

ART & AESTHETICS IN PAPER, PEOPLE & PLACES

Dhruvin P Soni

*Asmita College of Architecture, At N. H. English Academy Campus,
Asmita Enclave, Mira Road (E) 401107, Thane, Maharashtra , INDIA*

Abstract

Art & Aesthetics of India lies in its history, culture and religion it's rooted in it. The question and answer of art & Aesthetics is deeply rooted with timeline of thousands of years back Achievement of Indian civilization is architecture and it's one of the most enduring achievement which extent to great deal more than Taj Mahal.

Since the beginning of time, Man has intuitively sensed the existence of another world a non-manifest. The potential of vastupurusha is infinite in making of houses, palaces, temples, and even cities it forms the basis of architecture.

The paper lastly says about ensuring the simple way to educating others about the sensitivity of this vital issues & documents of our paper, people & Places. That retains diversity and authenticity which is rooted with its context.

Keywords: Art – Aesthetics – Paper – People - Places

Introduction

Authenticity of any art form started from man, as the image of Man, becomes a fundamental paradigm for explaining all phenomena, macro and micro. It is used as a sustained term of reference in all disciplines. And here architecture is mixed of all art form it's no longer perceived as singular art form. Especially Indian architecture with the timeline.

Also our roots say that it's become very important to be reminded that we are that civilization which has spanned at least 4,500 years and which has left its impact on nearly everything in our lives and society. Imagine UNESCO has listed 830 World Heritage Sites, out of which 31 are in India. This is less than six other countries. Is this not a tangible proof of the creative genius and industry of this ancient land, people, and also of the gifts bestowed on it by nature. Be it the Bhimbetka's pre historic rock art at one end or the innumerable palaces, mosques, temples, gurudwaras, churches or tombs and sprawling cities and solemn stupas.

Journey of Paper, People & Places

People

The need for shelter is basic to man. But transcending this is a set of overriding values, intrinsic to the human condition: a concern for life, for community, for beauty. Architecture is not a modern phenomenon. It began as soon as the early cave man began to build his own shelter to live in. Man first began to create and fix his own shelter when he stepped out from the natural habitat of dense jungle covers. With the artistic faculties of man awakened in the search for larger and better-

sheltered spaces, he began to build, with inherent aesthetic sense, shelters that seemed pleasing to the eye. Thus emerged architecture which is a combination of needs, imagination, capacities of the builders and capabilities of the workers.

Through the centuries, man has created his habitat through an intuitive and instinctive process. In looking at the examples shown in this section (the villages of Banni in Kutch, a pol in Ahmedabad, the desert city of Jaisalmer, bamboo housing in the Assam region and a squatter colony in Bombay) we must try to understand not only the buildings and the community spaces that lie between them, but also the underlying deep structure that has generated this habitat.

Banni, Kutch

The villagers of Banni build circular houses of mud, roofed with thatch – materials eminently suited to their hostile desert environment. The clustering of huts and the arrangement of open spaces reflect their life-styles and social structure. Faintly discernible – in many different ways, from painted wall decorations to jewellery designs – is an underpinning of other aspirations, intimations of deeper and more primordial myths and images. For like thousands of other Indian villages, Banni represents both time present as well as time passed.

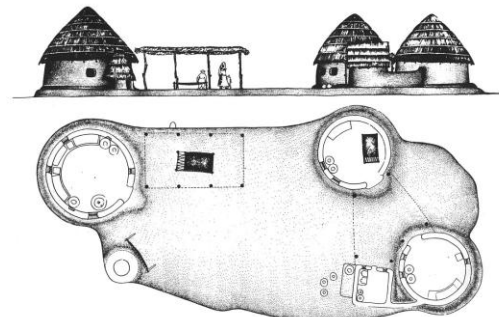


Fig.1. Banni, Kutch

Jaisalmer, Rajasthan

Founded in 1156, the city of Jaisalmer rises like an ocean liner from the sands of the desert. It was one of the great trading posts along the camel caravan routes, and its rich merchant community created for itself an environment of extraordinary architectural value. Within its buttressed walls, tall houses cling together, their facades a collage of intricately-carved jharookhas, eaves and terraces. Even the smallest detail seems to have received as much attention as the overall conceptual plan.

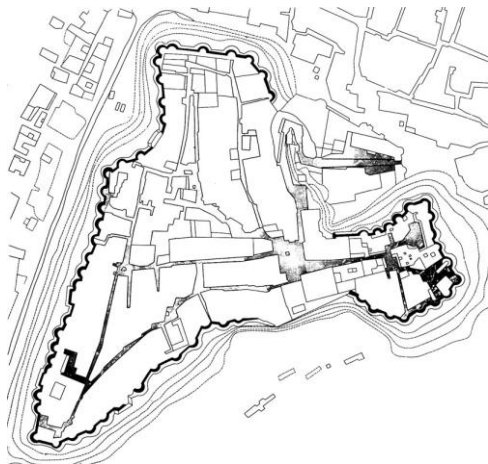


Fig.2. Jaisalmer, Town.

Paper – Mandala - Drawings

Power of mandala to make houses, palaces, temples and even cities. Even a great classical book on Astrology named Brihat Samhita explains that Vastu was given to the sages from Brahma the ultimate creator. There is a mythology concerning the birth of VastuPurusha. Such mythological stories are innumerable in Hindu scriptures and they never fail to present the most intricate subjects of science or mathematics in the most lucid form. Historians argue about the existence and the proofs of their existence whereas the wise man learn the lesson hidden behind such stories.

Mythological beliefs are certainly at the root of the origins of these canonical texts and their discourse. The first of these relates to Vastupurusha, which appears to be the first step in ordering a part of the vast cosmic space, the brahmand, for human habitation. According to myth, long ago there existed an unnamed, unknown and formless being which blocked the sky and the earth. The Gods forced it down on earth and pressed it face down. To ensure that it did not escape again, Lord Brahma, the supreme creator, along with other gods weighted it down and called it vastupurusha.

Adherence to Vastushastra, the ancient and medieval canons on city planning and architecture, has suddenly assumed tremendous significance, particularly among the well-educated and affluent in urban India. It may be difficult to predict if this is just a fad or if it will be a way of building dwellings, offices, and factories etc. for many years to come. Interestingly, practically none of the practitioners of Vastushastra has an academic background. So there is a lot of genuine practice as well as hearsay going around. In this brief introduction, the intention is to give a broad overall picture of the vastushastra with some examples. Vastushastras are canons dealing with the subject of vastu which means the environment. Put differently, one may regard them as codification of good practices of design of buildings and cities, which will provide settings for the conduct of human life in harmony with physical as well as metaphysical forces. These canons provide guidelines for design of buildings and planning of cities such that they will bring health, wealth and peace to the inhabitants.

In looking at the examples shown in this section (the sriyantra, Jain cosmograph, Square Mandala, Sanchi Stupa in Madhya Pradesh,) we must try to understand the maths and calculation behind this.

Sri Yantra (Gujarat, copper plate, contemporary)

Yantras are geometric depictions of cosmic order. They are used as aids to meditation. Sri Yantra, considered the greatest of all yantras, is formed by the interpenetration of nine triangles, four facing upward and five downward. Together they symbolise the union of Shiva and Shakti, representing the creative energy which caused the manifest world. In the centre is the bindu, reservoir of the infinite.

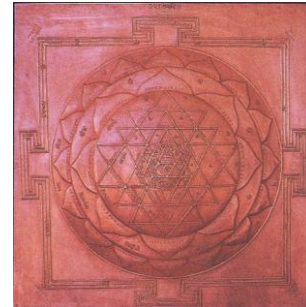


Fig.3. Sri Yantra

Jain Cosmograph (Early 19th century gouache painting, Rajasthan)

In Jain cosmology, there are three worlds – the upper (urdhva-loka), middle (madhya-loka) and lower (adho-loka). This cosmograph is a depiction of part of the middle world, from which the soul is capable of gaining release. Specifically it represents Adhai-dvipa, the two and a half continents inhabited by man. The central circle is Jambu-dvipa (continent of the rose-apple tree), traversed by long rivers and encircled by the waters of Lavana-samudra, with Mount Meru in the middle. Each continent has its own particular species of animals, graphically portrayed here by the artist. The cosmograph is a metaphysical landscape, setting forth the ordering principles that are central to Jainism.

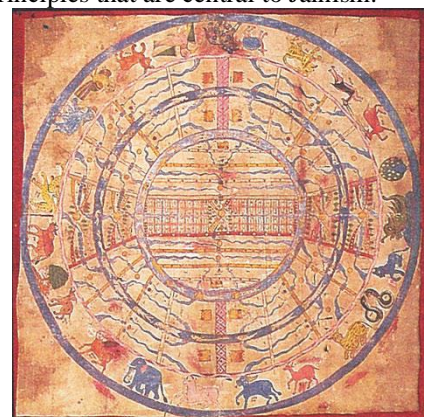


Fig.4. Jain Cosmograph

Sanchi, Madhya Pradesh (2nd century B.C.)

The stupa at Sanchi is one of the most perfect examples extant in Indian architecture as a model of the cosmos. Its very form symbolises Mount Meru, the sacred mountain. The central

wooden post buried within the masonry is yupa, the axis mundi, i.e., the column that passes through the centre of the universe. This incredibly potent concept is expressed on the exterior by the harmika (heavenly abode) which contains three superimposed umbrellas.

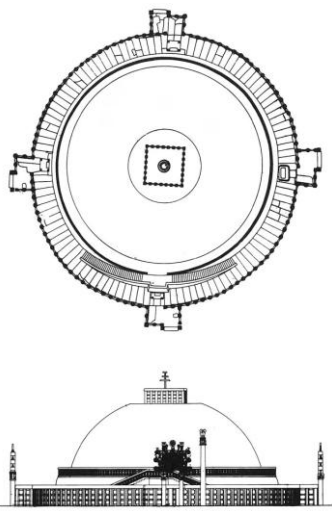


Fig.5. Plan and Elevation of Stupa

Manthana

Throughout the history, India has shown a singular capacity to interact with outside influences, assimilating and transforming them through a process akin to osmosis. Hence the title of this section – manthana, which means churning. Here, we find crucial examples of this phenomenon: the Diwan-i-Khas in Fatehpur Sikri, the castle of Datia near Gwalior, the Jain temple at Ranakpur, the Padmanabhapuram Palace in Trivandrum and the city plan of Jaipur in Rajasthan.

City plan of Jaipur

Jaipur represents a transformation of another kind, one which is of crucial relevance to us today. For the master plan of the city attempts to combine the most ancient and sacred beliefs with the tenets of modern science. Maharaja Jai Singh who founded the city, was also the renowned astronomer who built the five Jantar Mantars (observatories) at Delhi, Jaipur, Ujjain, Banaras, and Allahabad. In the plan of Jaipur he generated a truly extraordinary concept. The basic plan of the city is the nine-square mandala corresponding to the navgraha or nine planets. The void in the central square was used for the palace garden. Because of the presence of a hill, a corner square was moved diagonally across. Other minor modifications were made to accommodate Jai Singh's own palace and its axial approach roads.

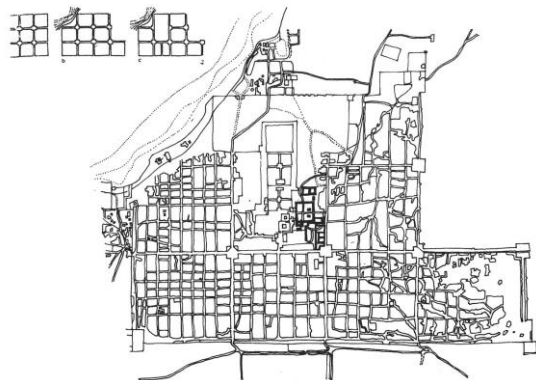


Fig.6. City Plan of Jaipur

Jaipur's plan is worthy of admiration and emulation: the clarity of its main arteries, the positioning of its principal buildings, the efficiency of its water management system, the understanding of essential socio-economic patterns, and above all, the startling relevance to us today of the transformation between past and future, between the material and metaphysical worlds, between the macro and micro scales, that Maharaja Jai Singh sought to synthesise.

Places

The building of Chandigarh, the new capital city of the Punjab, provided the first important threshold in the emergence of contemporary Indian architecture. Le Corbusier came to this ancient land with a powerful vision of the future – and acted as a decisive catalyst, triggering off our nascent sense of architectural form and syntax. Inspired by this vision, young Indian architects studied the work of the other great modern masters of Europe and America – in the process producing new archetypes for an industrialising society, and using the mythic overlays of rationality and functionalism to generate imaginative new forms.

The Secretariat, Assembly And High Court

At the grand scale of public architecture for the capital complex, Le Corbusier develops a powerful vocabulary of plastic forms emerging from a dynamic spatial organisation.

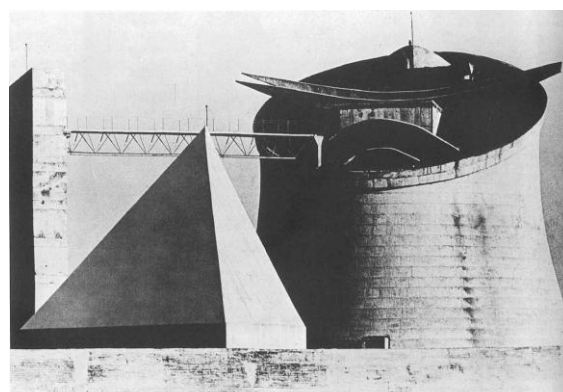


Fig.7. The Secretariat, Assembly & High Court

Finally we are on roots to see our structures of deep rooted culture, There is perhaps no phenomenon as complex as `root.

In a manner of speaking, root is everything in a particular society, and one can as easily speak of the roots of Hindustani music and Bengali bhadrak society as one can of the roots of the working-class, Hindi film-viewers, rickshaw-pullers, and India's modernizing elites. Indian roots is no easy composite of varying styles and influences. In the matter of cuisine, for instance, the North and the South share little, and these broad categorizations say little about the distinctions between the peppery hot food of Andhra and the coastal, largely coconut-based, cuisine of Kerala. Likewise, in thinking of architecture, one's mind traverses from the great temple cities of the South -- Chidambaram, Rameswaram, Kanchipuram, Madurai, and numerous others -- to the architectural splendors of the Vijaynagar empire and the erotic sculptures of Khajuraho to the grand Mughal architecture of Delhi, Agra, and Fatehpur Sikri. And what of modest roadside shrines, the stepwells of Gujarat, or the havelis of Jaisalmer with their impeccable lattice work? But roots is not only a matter of music, dance, art, and cinema, for marriage customs, death rites, patterns of pilgrimage to holy cities, modes of raising children, treatment of elders, and innumerable other aspects of everyday life are stitched into the meaning of roots.

Conclusion

The paper concludes; Aesthetics of architecture has to be appreciated at many levels. There is the experience of anticipation and comprehension of an idea and a programmer, the act of negotiation and Coordination of human and natural resources within a defined context, and finally the transformation brought about by the participation in and enjoyment of the built environment in use.

'Looking Beyond' is symbolic of the ageless quest for discovering a reality which transcends the mundane, yet is grounded in the human condition. In contemporary architecture it is reflected which address the shelter needs of tribals and the poor, as well as those which focus on the timeless tradition of craftsmanship and the developing context of a society in transition.

The paper say methodology to ensure that the simple way to educating others about the sensitivity of this vital issues that retains diversity and authenticity is to be rooted with measure of man and its context.

In choosing these building projects, I have tried to represent the diverse realities of the contemporary scene, within the three broad thematic subdivisions of 'Paper, People & Places. These divisions were defined by the dominant characteristics of the architectural syntax employed in the designs. The translation into building designs of sets-of-ideas and patterns-of-living being the determinant of the quality of the architectural product. Within the idiom we see the development of an architecture which adds value to the idea of rapid industrialisation combined with urbanisation, an essential mobility of people and goods, and the theoretic notion of starting from a clean slate. In terms of design language, the characteristics of dynamic spatial organisation, boldly engineered structures, large masses and uniform surfaces define their own context in the landscape. The emphasis is on developing a grammar which signifies an

efficient, orderly and industrious environment, with minimum reference to the past. It is an architecture which shares its premises with international developments. Yet it is significant to note that within this internationalism there exists a particularity which distinguishes its character from similar developments in other parts of the world. Concurrent with the outward-looking 'Modernity' there has been the inner-directed search for 'Roots' in the land. The values which informed the great buildings of our past, and the diversities of regional culture have fashioned an architecture which uses modern technology to express the genius of locale. The building vocabulary is chosen deliberately to increase awareness of traditional values. Memorials are designed to project the ideals of great contemporary leaders; public buildings relate to the context in which they are placed; and in the creation of public residential architecture the dominant concern is to find appropriate expression for community-living with reference to climate, landscape and the need for spatial and material economy.

References

1. Kegal C, *Vistara - Architecture of India*, 1986.
2. Mandal K, *Vastu Shastra*, 2001.
3. Benedict, Ruth. *Patterns of Culture*, NY: Sentry, 1934.
4. Boas, Franz. "Social Life." In *General Anthropology*, NY: D.C. Heath, 1938.
5. *Primitive Art*, NY: Dover, 1955
6. Leland M. Roth, 1993, "Understanding Architecture-it's Elements, History, and Meaning," Westview, pp. 75.
7. Adorno, Theodor (1979) *Functionalism today* translated by Jane Newman & John Smith.
8. Alberti, Leon Battista (1988) *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*, translated by Joseph Rykwert, Neil Leach & Robert, Tavernor, Cambridge, Mass.
9. Alexander, Christopher et al. (1977) *A Pattern Language, Towns, Buildings, Construction*, New York.
10. *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*, 147.
11. *Architecture & Science*, Giuseppa De Cristina
12. Foster, Norman (1996) 'Carréd'Art' in *The Architecture of Information*, London.