

Cultural Expression in Modern Architecture

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Abstract: *What reflects in architecture is its historical factors, political factors, economic factors, geographical factors, structural factors, and socio-cultural relations of the people. Our heritage that we see today witnesses the reflection of past culture and trends. Thus, the modern architecture that we witness today is seemingly a reflection of the culture and trends we are following minute to minute with our constantly evolving lifestyle. Thus, in modern architecture culture that is and will always be with us. The following article clears the deceptive thoughts of culture not being seen in modernity.*

Keywords: creativity, architecture, building, transition, forms.

1. Introduction

If you ever interview the amazon forest you will apprehend the eating and living habits of the enduring existing animals and it has been just the same for centuries. Did you ever consternate why? A complete converse is seen in the history of the human race around the globe which changes fashion statements, cuisines, dwellings, and on and on. It is because the human brain is creative. Right from the basics of food clothing shelter for a normal living to a palatial living space, humans have become iterative. While talking about architecture I purely wish to clear the deceptive thoughts of it being built. Building doesn't become architecture merely by the stability of what it erects.

Talking about ingenuity in architecture, Charles L' Eplatteneir whom Le Corbusier later called his only teacher who taught him basics of drawing, art history, aesthetics of Art Nouveau had shortlisted three basic and immortal periods of architecture:(1) ancient Egypt- lotus leaf. (2) Greek- acanthus. (3) Gothic-flowers, animals, and chimera. Some of his early studies say that there has been a transition in forms of architecture right from natural forms which indeed meet with mathematics and geometry to organic and abstract forms. You will get to contemplate deeper about the above in the book – '**Elements of synthesis**' by Stanislaus Von Moos.

With development in almost every aspect of the human lifestyle, as a result, it is also modifying, moving frenetically towards a leading edge where pragmatic architecture is all about flamboyance and opulence. Notably we are interlaced with architecture

Any layman would regard modernity as present, recent, and up-to-the-minute. When we connect the dots, modern architecture is nothing but something that meets the needs of a matured and refined globe. As mentioned above that we are interlaced with architecture, modern problems require modern solutions and hence, 'modern architecture' is what we term it simply. For instance, with the emerging and scintillating technologies came ostentatious houses that can be operated just with a touch of a remote control. The book – '**The third wave**' the author Alvin Toffler pedagogues deeply about the industrial revolution in the second wave and thus the advent of modernism through western influence. With the evolution of creativity be it in any field there follows diversity of people and their lifestyle. For

instance, people in Australia or America live in typically large size houses because they have enough room to not be crowded whereas people in japan do not believe in quantity but the quality of spaces.

Similarly, with a diversity of people what stands disparately is their 'culture' or call it a nucleus of a home, colony, society, city, and macroscopically even a nation. For a toddler's instance, an office or workplace is always designed and laid out as per the kind of work, working requirements, working pattern, or what we simply call as 'work culture' which is unambiguously just a workplace.

I have prepared a model to link you to cultural identity.

Architecture	relation	Scope
Pragmatic and functional	Human interactions and social communications.	Sociology
Conceptual	Artistic abilities and creativity of people	Aesthetics
Operative and utilitarian	Human lifestyle and comfort	Anthropometry
intuitive	Mental health and well being	Psychology

The above module explains the type of architecture-its need today or you can say its relation or reflection on human life and further showing its scope in its respective fields. Here what proves is the IDENTITY. The above module can phrase questions of belongingness, who are we? Identity refers to what makes us stand apart from other individuals, what describes us, our very existence, and our essence. The module refers to architectural identity which will keep on changing the culture. For instance, each civilization or ethnic organization has its cultural identity/essence which differs in its product of architecture.

For instance, religious monuments are so built keeping their culture under consideration.

- (1) Temples having Gopurams, shrines, Pradakshina path, Garbha Griha serve a purpose. [figure :01]
- (2) The alter is most well-lit in the churches because of the belief of the presence of almighty. This would initially be possible with clerestory windows for that great height. [figure:02]
- (3) Islam doesn't believe in idol or deity hence they face the most decorated wall- the Qibla wall. Mimar Sinan shaped entire Islamic architecture into geometry, shapes, and lines. [figure: 03]



Figure 1: A famous south Indian Kanyakumari temple]



Figure 2: The altar of the Parish church of Gampern, Austria]

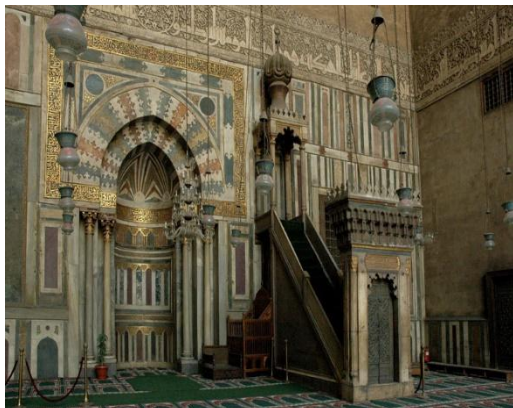


Figure 3: qibla wall of a mosque at Cairo, Egypt

That is how diverse people of diverse cultures influence and shape architecture. The headmost concept of bazaars still prevails in parts but is unanimously replaced with the idea of shopping malls. Do we contemplate why? With the idea of modernity what comes along is the hustle and bustle of city life where one chooses to shop for bulk under a roof in a soothing or palatial atmosphere. Thus, people themselves have modified the culture of street shopping in Mumbai.

I've affirmed myself that architecture and culture are interlaced. If culture influences architecture it is the same vice versa. Heritage sites often speak to people. Their walls have stories to tell. They are pinpointing us, indoctrinating us about the former times, traditions, and cultures that have been dispatched to us and so to our future generations. For instance, (1) the traces of Rama Setu that are found under the waters make us feel assertive about the stories of Ramayana. (2) The Kala Pani jail in Andaman Nicobar

which had witnessed the legal culture and judicial reform. Hence today we feel pride in talking about the Indian freedom struggle. (3) The Hellenic culture listed the gardens of Babylon as one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Didn't this concept of hanging gardens influence architecture? Thus, a structure too can influence culture. A question that interjects my mind is what if cultural identity was lost?

Footnote: *Architecture is the art which so disposes and adorns the edifices raised by man for whatsoever uses, that the sight of them contribute to his mental health, power, and building.” _ John Ruskin, seven lamps of architecture.*

Thus, nothing but a profession like architecture can indoctrinate discipline, artistic aspects, self-expression, and to a great extent influence the socio-cultural relationship of people. The people, common citizens, rich or poor, of any or all cultures influence and shape the architecture microscopically as well as macroscopically a city. Thus, it is the citizens that make a city.

References

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Author Profile



Niharika. Desai has completed her two years in the profound profession of Architecture from Mumbai, India. While she is still pursuing her further studies in the field, she has set her goals and ambitions for her passion for writing as well. Her first research paper is a club of her passion for writing, researching and her career in Architecture.