

History of Architecture and Culture III

Lecture 6

Roman School

The Roman school of Italian Renaissance. As I said earlier, Italian renaissance shuffled and varied between Florence, Rome and Venice. You saw how Italian architecture was in Florence. In Venice, the unique character of Rome was its prestige as the capital of an empire that had crumbled away and whose architecture was now being revived. All that architecture which we are referring to had been revived and existed in this place called Rome. That shows the magnificence of Roman architecture or Roman renaissance architecture since they were living in a place that once was the capital of an empire but had crumbled away. The remains of Old Rome such as; Colosseum, Pantheon, Colonnades; they formed a major part of Rome and they acted as a quarry from where materials, understanding of construction techniques for this Romanesque period of architecture. The return of the popes from the Avignon to Rome in AD 1376 helped restore her to her former position of importance and prosperity. Rome was important, prospered, big, huge, had many famous kings, rulers and emperors but once Rome had fallen down, it was very tough for them to gain the same importance they once had. But the Pope came to Rome and that helped revive Rome to its former glory and that led to Rome becoming the centre of attraction, trade, commerce, architecture and anything. From the time of the Council of Constance in 1415, the Popes took a more prominent position as Italian princes, and during the 15th century, they greatly extended their temporal dominions in Italy. Splendid new palaces and churches were erected, and Pope gave the freedom to decorate the old ones and create successive new ones, give painters the chance to paint, sculptors a chance to sculpt, architects a chance to build. That created a new form of extensive growth of art and architecture. That was a period where art grew into something that is more humane yet so magnificent in nature. The Classic orders were largely used in the facades and courtyards, a general attempt to correct and confirm to the ideas of ancient Roman architecture and prevailed. Arcuation was only sparingly introduced, except in the form of tiers of arcades in the imitation of the Colosseum.

Bramante

First person we will be learning about is Bramante. He lived between AD 1444 - 1514. He was the first Roman architect of note and was born in the year that Brunelleschi died. He did get a lot of ideas from Brunelleschi. As a Roman architect, Bramante was born in the year Brunelleschi who was a Florence architect died, educated was a painter under Andrea Mantegna and was probably a pupil of Alberti. He was Florentine by birth but studied in Rome and began practising in the city of Milan in Rome and in the ducal dominions. He didn't go back to Florence, he stayed in Rome and constructed in Rome. His plan for St. Peter's Basilica formed the basis of design executed by Michael Angelo.

The foremost important building was St. Maria della Grazie, Milan. Santa Maria delle Grazie is another important landmark in renaissance architecture and the first landmark in Rome in renaissance architecture. This was built in AD 1492 and literally translated to 'Holy Mary of Grace' i.e. Santa Maria della Grazie translated to 'Holy Mary of Grace'. A church and Dominican convent in Milan in northern Italy. It was an Abbey church of the 15th century to which Bramante added the choir, transepts and the dome. The whole thing was not done by Bramante. His contribution was basically the choir, transepts and the dome. It was basically a small Abbey church to which Bramante added details that made it one of the fabulous constructions of all time. It is essentially transitional in style with Gothic feeling; one of the most successful and suitable in detail for the terra cotta with which it was constructed. It was not constructed by brick but by terra cotta. That makes it one of the most successful and well detailed architecture in the terra cotta construction.

Moving on, this is the plan of Santa Maria delle Grazie and this is the sectional elevation of the same. The Duke of Milan ordered the construction of Dominican convent and a church at the site of a prior chapel dedicated to the Marian devotion of St. Mary. As I said, the devotion of St. Mary happened widely at that point of time. There was a site where a church already existed, the Duke of Milan decided to actually create a Dominican convent or a church at that particular time

in that particular area. The main architect was Gianforte Solari who designed the convent which was completed by 1469. As I said, Bramante's additions were the choir, transepts and the dome. The construction of the church took decades to construct. The church, the main reason why this church is particularly famous is because this church contains a mural of the last supper. If you see the picture in the presentation, this is where the mural of the last supper was actually made. This is a close up of the same. That actually makes this church a landmark. This was done by Leonardo Da Vinci and it was in the refectory of the Convent. The design of the apse of the church has been attributed to Donato Bramante, who at that time was in the service of the Duchy. In 1543, the Titian altarpiece depicting the Christ receive the crown of thorns was installed in the Chapel of the Holy crown, located on the right of the Nave.

Michael Angelo

The most important architect of the Renaissance period – Michael angelo. Michael Angelo was a marvel, he will remain the most celebrated painter, architect and sculptor of all time. Extraordinary genius in every form of art. He created a landmark which is yet to be broken by any other architect. He lived between AD 1474 - 1564. He was a famous Florentine sculptor and painter of the roof of the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican representing the fall. Sistine chapel chapel is very famous one of the most works of Michelangelo, after St.Peter's Rome. He turned his attention to architecture late in life but reckless detail marks his work. He was monumental and detail oriented as well. Detail as in form of art, sculpture, motifs, everything. The churches he built had every bit of detail that could be given to a particular building. He finished the Farnese Palace, and carried out the Dome of St.Peter.

In the presentation, you can see in the background one of the best works of Michelangelo, the Pieta. Other than David, this is regarded to be the most famous sculpture by Michelangelo. David and Pieta were two sculptures Michelangelo finished before he was 30 years old. Usually age gives understanding and expertise to a particular person but this great human being exhibited extensive talent before the age of 30. He created his renowned works Pieta and David

before the age of 30. A number of Michelangelo's works in painting, sculptures and architecture, rank among the most famous works of all time. His output in every field of interest was prodigious; given the sheer volume of surviving correspondence which we have to understand. He was a sheer genius who created the best of all interests he had. He was unarguably the best documented artists of the 16th Century. Michelangelo also created two of the most influential frescoes in the history of Western Art. The scenes from Genesis on the ceiling of the Sistine chapel in Rome and the Last judgement on its altar wall. The last judgement is one his famous works of a fresco of all time. As an architect, Michelangelo pioneered the Mannerist style at the Laurentian library. Mannerism is one style that came into existence at that point of time and Michelangelo had a lot to do with it. Michael Angelo was an inspiration of the mannerist architects, that we will see later. In a demonstration of Michelangelo's unique standing, he was the first western artist whose biography was published when he was alive. He was the first artist of the western side whose biography was published and read when he was alive itself. This is the last judgement by Michelangelo, one of his most famous work of his. This marks the beginning of an era that actually gave light to architecture called Michael Angelian architecture.

Mannerism

Mannerism is a style in the European art that emerged in the later years of the Italian High Renaissance around 1520. It lasted until about 1580, when the Baroque style began to replace it. Baroque and Rococo were styles that came after that and those particular styles replaced the mannerism style of architecture. In this particular Renaissance, you saw Humanism, Mannerism and later we will look at, Baroque and Rococo type of architecture. Many minor styles of architecture, art literature were brought about in that period of time and actually made Italy a rich culturally diverse place of architecture. Mannerism continued into the early 17th Century, you can see David on the presentation by Michael Angelo. This is one of the most famous mannerist architecture or sculpture of all time. Stylistically, Mannerism encompasses a variety of approaches influenced by and reacting to the harmonious ideas associated with artists such as Leonardo Da Vinci, Raphael and early Michelangelo. Early because

certain works of Michelangelo didn't go with the manneristic idea of architecture but the works he had done previously, while he was thirty or thirty plus gave the manneristic architects a lot of influence, promise and understanding. The cities Rome, Florence, and Mantua were mannerist centres in Italy.

The word mannerism derives from the Italian word 'maniera' meaning 'style' or 'manner' as in English. Mannerism favours compositional tension and instability, rather than the balance and clarity of earlier Renaissance painting. What happened by the end of Renaissance? The architects, the art lovers came into a confused scenario wherein everything that could be achieved had already been achieved. They felt that everything had already evolved and that there was no room for any further development. Technically, there were no difficulties that were left unsolved because they felt that everything they could solve was unsolved. As an architect or as a literate, a literature enthusiast, they had a kind of enthusiasm to do something difficult, they were very competitive to create something new, that is where Mannerism came into existence. Human principles were studied, human body was studied and understood; all these were studied before Mannerism came into existence leaving nothing more to do or realize. That's when they came into thinking about why don't they do something that's out of proportion, out of symmetry or out of composition, such ideas brought in Mannerism. Michelangelo's David is an example of Mannerist sculpture as I said. The young artists needed to find a new goal, and they sought new approaches. At this point, Mannerism started to emerge. This new style developed between 1510 and 1520 either in Florence or in Rome or in both cities simultaneously which we are not sure of yet. Michael Angelo from an early age developed a style of his own that is deeply original which is why people admired his work. His kind of work had never been done before, his kind of work was too original to be true. His work was very modern for that age, true to its cause. It was often admired by his contemporaries. Many works can actually confuse with Michelangelo's work because it can simply be a sheer imitation of his architecture styles because that is how much he influenced the artists or architects of that particular time. So one of the qualities more admired of Michelangelo by his contemporaries was his Treblinka which was very awe-inspiring grandeur and it was the attempts of

subsequent artists to imitate. Detail or grandeur is synonymous with Michelangelo and his rigorous passion to create a grandeur space or a beautiful space because of which he created extremely detailed spaces that were big hits amongst his contemporaries. His painting at the Sistine Chapel was one such example. Mannerist architecture has a few examples; two of the most famous mannerist examples - this is Palazzo Te in Mantova designed by Giulio Romano and this is Palazzo Ducale in Mantova, again designed by Giulio Romano. This is the Sistine chapel ceiling. The Sistine chapel had beautiful work by Michelangelo on the ceiling and it is considered to be the best work of his. This is the complete work of Michelangelo on the ceiling. The Sistine Chapel was painted between 1508 and 1512. It took 4 years to finish this particular painting, it is very evident with the amount of detailing that has gone into it. A lot of detail has been taken into consideration, every intrinsic detail was made out and marked in this particular work. The ceiling is a flattened barrel vault supported on 12 triangular pendentives that rise between the windows of the chapel. The commission was to adorn the pendentives with figures of the twelve apostles. That was what was commissioned to him at first, Michael Angelo was not happy. He was reluctant to take up the job, so he persuaded the Pope to give him a free hand in composition. After he got a free hand, the resultant scheme of decoration awed his contemporaries so much that it has inspired artists and architects ever since. The scheme is of nine panels illustrating episodes from the book of the Genesis set in an architectonic frame. Here you can see, that is the basic scheme. On the pendentives, Michael Angelo replaced the proposed Apostles with the Prophets and Sibyls who heralded the coming of the Messiah. He was given the freedom to create something he wanted and as a result, he created something of such grandeur that makes it one of the most revered artwork of all time.

The next thing we will be looking into is the; Venetian school of Renaissance. We discussed the Florence style, the Roman style; now we will be moving onto the Venetian style and its architects. The greatness of Venice was founded on Oriental commerce due to her important geographical position and the effect of this commercial prosperity lasted well into Renaissance times. Venice was a prosperous state, it was very much established, it was geographically located in

such a prominent location, all this made Venice a place very prominent back then. Venetian architecture was different from the Florentine or the Roman architecture. This was actually entirely different from both, you could say there are slight similarities between the Roman and the Florentine architecture but Venetian architecture, Renaissance architecture is way different from both. The history of the Venetian state was always influenced by the proximity of the sea and the peculiar formation of the coast. Venice has the appearance of a floating city founded in the sea, churches, palaces, and houses were set up on piles in a shallow lagoon in a structural formation having an important influence on its art. The government of Venice was a republican, and the rivalry of the leading families led to the erection of fine and lasting monuments, such as the palaces which line the Grand canal. These however were not fortresses, they were residences of peaceable citizens and merchant princes. The Renaissance movement had a very different effect upon the architecture of Venice, as I said from that of Florence. The architecture of Venice was more lighter and graceful when compared to that of the monumental architecture of Florence and the detailed architecture of Rome.

The first and foremost example of this type of architecture we will be seeing is 'The Library of St. Mark'. The Library of St. Mark doesn't refer to the St. Mark's Cathedral. This was constructed in AD 1536, it was erected by Sansovino. The continuation of this design, one order higher round St. Mark's square, executed by Scamozzi in 1584. This design has been followed by the Carlton club in London. As you can see in the background, the library of St. Mark is one magnificent building. It is one of the earliest surviving public manuscript depositories in the country, holding some of the most classical texts collections of its time. The library is named after St. Mark, the patron saint of Venice, after whom St. Mark's Cathedral is also named. The first 16 arcaded bays of his design were constructed during 1537 to 1553, with work frescoes and other decorations continued until 1560.

Sansovino died in 1570, after which Scamozzi undertook the construction of the additional five bays, still to Sansovino's design. Sansovino's design was done till one extent, after which he passed away, then Scamozzi took over the rest of the 5

bays still based on Sansovino's design. Today, besides a million printed book, the Biblioteca contains about 13,000 manuscripts and 2883 incunabula and 24,055 works printed between 1500 and 1600, making it one of the most best classical collections in a library of all time. There are many illuminated manuscripts also in that place.

This is the interior of the St.Mark's Library in the picture. At that particular time, Vicenza and Verona were notable cities possessing many examples of Renaissance architecture and are counted in the Venetian school. Vicenza was the birthplace of Palladio and that was how Vicenza became very famous. His designs were mostly erected in brick and stucco and the lower storey being rusticated and the upper ones having pilasters. The main example we will be seeing, 'The Villa del Capra, Vicenza'. This is called, Villa La Rotonda and is a Renaissance villa just outside the northern city and designed by Palladio as I said. An example of the application of the features of classic architecture carried to an extreme. It is a square building, with a pillared portico on each face leading to central rotunda. If you can see, this is the plan of the building, this is the central rotunda and that is why this particular building is called La Rotonda. The Rotunda appears externally as a low dome above the tile roof always from the angle of the main building. You can see, this is the low dome. The design of this building was utilized by Burlington at Chiswick. Palladio's designs were mainly executed in common materials such as brick and stucco, and were often never fully carried out. It was a little left out. Yet their publication in books had a far-reaching influence on European architecture. Palladio's work was very much followed by Inigo Jones. Inigo Jones was first significant English architect of Welsh ancestry in the early modern period and he left his mark in London on a single building i.e the Queen's house, the first England building designed by a pure classical style.