

# **Theory of Architecture II**

## **Lecture 3**

### **Character of a Building**

We need to understand what character is and what style is., We can compare this with the interpretation of human beings., like how we interpret a human being his character and style. Likewise an architecture also, we can interpret through the outlook, the way it behaves in this environment. So in architecture character is primary virtue just like in a human being. It is a central issue in the question of meaning. So it all needs to meaning of being there. So the analogy between the interpreting the buildings, in architecture is in terms with human physiognomy, the human life as well.

The character of a building broadly as classified into three main categories:

1. The functional character of building
2. The associated character of building
3. The personal character of building

These three characters help us to analyse the building to understand a building better, how it behaves in what context was it created, was it built.

Character is a distinctive quality of an individual, Likewise a building has an its own character but style in a manner in which it is done, it is expressed just like in human beings as well. We will see how it goes by means of examples.

I will go to the functional character ,the three different categories of character;

The functional character of the building:

Every building has specific functions and is made for specific broad purpose. The internal planning is in co-ordination with the exterior façade that tells us the purpose of the building.

The external appearance plays an important role in determining the purpose and the function of the structure.

For example: The elements of the building, the size of windows or openings, indicators what kin of building activity happens inside, the wide entrances that invite people inside that has good interaction between inside and outside., the elements such as stars, the form, the intimidating form or else slope roof etc..it shows its character, it helps us to identify the character.

The functional character of a building, We see some examples here of religious building,

Because religious building is the oldest manifestation and expression of character of buildings in architecture. So we have golden temple Amritsar which is fine example of conglomeration of two different regions., one of the persian and one of the rajputhana styles. So we see very carefully chosen from these two regions here in golden temple and its called its own character of that. Most of the religious buildings of amritsar are like this. There is an another example of mosque in morocco, it is of a different faith. Eventhough they are religions they all subjected to worship, prayer and god and activities. See the kind of differences they emerge the kind of the entrances, the openings, the style of it.

You see the church in these picture, what is the church do, how does it look, what are the character of the church, the elements in it. What does it post to you, the entrances, the wide entrances in the road area, the larger opening which cannot be actually accessed in the upper levels but they have very good opening from outside that also lets in light inside and how light plays inside that area. So we try to understand the character of a building of its function through the elements of the building. We see another example in the bottom is the airport building, so the king of opening, the huge openings they have the kind of intimidating, inviting entrances and it also reflects the kind of building it functions to it is airport building naturally it has to be really huge where it draws in a lot of people.

You see another example here another functional building where lot of people come infront and then this example is Musee du louvre in Paris, the louvre museum in Paris. It is an extension building done by I.m.Poi. And then you see a huge plaza and the plaza is opened out underneath where the museum is located the greatest artifacts of these century is located there including the monalisa. Underneath is an another example of IIM Ahmadabad designed by Louis kahn in India. See the open spaces without even the number of people or the people here understand its purpose it's a public building the huge idea infront which really invites.

You see another fine example here to undersand the functional character of the building. You see this building which the fazard looks like a water bubble in deep it's a aquatic center, it's a sports center designed by PTW architects of Australia and China.This is the olymphic stadium so to say, and you can see easily get the function of the building from its exterior itself. This is the one way of expressing itself. And these are some buildings which actually express themselves they are function openly.

So what's an associated character of a building, Associated character mostly goes along with historical buildings, what happens is some buildings are located in place like in context of historical and cultural era. So they had to reflect the locality and regionality of that place. So the character of some buildings is expressed the elements associated with certain influences. And such influences often goes thousands of years back in ancient culture. This one is a Good example from our own area. This is in Chennai. This is Madras University Centenary Building, you can as well see the dome which is heavily inspired and influenced by local architecture of Islamic architecture. The arches and the way the brick used the spires, the towers. Eventhough it is centenary building, eventhough it is an auditorium building and university building, it doesn't look like one. So it tries to kind of imitate or kind of reflects the character of religious buildings in these regions. So that is one way of expressing itself. So this is called associated character of building. The inside has not much to do with the exterior.

This is the another example of the same architects. I have taken the same architects examples. This is Robert Chisholm. He lived in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, he was one of the most prominent British architects who served in British India and this is another building by him. So this building one in the above is an Napier Museum in Thiruvananthapuram. It is still functional. This holds the museum of the artifacts of Kerala. And this building as you can see it reflects is the study of the locality. He has not brought something from Britain or Europe for his architecture, whereas he is brought in, he is assimilated the local ideas of sloping roof and the usage of locally available materials such as bricks. Even the openings, the arches everything reflects the Indian the local regional character. So this is influence that he got from local architecture. And this is another example Victoria Public Hall, right next to the central station in Chennai and this building as well reflects the regionalism here. So this is one way of looking at the buildings, understanding the characters.

What is the Personal Character of a Building? So what happens is the Creator. He is the creation reflects his idiosyncrasy his own character, so the man is the building, so if the man is very bold and very dignified his building, his philosophies reflected in his building. So look at these examples, the character in architecture is comparable with the attributes of an individual Creator. If a building is designed in the proper spirit, personal characteristics of the person such as grace, dignity, simplicity, vigor and vitality can be expressed as an integral part of the creation itself. Look at this building, these are built by Zaha Hadid. Zaha Hadid is one of the greatest architect who lived in this century. And then she was from Iraq. She found her freedom from European countries.

And then her buildings expressed the freedom that she always wanted for, and look at this lines, these are define conventions, they are not straight, they are defining conventional way of designing buildings. They are all free flowing, they are all vital, they are all vigorous.

Look at these buildings by the same architect. So her character of bold and that the seeking of freedom is expressed through her buildings. Look at the lines, look at the unconventionality, the movement, the dynamism of the buildings. It is also her own character which she is trying to reflect in her buildings. This spiral Tower in Barcelona and the residential tower in New York.

So this is another example from India. So this is an example by architect Joseph Allen Stein who lived in the 50's and 60's. He was one of the most influential architect in the independent India. So he was commissioned in lot of projects in the capital city New Delhi. And look at these buildings, so he expressed his character of dignity. So he always thought that building have to look dignified and then without nonsensical element. So he lived with his time, he brought in modern architecture in India with his dignified looks. So they were straight lines with decent openings and very functional openings., very functional buildings as well and this example is Indian Habitat Center in New Delhi which won Lot of awards. And the Sri Dharani Art Gallery, Look at the similarity of the character of the building. So you will immediately identify the building with the character of the person. So they need not have same elements, similar elements such as that. But there will be something which integrates these two buildings, which makes to identify the building with him, the Creator.

This is another example of the Personal Character reflecting a Building. This is designed, this is world famous building Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao in Barcelona. And what would you call this building a fish or ship, well we don't know. Because the architect is always fascinated by the way fish, the faster the fish. So naturally he reflects all his building in the ways of fish. So he borrows heavily from the fish its movement and luckily this building was located on a shore. So naturally it was more appropriate to him to expose this building as express this building in the form of fish. This is one fine example of Personal character reflecting in his creation. I would like to conclude this part of character through some notes. The character of building depends upon its capacity to express particular function and status. It is also with terms of space and time. In the historical styles of architecture, the function and status of building were successfully expressed in variety of styles. So now we come into the Style area. The character is expressed but style is the way in you express it.

So style has more connection to us the time in which it is built. The character could be the same, the dignity as character could be the same, but the style of different times made it possible in different ways. So just like a individual personalities made up of unique qualities resulting from a combination of genetic factors, environment and bringing which distinguish a person from other, a building comprises of various aspects that makes it unique and stand out. So every building should have a character- as stated by Le Corbusier. So it's a creator's input that makes the character much more stronger. So this were architecture stands out, so it is highly intentional. So symbolism is become the major principal of the architecture to convey a character in contemporary times in todays architecture. Symbolism is always been a very strong element to express a building.

### **Style of a Building**

Lets move out to style of a building. Architecture as a kind of art form. Style is the way you do it. It is the concept that focuses on the components of elements of the structure or system, and unify them into coherent and functional hole. According to a particular approach in achieving the objectives and the given constraints and all limitation. This could defined as a style.

In general, however, style is the vocabulary we use when we classify buildings accordings to their appearance, structure, materials and most importantly historic period. So style mostly has direct impact in times of its existence, of its creations. So buildings are said to belong the same classification or style when they share many of the same characteristics.

So the character signity uniqueness, but the style reflects general observation of a particular historical period. So we compile, conclude some buildings are of similar style that was built in during a some period of time. We will see that through some examples:

I am going into the movements of the different artistic movements and the architectural style movements that happen throughout till today.

So lets start with the pre historic style. So we would classify certain buildings these styles. So what would be these buildings. So prehistoric is the architectural structures that remain partially intact today were typically religious in nature., as I was telling you before., so because religious architecture was made of more permanent materials like brick and stone. Such structures vary dramatically in terms of style and appearance but reveal much about the building technologies and where there are engravings and paintings. This one is the good example as the Stonehenge, a massive circular Megalithic movement in

the plains of Southern England and it is one of the most famous of all prehistoric structures.

A prehistoric, I mean that before the time of writing of history or recording of history, documenting history. We do not know who built the buildings.

Another good example of prehistoric styles would be the Egyptian buildings, ancient Egyptian buildings like the pyramids and the halls of far on an era. In ancient Egypt which is between 3000 B.C to 900 B.C before the existence of Christ. People lived in the omnipotents of Gods. Again religious connotation here. With Many aspects of daily life carried out with the respect to the idea of divine or super natural and the way it is manifest in the morals cycles of generation. You will see the character of these buildings of the prehistoric buildings but the way they were expressed here. This is so coarse not much ornamentation but we still see the hands of human beings here, really mega scales these each stone would be around like 20 feet height. And these buildings were inspired by the papyrus plant which grew near the Nile river they were inspiring and these buildings were inspired heavily by those. And then we see lot of paintings the fresco paintings and different ways of depiction of everyday life in those times. And the connection between the man and the God.

Next to the prehistoric we come to the Classical Style. The classical style forms two primary sub categories:

- 1) The Greek

- 2) Roman architecture.

You see distinctive qualities, characters of the Greek and Roman architecture during the Hellenic period. I have not taken the very famous example of halls in Athens. But I have taken some examples which are far from Greek as incisively.

Next come to Medieval Style, the Medieval style in which the churches developed and in which we have the Gothic Churches. Medieval style the period which started around 800 AD 800 years after the existence of the Christ, a two important times of Romanesque and Gothic Architecture. Romanesque as starts from Rome, it had heavier, stocky architecture with rounded arches were discovered and invented and lot of experiments are done in the massing of the building even though only the ground floor is approachable area. The churches and castles of earlier medieval period were constructed with thick walls and heavy piers.

And Gothic Architecture is one of the good examples would be the Notre Dame in which the ribbed vaulting, flying buttresses and other innovations were involved.

Then comes the Renaissance Style, Renaissance means the rebirth, the Gothic Architecture really gothic really Wild structures were manifesting in buildings. Renaissance wanted a fresh look at the nature and how it expressed in architecture. So Renaissance style came more sophistication through use of geometry and proportion, the understanding of proportion. The Renaissance Style indeed so lot of refreshing architecture styles. Architectural building all over the world especially in the southern parts of Europe. This one example is St. Peter's Basilica by Michelangelo.

Next comes to the Baroque Style which followed along with Renaissance style. Its about over decoration from these examples. And you will see a too much crassment and too much decorations inside the building as well as exterior of the building. And it is just extension and Renaissance architecture whichever is started the crassments refreshing ideas. Continued with the Baroque style and it was also the time the after the French Revolution and the Central European Revolution of the common people where in lot of crassments were available, and they are enthusiastically participating in building of community as well as society through public buildings.

After the Baroque style starts with Neo-Classical. The classical as we know its before the Gothic and Romanic period. So Neo-Classical means refreshing and bringing back the classical architecture and this is very popularly exemplified by an architect called Andrea Palladio. And his own style of architecture called Palladian architecture. He was the architect of very popular of the rich people of those times who were about to setup great industries to during this time using the land and the power of status like duke and dutcher. The building for who has anybody rich the whole of Europe. And his style of architecture was very sort after during that period. All his buildings were symmetrical beautifully proportioned and very high lengthed and what not. So it reflected the character of the client as well. The same Neo-classical and Greek revival style then it becomes so popular that the classicism that we saw in Greek and Roman Architecture, the Hellenic period architecture being reflected even in the modern times and even during in the concrete times.

These are some fine examples from our India, this is Fort Mumbai, the Asiatic Society Library always see the state the royal building in India such as the Assembly Halls, the Court buildings of India designed as you know the great hyperstyles of the classical style. We still see that. This bottom is an example of

USA the Lincoln Memorial which kind of reflects the architecture from you know the Greekenhellenic period.

Then comes the very refreshing Art Nouveau Style which basically was very highly influenced from nature. The mans connection to be nature has to be establish through the art new style. It was expressed through fabrics and graphics design in the beginning. Because it was very easy to draw and to paint but converting that into architectural detailing and style took a lot of crassmentship but yes lot of architects such as Antony Gawdi and Victorhearta as you can see in the examples have really tried it out with great architectural examples. These are unique you cannot copy them so easily. They are so unique that they cannot be another building like this again. Because they are directly converted from sketches into the building.

The Beaux arts style is called Beauz in French means fine arts, so they wanted to revive, there is always been lot of movements which had combination of the previous styles. So Beaux had the Classicism, academic and you know the way of approaching theoretically into architecture. So they are symmetry as well as creativity in its opening, in its manifestation of elements. But it also paved way to what would be called as a modernism later. So we will so how it goes.

And they were Neo Gothic Style as well like in Neo-classicals,so they were Neo Gothic people wanted to revive the older ways of Gothicism of building wildly.

Art Deco was another style which had the beginnings of what is called the modernism in arts decorative, so decorative art they have good geometry as well as somethings borrowed from the classicism. So as you can see in these dramatic lines of even the sky scrappers or in horizontal buildings. We had some fine examples here, as well, so one is Chrysler Building, it was supposed to be the tallest building at its time of existence. And this is Dare house in Chennai this is still alive. There is another good example could be this Paris Corner building as well, but this Art Deco building has great influences in product designs and other art styles as well.

Then comes to Modernist Style, the modernist is the style which basically is the strongest still living in the architectural style. Mainly because of the usage of the new elements such as the cement and steel and concrete. So this modern, modern means the Era, so this word is coined by the Bauhaus School of Architecture in Germany. This is soon after the first world war broke out. So this is when the New Era has to be starting and then this is were the new buildings have to be build. These are some good examples in different parts of the world, how decoration is totally rejected and then when everything goes on



to simple building in geometry, and trying out the new structures by means of the structural elements design. The one example we have shown is Golconde building in Pondicherry is the one first real modern building in India built in 1950's.

Some good example of Modernist Style. The modernist architecture can express a number of stylistic ideas, including: the Structuralism, Formalism, Bauhaus, International style, brutalism and minimalism,. These are all the different esums, the different movements that came that forms the part of the modernist style. So we can keep on going with the examples like this. There are lot of philosophies made out of the these from form follows function and form follows emphasis, form follows nothing, and the less is more and things like that., yes there are lot of new way of building in modern architecture.

After the modernist style, this comes the Post-Modernist where you revive the examples of Classical architecture but combine that with the modern building, modern way of building. So you can still see the pedimant kind of form in this building, the emergence of form in this building in a modern building. This is one good example from Vanna Venturi House by Robert Venturi.

So finally we come to this DeConstructivism Style where you start from scratch by thinking very rationally and very boldly. So all your buildings are very rational, very bold, so they don't follow in any of the rules previously established or defined. So there are good examples of these two and we will see them in different works of architects that they have been doing here.

Eclectic Style is a style which combines all the previous style or one or more combination of styles. Indian buildings and lot of more commercial have been eclectic style. And this one in Rashtrapati Bhavan. It is a combination of Hindu sarasinic architecture and lot of Hindumortives and British colonial Architecture as well. The Vidhana Soudha as we call it in Karnataka, is the good example in Eclectic style.

So finally we come to the Regional Style, so Regional Style is the style which is heavily influenced by Regions, so it belongs to one particular region. It expresses the status of community and society of the region.