

EXPLORING THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF OLD VERSUS CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Nicoleta GALBEN

Department of Architecture, ARH-231, Faculty of Urbanism and Architecture, Technical University of Moldova,
Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

Corresponding author: Nicoleta Galben, nicoleta.galben@arh.utm.md

Coordinator: Svetlana CEBOTARI, University Assistant, Department of Foreign Languages,
Faculty of Food Technology

Abstract. *This article offers a nuanced exploration of the psychological influence exerted by old versus contemporary architecture. Through a meticulous examination of historical precedents and contemporary research findings, it elucidates the multifaceted impact of architectural styles on individual psyches and societal dynamics. Emphasizing the enduring resonance of historical architecture alongside the innovative impulses of modern design, the article probes into the intricate interplay between form, function, and human perception. Delving into the psychological nuances of shape, color, and spatial configuration, it reveals how these elements evoke emotions, shape behaviors, and contribute to cultural identity formation. Moreover, the article elucidates the historical imperative for durable structures in the past and the technological advancements propelling modern architectural paradigms. By contextualizing architectural discourse within the socio-historical backdrop, particularly in the aftermath of events like World War II, it underscores the psychological imperative for freedom, expression, and human dignity in the built environment. Ultimately, this comprehensive analysis equips architects, urban planners, and policymakers with insights to craft environments conducive to well-being, social cohesion, and sustainable development.*

Keywords: *architecture, contemporary, historical, psychology, societal dynamics, spatial configuration*

Introduction

Introduction Architecture no longer only serves functional purposes, but also profoundly impacts human psychology, shaping emotions, behaviors, and societal values [1]. The dichotomy between antique and contemporary architecture gives rich insights into the mental dynamics underlying our constructed environment [4]. In this article, we will delve into the psychological impact of architectural patterns at some stage in history, from the necessity of durable systems in the beyond to the technological improvements driving present day layout. We can even discover how architecture reflects societal values and responds to historic events including World War II, emphasizing the mental want for freedom and expression [5].

The Enduring Influence of Old Architecture

Throughout history, old architecture has played a pivotal role in shaping human experiences and identities [4]. Ancient civilizations built monumental structures such as the Pyramids of Giza and the Parthenon, which served not only as religious and political centers but also as symbols of power and cultural identity [1]. It was important at that time to build architecture with a lot of function, thus people perceived big structures called "home" as elements of safety and representatives of religious identity and beliefs [6]. Whether through iconic landmarks, historic neighborhoods, or ancient ruins, old buildings anchor individuals to specific places and imbue them with a sense of identity and belonging [2]. This connection to place fosters a sense of rootedness and attachment, contributing to overall well-being and mental health [3].

During periods such as the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, architecture served pragmatic functions, reflecting societal values and religious beliefs [2]. Gothic cathedrals, with their soaring spires and intricate stained-glass windows, aimed to inspire awe and reverence, reflecting the religious fervor of the time [5]. Similarly, Renaissance palaces and villas emphasized by symmetry, proportion, and humanism, reflected a newfound appreciation for classical ideals and individual expression [6].

The Psychological Significance of Durability and Craftsmanship

In the pre-current era, structure had to resist the check of time because of the labor-in depth nature of production and the restricted availability of resources [4]. Structures such as medieval castles, fortified cities, and ancient temples had been built to undergo, symbolizing balance, safety, and permanence [2]. The mental impact of those long lasting buildings instilled an experience of continuity and resilience in communities, anchoring individuals to their bodily and cultural landscapes [3]. Moreover, the craftsmanship and attention to element obtrusive in vintage architecture replicate human ingenuity and creativity, eliciting admiration and emotional resonance [5]. The elaborate carvings, ornate facades, and hand-made materials observed in ancient buildings appeal to our senses and aesthetic sensibilities, fostering an experience of connection and belonging [6]. Even as time progresses, the essence of safety and security remains paramount in human existence, as delineated by Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs [4]. It underscores the significance of attending to these fundamental needs, which stand as the bedrock for self-actualization. In this context, the incorporation of intricate details and the celebration of craftsmanship emerge as pivotal elements in human life, extending their significance into the realm of architecture.

Technological Evolution and the Rise of Contemporary Architecture

The advent of the Industrial Revolution and subsequent technological advancements revolutionized the field of architecture, paving the way for contemporary design principles and construction techniques [5]. Innovations such as reinforced concrete, steel frames, and prefabricated materials enabled architects to push the boundaries of form and function, creating bold new structures that were previously unthinkable [2].

Contemporary architecture embraces principles of flexibility, sustainability, and innovation, responding to the evolving needs of society and the environment [3]. Skyscrapers, bridges, and avant-garde structures exemplify the fusion of art and engineering, embodying the spirit of progress and modernity [6]. The psychological impact of contemporary architecture lies in its ability to inspire awe, curiosity, and optimism, as individuals engage with cutting-edge design concepts and futuristic visions [1].

The Psychological Dynamics of Shape and Color in Architecture

Human perception of architecture is profoundly influenced by the diversity of shapes, colors, and spatial configurations present in the built environment. Research in environmental psychology suggests that certain architectural features can evoke specific emotional responses and cognitive associations. For example, curved forms and organic shapes often elicit feelings of warmth, comfort, and approachability, while angular structures convey strength, power, and dynamism.

Similarly, the use of color in architecture can profoundly affect mood, atmosphere, and spatial perception. Below is a comparison of the psychological impact of popular colors in old architecture versus contemporary architecture:

Table 1

The influence of colors in the past VS today

Color	Influence in the Past	Influence Today
Red	Symbolized power, passion, and vitality; used in religious settings	Represents energy, excitement, and urgency in urban spaces
Blue	Associated with tranquility, spirituality, and infinity	Evokes calmness, professionalism, and technological progress
Green	Symbolized nature, growth, and fertility	Represents sustainability, environmental awareness, and growth
Yellow	Signified warmth, optimism, and intellect	Represents creativity, optimism, and innovation
Brown	Evoked stability, reliability, and tradition	Represents warmth, earthiness, and authenticity
White	Symbolized purity, cleanliness, and spirituality	Represents simplicity, minimalism, and contemporary aesthetics

Historical Context: World War II and the Psychological Need for Freedom

The aftermath of World War II marked a significant shift in architectural discourse, as nations sought to rebuild and redefine their identities in the wake of destruction and upheaval. The brutalities of war highlighted the psychological need for freedom, expression, and human dignity, driving architectural movements such as modernism and brutalism [5].

Modernist architects such as *Le Corbusier* and *Mies van der Rohe* embraced principles of functionalism, simplicity, and social progress, advocating for the democratization of space and the liberation of the individual. Brutalist architecture, characterized by raw concrete surfaces and bold geometric forms, sought to convey honesty, authenticity, and resilience in the face of adversity. These architectural movements reflected a broader cultural shift towards openness, transparency, and social justice, emphasizing the psychological importance of freedom and self-expression in the built environment.

Conclusion

In conclusion, old and contemporary architecture exert profound psychological influence on individuals and societies, shaping perceptions, emotions, and societal values. From the enduring allure of historical landmarks to the bold innovation of contemporary design, architecture reflects human aspirations, values, and aspirations. By understanding the psychological dynamics at play, architects, urban planners, and policymakers can create built environments that foster well-being, social cohesion, and sustainable development.

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