A Genealogy of Tropical Architecture: Colonial Networks, Nature and Technoscience (Architext)

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A Genealogy of Tropical Architecture traces the origins of tropical architecture to nineteenth century British colonial architectural knowledge and practices. It uncovers how systematic knowledge and practices on building and environmental technologies in the tropics were linked to military technologies, medical theories and sanitary practices, and were manifested in colonial building types such as military barracks, hospitals and housing. It also explores the various ways these colonial knowledge and practices shaped post-war techno scientific research and education in climatic design and modern tropical architecture.

Drawing on the interdisciplinary scholarships on postcolonial studies, science studies, and environmental history, Jiat-Hwee Chang argues that tropical architecture was inextricably entangled with the socio-cultural constructions of tropical nature, and the politics of colonial governance and postcolonial development in the British colonial and post-colonial networks.

By bringing to light new historical materials through formidable research and tracing the history of tropical architecture beyond what is widely considered today as its "founding moment" in the mid-twentieth century, this important and original book revises our understanding of colonial built environment. It also provides a new historical framework that significantly bears upon contemporary concerns with climatic design and sustainable architecture.

This book is an essential resource for understanding tropical architecture and its various contemporary manifestations. Its in-depth discussion and path breaking insights will be invaluable to specialists, academics, students and practitioners.

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