame to hold one or two stacks of turf.



**Designed for Harsh Winters**

The gable (roof) of the house is **timber with a double door** to keep out the Icelandic winters. The roofs of these types of houses were distinguished by grass.



## The blackhouse, Scotland

A blackhouse is a traditional type of house which used to be common in the **Scottish Highlands, the Hebrides, and Ireland.**

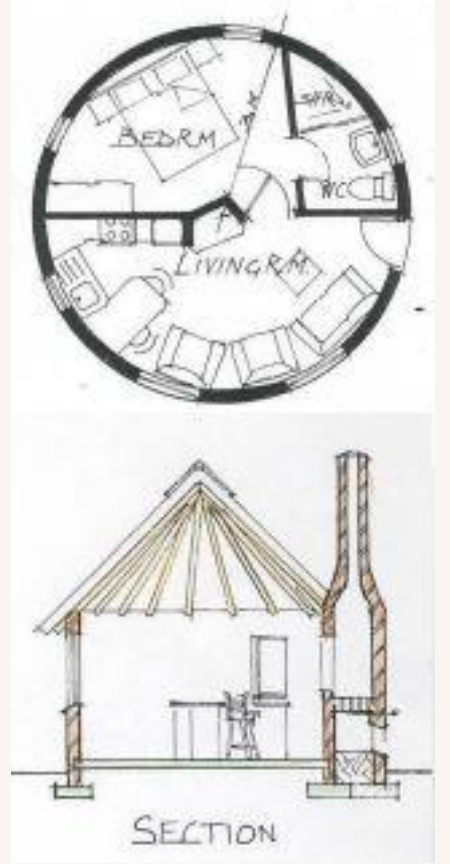


## Structural Design

The buildings were generally built with **double wall dry-stone walls packed with earth** and were made with wooden beams, over which a layer of turf (a type of grass and soil), cereal straw, or reed was laid as a covering.

# Vernacular architecture in Africa





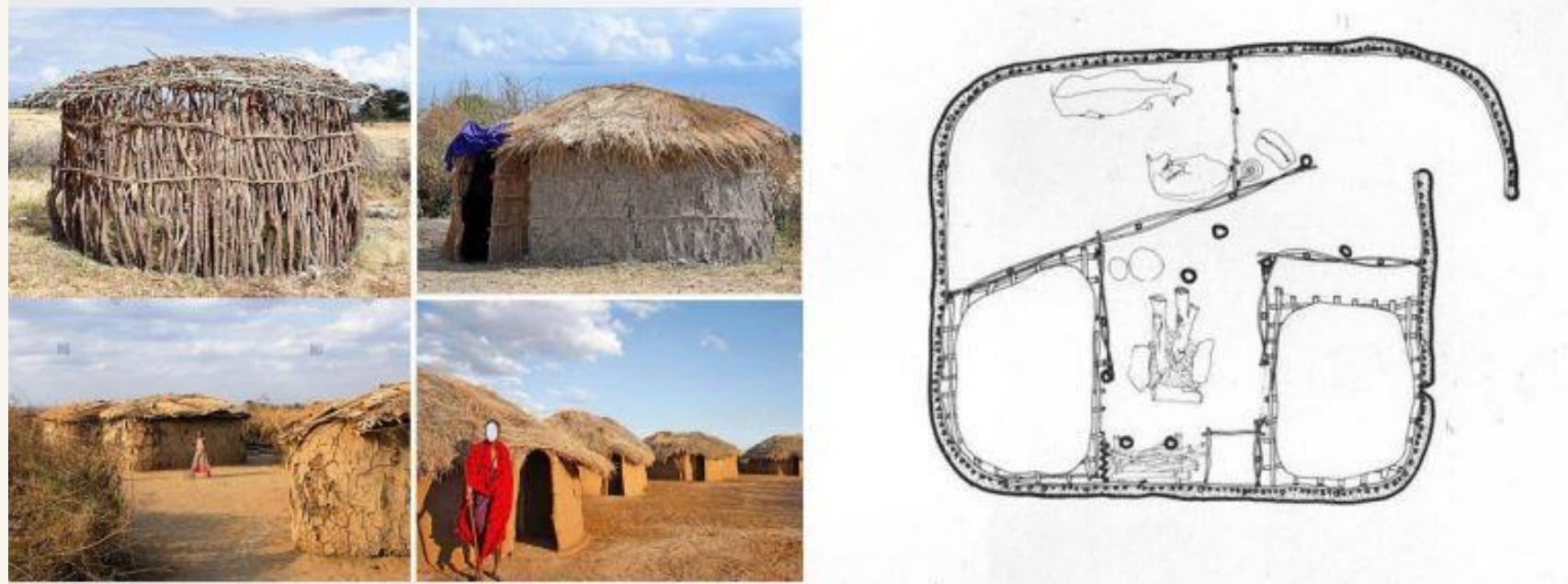
## Rondavel, Southern Africa

The Rondavel, a structure with **significant cultural value**, is predominantly **round or oval**. This architectural form is **deeply rooted in the vernacular** traditions of **Southern Africa**.

Constructed using materials that are **readily available in their natural state**, The Rondavel serves as an example of **environmentally friendly and sustainable construction methods**. These **indigenous dwellings** are a common sight in the countries of **South parts of Africa**, They **integrate perfectly** with the **surrounding environment**.

- **The walls** are often constructed from **stones**. The **mortar** may consist of **sand, soil, or combinations** of these, **mixed with cow dung**.
- **The floor** of a traditional rondavel is finished with a **dung mixture** to make it **hard and smooth**.
- **The main roofing** elements of a rondavel are **spars or poles** taken from **tree limbs**, which have been **harvested and cut to length**.
- **The roof covering** is of thatch that is **sewn (join)** to the **poles with grass rope**.





## Maasai House Construction

- The Maasai houses are designed to be **circular or oval shaped**.
- Constructed as **temporary abodes**, these houses cater to the Maasai's **need to move at any given time**.

- **All materials** used for building are **natural and collected** from nearby areas.
- **The method of construction** begins with erecting the frame by **fixing gathered timber poles** into the ground. This is followed by interlacing **the poles with a lattice of smaller branches**, which are then plastered with a mixture of **water, mud, cow dung, and even human urine**.
- **Finishing touches** on the Maasai house are applied using a mix of **cow dung and water**.
- Given the Maasai's **need for mobility**, their houses are designed to be **temporary structures**.



# The Fortified Ksar Ouled Debbab of Tataouine, Tunisia

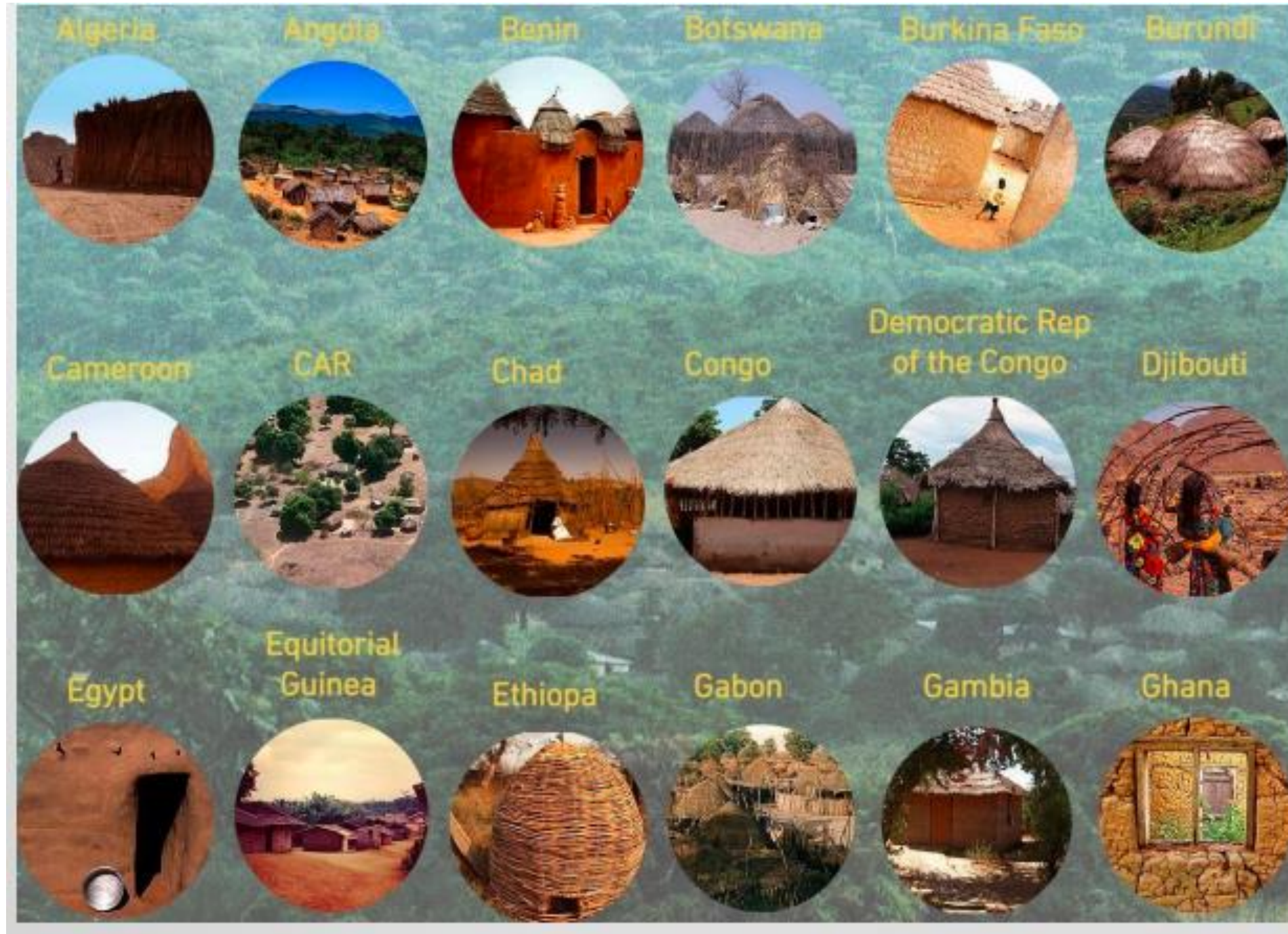
These are the vaulted adobe homes of the 15th century Ksar Ouled Debbab, located in southwest of the city of Tataouine, Tunisia.

The walls of these homes are constructed from **thick mud bricks, complemented by palm wood doors.**

These specific architectural features were instrumental in helping to **keep food cool within the homes.**

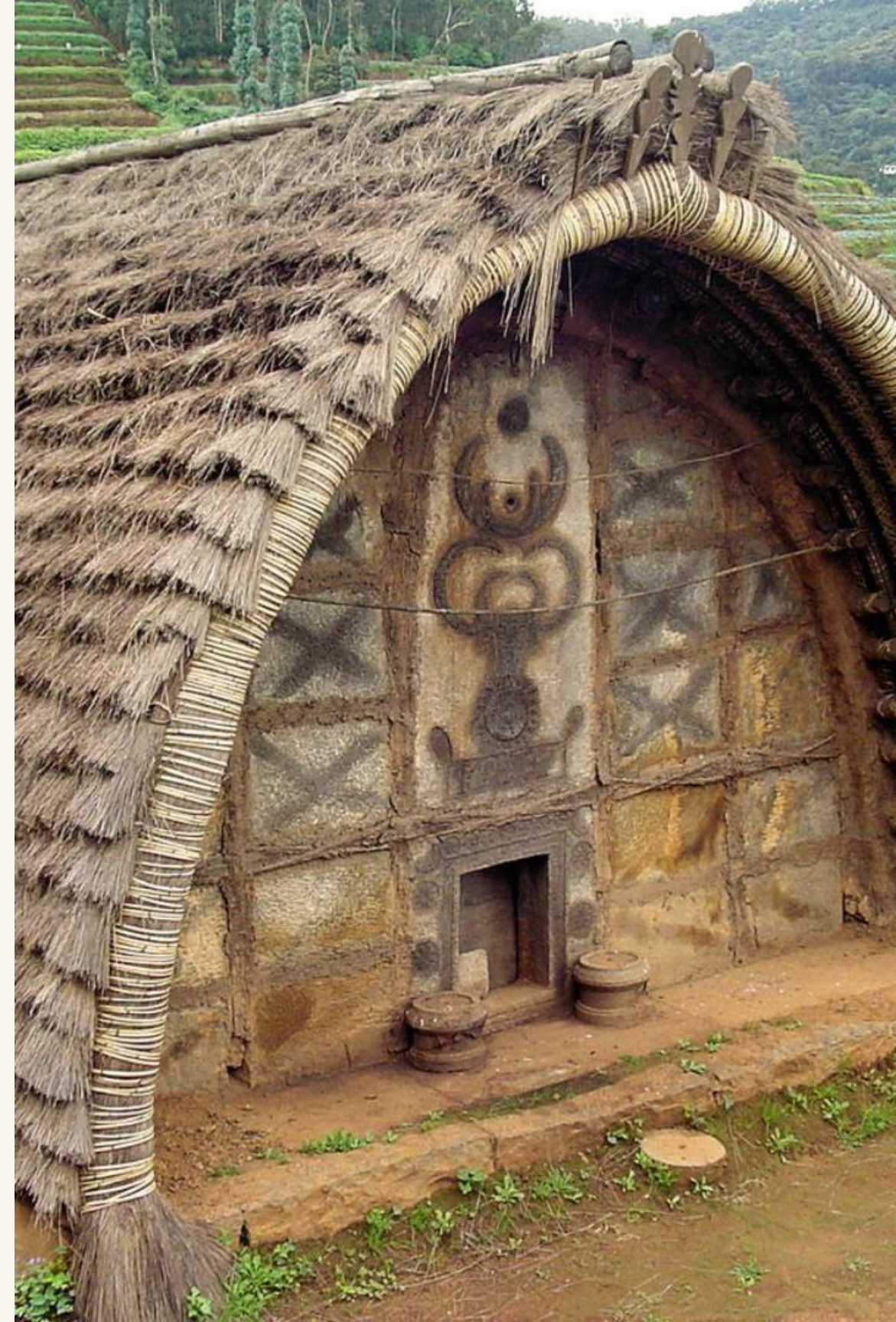


# African Vernacular Architecture



# Vernacular architecture in Australia

Exploring the unique number of traditional **dwelling**s that are designed based on **local needs**, availability of construction materials, and **reflecting local traditions**.



## Typical Queenslander, Australia

The typical "**Queenslander**" house in Australia is a unique, **single-story home made mostly of timber with a corrugated iron roof**. Set on individual land plots, these houses contribute to the region's **distinct streetscape**.

Characterized by their **elevated design** and **iconic verandas** that partially extend around the house, they are **aesthetically pleasing and functional**, especially in the Australian climate.



# Vernacular architecture in South America

## Brazilian Houses, Brazil



### South America: Vernacular

The vernacular architecture of South America is exemplified by structures such as the **Oca (or Oga)**, which are integral to the formation of villages.

### Collective Living

Constructed primarily from **straw and timber**, the Oca serves as a collective **living space** without interior separations, fostering a sense of community.

### Daily Activities Hub

This traditional dwelling is not only a residence but also a **central hub for daily activities**, including **cooking and the creation of artisanal objects**.

**Timber Framing (Fachwerk)**

**Rammed Earth House**

**Oca (or Oga)**



Wattle and Daub

**Wattle and Daub**



Quilombo

**Quilombo**

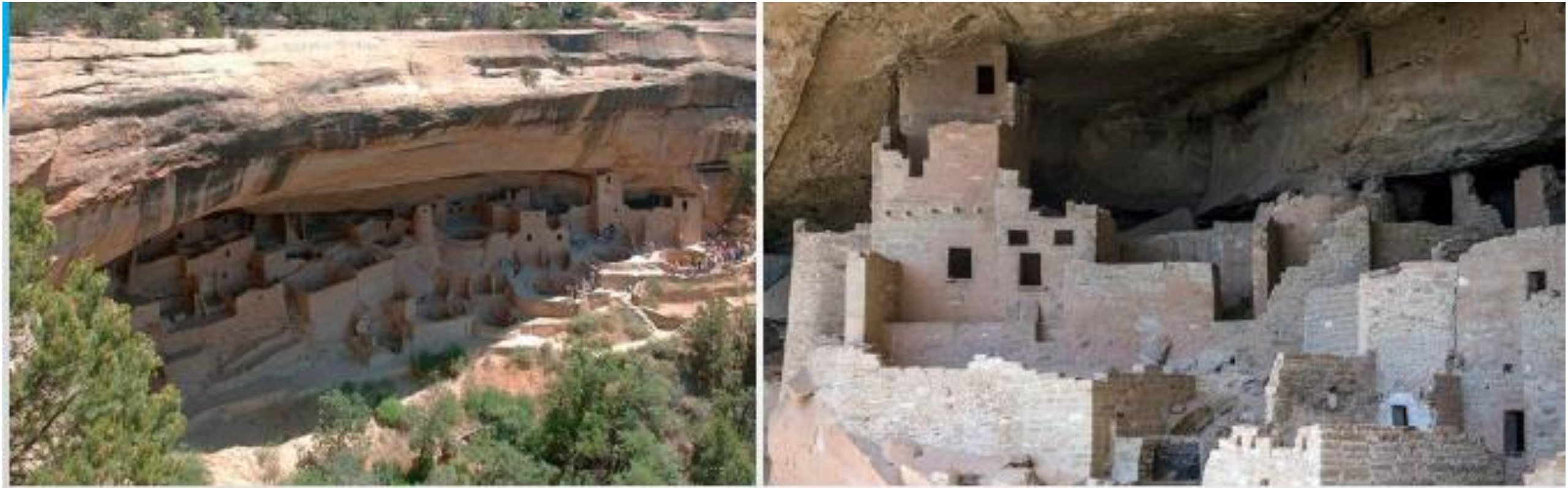


Shack

**Shack**



# Vernacular architecture in North America



North America : vernacular North America has a wonderful array of vernacular architecture, from the **indigenous native forms** to the imported European styles that **have overlaid the landscape**

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