

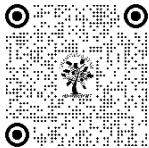


# IMPACT OF ART AND ARCHITECTURE IN THE MODERN WORLD AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

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## ABSTRACT

Architecture has been amongst the fundamental cornerstones that have moulded society for centuries. The element of art in architecture further enhances its influence on those who perceive the architectural piece. The purpose of this research is to carefully scrutinize powerful examples of architecture from history and learn about their role in influencing human emotions, societal norms, cultural identity and economic and political landmarks. The chief objective of this study is to learn about the vitality of art and architecture in impacting various tenets of human experiences. The author makes use of relevant literature and examples from all around the globe and varying time periods with the aim to appreciate the subtle yet monumental role of architecture in shaping the world around us. A thorough account of architectural ideology and works from Nazi Germany and the impact of the destruction of the World Trade Center in New York highlights the undeniable role played by architecture in influencing the lived experiences of humans.

**Keywords:** Architecture, Art, Powerful Examples, Human Emotions, Societal Norms, Cultural Identity, Economic and Political Landmarks

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The realms of art and architecture are not mere expressions of human imagination; but rather profound reflections of society and the norms that govern it. Throughout the history of the world, art and architecture have played a critical role in moulding cultures, impacting societal norms, and even initiating social movements. From the grandest of ancient monuments to the thought-provoking works of modern artists, the influence of art and architecture on humankind is both powerful and far-reaching.

## 2. ROLE OF ART AND ARCHITECTURE IN

### 1) Shaping Identity and Culture

Art and architecture are essential parts of a society's cultural identity. They reflect the beliefs, values, norms and aspirations of a community, capturing its true essence. For instance, the awe-inspiring pyramids of ancient Egypt stand as enduring symbols of power, eternity and authority of the divine. Similarly, the meticulous carvings of Hindu temples in India depict stories of spirituality, mythology and the divine.

**Figure 1**



**Figure 1** Pyramids from Egypt.

**Source** Google Images

**Figure 2**



**Figure 2** Intricate carvings in Hindu Temple

**Source** Google Images

Important art movements such as the Renaissance in Europe or the Harlem Renaissance in the United States have played key roles in shaping cultural identities and challenging obsolete societal norms. These movements not only produced works of timeless beauty, but also facilitated intellectual and cultural exchange, leading to tremendous advancements in various streams.

To this day renaissance architecture manages to influence modern architects in their planning and designing. Renaissance concepts such as clarity and order can be found in modern architectural works in Europe. The architecture influenced by the period of Renaissance also influenced humanist ideals, such as prioritizing community engagement and improved accessibility in urban planning and design.

## 2) As a Catalyst for Change

Both art and architecture have often served as the catalyst for social and political change. Both artists and architects have used their work to challenge tyrannical authority, provoke thought and inspire important movements. Going back to the period of Renaissance in Europe, Italian artists such as Michelangelo and da Vinci used their artistic prowess to create artworks that questioned the established religious and social norms, resulting in a period of intellectual and Cultural Revolution.

Buildings such as the Bastille served as a fortress and a prison by the French Monarchy for a substantial period of history. The tyranny of the royal family and the use of the fortress made it the symbol of the despotism of the ruling Bourbon monarchy. The fortress was used to imprison anyone who disagreed with the established powers of France. Consequently, the storming of Bastille was the chief catalyst that bludgeoned the nation in a revolution.

**Figure 3**



**Figure 3** Bastille Fortress

Source Google Images

**Figure 4**



**Figure 4** Storming of Bastille that Lead to the French Revolution.

Source Google Images

moving forward in the historical timeline, 20th century art movements such as Surrealism, Dadaism, and Cubism challenged traditional artistic conventions and provided a platform for social commentary and political activism. Artists such as Picasso and Dali used their art to critique wars and social injustice.

### 3) Economic Impact

Art and architecture play major roles in boosting the economy of the society. Cultural landmarks and tourist attraction spots brings millions of visitors every year, generating revenue for the local economy and providing countless jobs in various sectors, including but not restricted to hospitality, arts and tourism.

For instance, historical landmarks such as the Taj Mahal and the Eiffel Tower are not simply symbols of cultural and architectural prowess, but also serve as major economic assets that garner tourists from all across the globe and contributing in their respective economies.

In India, the famous architectural works from the past bolster the tourism sector. With the Taj Mahal being the most revenue generating monument of the country. The Archaeological Survey of India looks into the planning and development of these buildings and report the revenue generated. A list of some of the highest revenue earning landmarks is presented below.

**Table 1**

**Table 1 Cumulative revenue by Centrally Protected World Heritage Monument managed by ASI (2017-18 to first half of 2022-23)**

Monument	Location	Revenue Generated
Taj Mahal	Agra, Uttar Pradesh	Rs 152.83 crore
Agra Fort	Agra, Uttar Pradesh	Rs 41.56 Crore
Qutab Minar	New Delhi, Delhi	Rs 30.96 Crore
Red Fort	New Delhi, Delhi	Rs 29.24 Crore
Sun Temple	Konark, Odisha	Rs 15.33 Crore

### 4) Shaping Public Spaces and Communities

The intricacies of architecture lies in how it influences the way in which communities function in those spaces. From archaic cities like Rome to modern metropolises like New York City, architecture has influenced the way people interact with both their environment and with each other.

Public buildings, such as museums, libraries, and government offices, are designed to communicate important cultural and societal values in addition to their functional purposes. For example, the design of the United States Capitol in Washington, D.C. reflects the democratic ideals on which the country was founded.

Furthermore, public art installations and sculptures frequently act as focal points in communities, instilling a sense of identity, pride, and belonging. For example, the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbour has come to represent freedom, democracy, and hope to millions of immigrants.

At the backdrop of the above, the objectives of the present study are as follows:

- 1) To understand the vitality of art and architecture in influencing the various tenets of humankind.
- 2) To study the role of famous architectural works and their role in shaping history in order to better appreciate the role of art and architecture.

## 3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 1) Cultural identity

Cultural identity is a component of a person's identity, or self-conception and self-perception, and it is linked to ethnic background, faith, socioeconomic status,

generation, location, gender, or any other social group with a unique culture. In this way, cultural identity characterises both the individual and the culturally identical group of members who share the same cultural identity or upbringing.

The process of cultural identity is not constant, but rather one that evolves within the discourses of cultural, historical and social events. Certain people undergo a greater degree of cultural identity change of reform as opposed to others, those who change less often have a clear sense of cultural identity. This implies that they have a dynamic but stable integration of their culture.

The idea of cultural identity comprises of various elements. These elements come together to govern various aspects that form the structure of the culture as a whole. A few observable elements of cultural identity are; language, religion, history, food, values and art, literature and architecture.

Architecture plays an integral role in nurturing and sustaining cultural identities for the people within the culture. Built spaces often provide opportunities for social interactions in the forms of discussions, educational discourses, entertainment, debate and so on. The style of architecture is frequently influenced by the cultural tenets governing the particular area. Lastly, regional factors such as the climatic conditions also shape the way buildings are created. A prominent example of this is Japanese architecture. The buildings are built using flexible structural designs to withstand the forces of earthquakes and stricter codes are followed to ensure safety of the residents.

## **2) Societal norms**

Societal norms are the perceived norms that are mostly in the unwritten and informal form rules that defines the appropriate and acceptable actions within a given culture or community. These norms consist of what one should do, what to expect from others and what we think others expect us to do. Therefore, societal norms are made from the interplay of behaviour, expectations and beliefs. Such norms are vital in the functioning of the society since they dictate what is right or wrong, and acceptable or unacceptable. Without social norms at place, the chances of discord in the society increases substantially.

With regards to art and architecture, social norms can be reflected in both. Art styles such as graffiti are often seen as those that challenge the existing societal norms. Movies often carry meanings that subtly target obsolete societal norms and inspire its viewers to create change in the world. In terms of architecture, correctional institutions such as Juvenile detention centers and prisons are some examples that are symbols of societal values. When individuals choose to break societal norms in harrowing ways, it is not uncommon for them to be put in such buildings to communicate the need of adhering to the set norms. In more recent times, places have started to label themselves as “LGBTQ+ friendly” in order to create safe spaces for people that might identify with the community. Such examples reflect how architecture influences social norms and how these evolving social norms evolve the architectural pieces around us.

## **3) Emotions**

According to the American Psychological Association (APA), emotions are defined as the conscious mental reactions that are experienced as strong feelings and are usually directed at a specific object. These complex reaction patterns are what makes humans unique. Emotional expression has three components: subjective experience, physiological response, and behavioural response.

Subjective experience is a complete, meaningful, and experiential understanding of the emotional and cognitive impact that an individual has on how



they understand and interpret an event or events that they have witnessed or processed.

A physiological response is an involuntary bodily change that occurs when the nervous system responds to an emotional impact.

Architecture plays an important role in impacting the emotions of human beings. This impact can happen due to several reasons. Firstly, the aesthetic appeal of a place or building greatly contributes to the human mood. Harmoniously designed buildings will invoke a sense of calm and tranquillity. Styles such as minimalism gained widespread popularity owing to their aesthetic appeal to impress human mood, contrasting to this, the brutalism architectural style is often associated with low moods and depressed feelings.

Architecture makes use of the aspect of color psychology that makes use of certain colors to invoke specific emotions and arouse certain feelings. For instance, warm colors such as red and orange often radiate warmth and energy, on the other hand, cool colors such as blue invoke the feeling of calmness. In this way, architecture is a profound driving factor in contributing to our emotions and mood.

Lastly, the cultural or religious symbolism that certain architectural pieces convey to its viewers deeply impacts human emotions. An important example of this is the inauguration of the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya. The construction of this temple carries the sentiments and emotions of countless individuals who practice Hinduism. Other buildings like the Ram Mandir such as the Notre Dame in Paris invoke a deep sense of awe and reverence.

#### **4. LITERATURE REVIEW**

By employing specific interdisciplinary approaches, architecture has the potential to influence a community's collective behaviour. Wollman et al. (2018) emphasised the importance of quantifying structures, movements, and their combinations in understanding how the built environment influences interactions and collective outcomes. The design scale, architectural scale, and geographical scale of physical structures all play important roles in shaping collective behaviours.

They also highlighted that by integrating various fields such as behavioural ecology, evolutionary biology, social science, cognitive science, engineering and architecture, it would be easier to develop a comprehensive understanding of how architecture impacts collective behaviour. This would also allow for the development of new research approaches, the identification of unifying principles, and the exploration of novel questions in the study of collective behaviour across different spatial scales and species.

Mitrache, G. (2012) investigated the relationship between art, architecture, and public spaces, focusing on changes in their interaction over time in Central-Eastern European cities. They also talked about how art has influenced urban spaces and public engagement, highlighting the changing roles of galleries, museums, and public art installations. The author emphasised three major hypostases of architecture in relation to art: architecture as a built setting for showcasing art, as an object of art, and as an environment to be reclaimed by art. The author used the example of Dublin's Millennium Bridge, which was decorated with a blue carpet equipped with motion, speed, and pressure sensors by Greyworld, to demonstrate the impact on the city. As people walked across the bridge, these sensors sent data to a computer, which generated a variety of sound effects, resulting in an interactive soundscape that passersby could manipulate by changing their gait. This intervention transformed the bridge into a highly interactive space that engaged

visitors in a unique way. This transformation had a significant impact, transforming the bridge from a drab, functional structure into one of the city's most popular promenades and meeting places. By providing an interactive and engaging experience, the bridge became a hub for social engagement and interaction among the city's residents and visitors. This project demonstrated how art can transform public spaces into vibrant and dynamic environments that encourage creativity and community engagement.

## **5. METHODOLOGY**

This study explores the deep-seated impact of architecture on the world, emphasizing its subtle yet prominent role in shaping cultures and societies. By examining key architectural buildings of history, the author throws light on the intricate association between built environments and the human experience.

Furthermore, the study has incorporated in-depth systematic review of relevant literature. This review is aimed to support the idea that art and architecture influence a plethora of human experiences, both collective and individual. Another facet of this study is the inclusion of two case studies that are infamous in history. These examples provide an in-depth look into how deeply the architecture around us influences us.

This interdisciplinary approach contributes to a better understanding of the multifaceted role that architecture plays in our lives. By establishing architecture's importance beyond its aesthetic and functional aspects, the study emphasises its broader impact on how we live, interact, and understand our surroundings.

## **6. RESULTS & DISCUSSION**

Architecture is not simply about establishing buildings; it is also a dynamic force that shapes the very fabric of our existence. From futuristic skyscrapers to modest abodes, from grand temples of the past to present day wonders, architecture stands as a testament to humankind's creativity and ingenuity. Apart from its practical function of offering shelter, these architectural pieces play a deeper and richer role on the world around, influencing how people interact with their surroundings, guiding their emotions and behaviours, and even dictating the deep-rooted societal structures.

## **7. ARCHITECTURE AND WAR: SPREADING PROPAGANDA THROUGH BUILDINGS**

The world we live in has witnessed countless wars, some of a miniscule scale and some that reached peak devastation. The common theme shared that is shared by each war is the changes they bring to the society's future and the sneaky role of architecture that is used by political parties to stir propaganda. Citing the case of Nazi Germany, architecture played a crucial role in leading the spirits of the common German folk to favour the prospects of war and further contributing to the success of the Nazi forces. The architectures adopted elements from the classical antiquity in their efforts to awe the general populace and subsuming the individual as part of the greater whole. Nazi architecture was characterized by four major characteristics: the building size, monumentality, emphasis on materiality over decoration and neoclassicism.

**Figure 5**



**Figure 5** The Führermuseum or Fuhrer-Museum.

**Source** Google Images

**Figure 6**



**Figure 6** The Volkshalle or the People's Hall

**Source** Google Images

The size of the building was of immense importance to the Nazi propaganda. The size of the building was to be huge enough to instil fear into those that were against the movement and contrarily, pride for those that believed in the movement.

The chief architect of the Nazi Third Reich, Albert Speer was a firm believer of the principle of focusing on materiality over mere decorations (with the exception of the swastika symbol). He overlooked the biggest projects of the time and used material such as concrete, steel and stone. The resultant was an aesthetic that established dominance over any opposition.

The result of this form of architecture was in the form of an influenced community that were convinced that the war was righteous and required. The architecture of Nazi origins was so despised by people against the war and of those in other countries that after the decisive conclusion of the World War 2, people took it upon themselves to destroy every bit of Nazi architecture they could, thus highlighting the sheer influence of architecture and the values it imposed on the world around.

## **8. ARCHITECTURE AND HOPE: HOW ARCHITECTURE RAISES THE FALLEN SPIRITS**

The harrowing terror attacks on the World Trade Centre on September 11th, 2001 remain as one of the worst incidents of all time. The falling of the two



significant trade buildings had important implications for both the victims and those responsible for the attack. For the American populace, the fall of the two buildings and the consequent loss of lives resulted in economic and emotional unrest. For the terrorist organization, the world trade centre stood as the ultimate symbol for evil and something that has to be taken down. These contrasting viewpoints of the same building is a great example of how different architectural structures can be perceived differently by different groups of individuals.

**Figure 7**



**Figure 7** The World Trade Centre in New York

**Source** Google Images

**Figure 8**



**Figure 8** The attacks of 9/11.

**Source** Google Images

The American response to the terror attacks of 9/11 are nothing short of heroic. The fall of one building and loss of American lives inspired the entire nation to unite together to bounce back from adversity. Stricter laws were passed, military missions were planned and after 5 years, the One World Trade Centre was constructed.

The newly established One World Trade Centre was positioned on the same land the World Trade Centre was and is a constant reminder of the lives lost in the past and the hope that the future holds. The building is constructed to be one of the sturdiest and safest in New York City and remains a calm and tranquil spot in the

hustling Manhattan area. The names of every person that lost their life in the incident can be found inscribed on the sides of the pool of the building, giving due homage to every American lost that day.

The One World Trade Centre has managed to capture the essence of the original twin towers and is now home to the U.S. General Service Administration and publishers such as Condé Nast. A concourse below the site provides 55,000 square feet of retail space, connections to 11 New York City subways and PATH trains, and underground access to the Hudson River ferry terminal, thus blending the tower with the larger New York Community, instilling hope and resilience in everyone around.

## **9. CONCLUSION**

We are immersed in the architecture around us, which can often make us forget to understand and appreciate the role it plays in influencing the society and humankind as whole. While art and architecture can appear to be deceptively simple and uni-functional, they are powerful forces that shape societies, influence culture, and drive change. From past civilizations to modern societies, art and architecture have had a significant impact on how we live, think, and interact with our surroundings. As we evolve as a global society, the impact of art and architecture on our lives will undoubtedly become more profound and widespread.

## **CONFLICT OF INTERESTS**

None.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

None.

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