

Inside Indigeneity and Iconicity: The African Traditional Hut

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Abstract

The chapter considers the concept and practice of “iconic indigeneity” as represented by the materiality of the African traditional rural hut, commonly referred to as “the kitchen hut”. This architectural piece that is widely revered across Africa in general and Zimbabwe in particular as a symbol of indigeneity and legacy of traditional planning heritage epitomizes a strong association between space, nature and society. Although the representation of the African traditional hut in both scholarship and practice is not new it remains a fertile ground for systematic academic engagement. Historical and archaeological research has traditionally over-emphasized stone-built structures and particularly the dominance of the ancient and medieval products at the expense of the African vernacular or traditional mud/dagga hut.

Keywords: African, Archaeological, Cityscapes, Communalism, Community capital, Communities, Cosmology, Cultural, Design, Enclosure, Ethnography, Family, Gothic, Heritage, Historical, Hut, Iconicity, Indigeneity, Indigenous, Iron Age, Kitchen huts, Materialization, Materiality, Modern, Monument, Museum, National, Religious, Representation, Rites, Ritual, Rural, Spirit, Statues, Stone, Traditional, Villages, Vernacular