

Introduction to History of Architecture in India
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Architecture Today Commerce and Creativity

Today we will look at the state of architecture in the country architecture is a profession as much as it is an act of creativity there is commerce behind architecture with the real estate prices that we witness the role of an architect is very often reduced by developers and builders to being a person who can extract the greatest amount of usable or saleable square footage from any building aesthetics good planning utility are all secondary 90% of buildings built in India today are of this commercial variety of building not all buildings should be considered architecture which is not to say that good architecture is dead we still have an excellent range of really good architecture being built in all the major cities and sometimes even in rural areas.

That is because there are still patrons who wish to make a statement who wish to project power and who wish to live good lives in good spaces after all architecture is the creation of space this space doesn't have to be enclosed or bounded it has to be a space that we inhabit architecture as a profession is regulated by the Council of architecture through the architects Act of 1972 by this act people who call themselves architects have to have passed a certain course of study and appeared for certain exams and have a certain amount of training and experience under their belt.

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Architectural education in India is controlled by the Council of architecture, a body that was legally established by an act of Parliament in 1972 the architects act decided who could call themselves an architect this system has had very mixed results whereby people who are inherently good designers are not necessarily architects and people who legally have been designated architects are not necessarily the best designers but yet we have produced architects of a very high caliber in the past half century the number of architects go abroad now a trend that you really did not see before the 1950s or 60s.

These architects deal with projects abroad which might be very different from reality is back home but then we have seen a growing trend of moving towards a certain kind of globalization where buildings start looking increasingly the same all through the world as we see in the case of Bombay the Art Deco buildings in front are equal in their cluster two buildings in Miami in the United States similarly the high rise buildings that we see being built everywhere all across India are really trying to emulate buildings being built everywhere from Shanghai and Hong Kong and Beijing and Tokyo to cities in Europe in Nigeria in South America and the United States.

Skylines increasingly are looking uniform Architects then try to create shapes that will make their buildings stand out today if you just look at the massing of cities there is no way to tell one city apart from another what makes us identify cities is only the tops of buildings which might vary thus we are moving into a new age of architecture where traditional values sometimes are discarded in Favor of practices of project management of Technology of expedient and fast building and developer profits it is this architecture that we have to be scared of because the human values might disappear completely.

While the magnitude and the form of buildings is going to change a certain essence has to be retained architecture should not be blind imitation it should not just be fashion it should not be an aping of things happening at other places in the world in a country like India where we have an excess of sunlight and a relatively dry climate for a large part of the year should we really be designing buildings in glass and steel should we not look for ways of being energy efficient should we not use materials that are local but it is here that we see public tastes and public opinions moving towards a system in which they want to play on the same level playing field as the world but blindly following form is not the way to do it.

Architecture should help move out of this blind imitation by managing to fuse all the tensions between a historical past and the future between traditions and local building techniques and new technologies that are emerging between doing things in human intensive ways to using all kinds of smart technologies it is the clever use of all these systems together to create spaces that are truly habitable comfortable pleasing and that will last the test of time that architecture should really aspire towards thus as our cities witness a boom like never before as the building industry marches on as more and more people migrate to cities as we have the need to build buildings of new types serving completely new programs we have to keep in sight both the past in a rearview mirror and the future so that we know in which direction we're headed we do not want unfortunate accidents.

I hope you have enjoyed the trajectory of architecture in India from 3000 BC till the present heading into the future we see some trends over the course of time that do not change buildings have consistently become larger throughout the course of history the other change is that buildings have had smaller and smaller footprints for the amount of height that they have to build something that was 500 feet tall 500 years ago you would have had a massive footprint today it's possible to build such a building on the most minimal number of columns we have also seen a change over time in terms of building materials used we now use materials that do not have to be painstakingly crafted but can be manufactured on a massive scale.

We don't know what the future of architecture is but the present has good and bad and your job is to keep your eyes open and appreciate all buildings for what they are thank you.

For architecture as a profession there are several challenges it has not been able to keep up and surely with the pace of life nor with the IT revolution while it is true that a lot of terminology of architecture was borrowed by information technology architecture just has not been able to keep pace besides they pass 30 years with a bout of globalization have seen a completely different attitude to architecture the old public welfare is not what drives architecture it is individual patrons.

Architecture as a profession is not growing fast enough it is projected that from 2016 to 2026 the profession will grow at the rate of 4% which is lower than any other profession it is also increasingly difficult to convince clients of good design as opposed to cheap and fast

construction as a result a lot of architecture is shifting towards conceptual architecture as opposed to dealing with real buildings as opposed to dealing with craft traditions bricks in concrete glass and steel architects are increasingly designing conceptual plans of utopias perhaps there have been many periods in time when such movements have taken place for example the German expressionist architects of the 1920s who because their country did not have the money to build well designing things that remained on paper even today architects are envisioning the colonization of space they are making all kinds of leaps of faith believing in the future and ways in which we shall design and inhabit new structures buildings and terrains.

But yet the star value of an architect seems to be failing the profession is not as well compensated as other professions and faces a lot of challenges the biggest one of which is the it is a long drawn-out process the process of designing buildings as opposed to professions which can turn around from concept to product in less than a year architecture might take several years architecture therefore is the first profession that is hit by any kind of economic recession because the deliverables of architecture are all in the future a building being designed today is going to be completed three or four years from now and therefore economy looks like it is shaky.

The first thing to go will be projects projected in the future architecture is a reflection as we believe of the state of society and therefore if we are increasingly disillusioned with what we are building thinking this is dystopian perhaps it is only an honest reflection of the kind of society that we actually live in now perhaps it is time to celebrate the architecture around us as an honest expression of our times, thank you.