

Dissertation Synopsis – Does Vernacular Architecture Play a Role in the Design of Modern Housing in the United Kingdom, using Comparative Case Studies?

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History and Theory 2
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9th May 2023

INTRODUCTION

With an interest in the history of architecture, I have decided that the dissertation topic will be comparing vernacular styles with modern housing designs. I believe that looking at the architecture of the past should be an influence on future designs and would like to research what effect they have. This dissertation will identify any influences of vernacular architecture and their effectiveness.

METHODOLOGY

The main method of collecting data will be the use of academic books and articles found in the university's library. I will conduct case studies of modern housing schemes that incorporate elements of vernacular architecture and evaluate their effectiveness, comparing them to schemes that do not.

Site visits to vernacular-inspired modern houses and vernacular houses, such as those re-erected at St Fagans, will be undertaken to physically see the elements that are and influence. A survey will be conducted and sent out to potential homebuyers to determine their housing preferences, establishing if the results correlate with influences from vernacular designs.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Aim 1: To explore the relationship between vernacular and modern housing design.

Objective 1: To review and compare academic literature on both vernacular and modern architecture.

Objective 2: To conduct case studies of both vernacular-inspired and non-vernacular-inspired modern housing and analyse the functionality and design of each.

Aim 2: To identify the key design elements of vernacular architecture that can be incorporated into modern designs.

Objective 3: To conduct site visits to modern housing projects and document the vernacular elements.

Objective 4: To identify elements such as materials, features, and construction techniques that can be incorporated into modern designs.

LITERATURE REVIEW

As different regions have different vernacular styles, I have examined Houses of the Welsh Countryside by Smith (1988), in which he has diagrammed houses with lateral chimney

stacks which are used for modern fireplaces, as well as analysing Pevsner's Architectural Guide: Pembrokeshire (Lloyd, Orbach, and Scourfield, 2004) and Hilling's (2018) The Architecture of Wales. To research the correlation between vernacular and modern housing designs in the UK, I will examine Nash's (2016) Contemporary Vernacular Design, which is in the same area of study as this dissertation topic.

LIMITATIONS

The word count is one limitation. The word count may be too low to consider other features. The generalisation of the research may be another. As this topic only compares vernacular and modern housing in the UK, the findings may not apply to other styles/locations. Therefore, the comparison is only associated with these findings. The survey may not be worded accurately, so there may be confusion/wrong information obtained.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

All participants in this dissertation should be informed about the study and their permission will be asked to use their names within the text, whilst keeping their personal information confidential

TIMEFRAME

Summer 2023 – site visits

October – initial research and chapter breakdowns

October-December – main research and analysis of data

January-March 2024 – write up of findings and conclusions.

CONCLUSION

I have chosen to discover if there is a relationship between vernacular and modern housing designs as I want to understand the influence of traditional and cultural styles on modern designs. Research will involve a review of relevant literature and an analysis of case studies. The expected outcomes of this research are to identify the elements of modern housing designs that derive from vernacular styles and to evaluate their effectiveness. The findings of this study will be valuable to architects and urban planners who are involved in the design of modern housing schemes and can then create more sustainable housing developments that reflect local history and character.

REFERENCES

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Word count: 590

Word count including references and cover page: 706.