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### **The Material and the Social: Vernacular Architecture in Transformation**

#### **Abstract**

*This paper presents two case studies in Indonesia where the traditional vernacular architecture is in the process of being transformed, adapted and often substituted by modern building styles. Many of these architectural transformations are closely related to sociocultural, economic and environmental changes in the regions. Furthermore, natural disasters and subsequent reconstruction measures have had a great impact on building developments. While the paper describes some of the main changes in form and material of houses in rural areas, it also offers explanations from an anthropological perspective and highlights the connection between architecture, society and culture. The authors argue that the socially constructed division between the material and the immaterial is no longer valid. In order to gain a thorough understanding of the complexities involved in social and material processes, anthropologists and architects need to work in close cooperation and in interdisciplinary research projects.*

**Keywords:** vernacular architecture, anthropology, transformation, reconstruction, natural disaster, interdisciplinarity, heritage, modernisation, Java, Nias, Southeast Asia