

# Losing and regaining ground: A jeremiad on the future of Architecture profession in India

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Realizing the attributes related to the making of an Architect and it's profession

In the last thirty years there are many significant changes in the way buildings are designed and architecture is practiced in India and abroad.

After India became independent, there was a lot of requirement to built forms for the development of administration. The developments can be classified by the decade like, in the early 50's the importance was given to the residential buildings around the country, then in 60's, industrial buildings were developed then in 70's, importance was given for construction of educational institutions, then in 80's many metropolitans got densely populated and once again the importance started for residential in high rise buildings and urban design patterns were changed and in 90's due to globalization many IT parks, shopping's malls, and multi recreational areas get into existence in a large scale, at last in present days there was a drastic change in the field by introducing the concept of sustainability and green buildings which is real requirement for the existence of life now a days. Many of our problems rest with an archaic process of design and construction. Architectural profession is a part of an industry that it could even be called a sector of the Indian economy. In India, the construction industry has become an important sector which will improve the standards of living of the people. In all the changes that took place in the way of ,construction industry.

Since Architecture is a particularly vulnerable profession, in that people

at all levels are continually trying to exercise some sort of influence, some sort of pressure, on the architect, surely architectural education should try to give a grounding in being able to assess and understand the ethical implications of what the people who are to become a part of the profession, they are going to be faced with. I believe that the studying of ethics within an architectural education has become more important - more urgent - in the last few years. There has been an expansion of the explaining away of what is clearly wrong or deceptive by making it over-complex, or simply using pressure and abuse.

For architects, they have to make decisions - or stand up against pressure - to represent what they know, what their education tells them, is right and proper and valid and safe. The ability to decide what is right or wrong, what is acceptable or unacceptable, is part of everybody's lives every single day.

Architecture is not a business, not a career, but a crusade and a consecration to a joy that justifies the existence of the earth. Architecture is primarily a utilitarian conception and the problem is to elevate the principle of pragmatism into the realm of aesthetic abstraction.

Architecture is a great art based on two cosmic principles beauty and utility. In a broader sense, these are but part of the three eternal entities: Truth, Love, Beauty.

**TRUTH** – to the traditions of our art  
**LOVE** – for our fellow men whom we are to serve  
**BEAUTY** – ah, beauty is a compelling goddess to all artists

Architect's status is similarly exalted, in the same way people have a misperceptions on the Architectural profession, that Architects would rule fairly and, when appropriate, would bite the hand that fed him by ruling in the contractor's favor and against the client's financial interest.

To challenge the compunction on the profession, the new style of working has come into existence. Architect who prefers his client's interest over his own, and when the issues are clear. Beside the principles or philosophy of Architecture, Architect's job is to instruct the client as to what the client really needs, to use the skills he has developed over a lifetime to persuade the client to do what the client is not trained to do and also good at listening to what their client needs are and adopting to them.

Now a days in countries like India, have a direct brainwave on the new styles, materials, new technologies in the construction field from western countries without concerning the actual requirements of the people. The interior designing materials are often imported from many countries, no matter how these building materials ensemble the local materials and their impact on the environment and climate. For example, in many metropolitan cities, Architects are using glass for all the buildings without perception of negative impact caused by these materials on the environment. They use excessive glass for elevation just because others had done it that way. WHY? No two materials are alike. No two sites on earth are alike. No two buildings have the same PURPOSE. The

purpose, the site, the material, determines the shape. Nothing can be reasonable or beautiful unless its made by one central idea and the idea sets every detail. A building is alive like a man. Its integrity is to follow its own truth, its one single theme and to serve its own single purpose. A man does not borrow pieces of his body. A building does not borrow hunks of its soul. Its maker gives it the soul, and every wall every window every stair way express it.

During the last ten years, the architect also lost much of his influence on the building process. Developers staffed up; the largest had their own employees to guide them through the valley of the shadow of death. Other owners or developers hired project managers who had a more useful and practical knowledge of the construction process than could be claimed by architects. Architects, who were once knowledge about both mechanics and autistics, could no longer demonstrate an expert knowledge of mechanics. They were commonly criticized for knowing too little about how buildings were put together and about the physical properties of materials.

In the seductive scenario posed by constructors, the architects, the plumber, and the project manager go hand in hand together into the subset. No person has an authority over another; no person's knowledge or skills are significantly differentiated from the knowledge and skills of the other. The tragedy of our architectural profession was the hard ships placed in the way of its talented beginners; that grit gifts had been lost in the struggle, unnoticed, that architecture was perishing from a lack of new blood and new thought, a lack of originality vision and courage. You have seen buildings with columns that support nothing, with purpose less cornices,

with pilasters mouldings, false arches, false windows. Do you understand the difference; your house is made by its own needs. Those others are made by the need to impress. The determining motive of your house is in the house. The determining motive of the others is in the audience.

Unless the architects are prepared to marshal countervailing forces to change their fate the picture is an accurate one. The following are the contrary forces on which all the modern architects should be focused and work hard —

First, architects must move towards embracing, rather than avoiding, responsibility. The architect must be the person most willing and most equipped to lead his clients through the awesome valley to the other side. The architect's liability to the client cannot be limited; the architect's undertaking on the client's behalf cannot be truncated.

Second, the architect must see the legislative process as an ally, not as an oppressor, in the various stuff struggles, and must make the use that the architect is the only person trained to co ordinate the process and to protect those who use and inhabit buildings. The professions must conceive people that the monopoly privilege inherent in registration is justified in light of the exigent needs of an otherwise unprotected public.

Third, turn the IIA and COA into an organization that will treat the fortunes of its members as its highest priority. Architects must aspire to build for their client the most comfortable, the most logical; the most beautiful that can be built. They could say that they must try to sell him the best we have and also teach him to know the best. They should not intend to build in order to have clients they intend to have cli-

ents in order to build. That special role of the professional has all but disappeared. The council of Architects and Indian Institute of Architects observed and recommended the proper registration for Architects in India due to the rising tide of education in society and improve the standards of architectural profession, so that no people will challenge the professional's judgment.

If all the efforts are launched, then the obligations of our schools of architecture are huge. All the civic courses should teach young architects how to work with their government effective and fearlessly. I feel, that there is a need to introduce required courses in mechanical and structure systems, in order to educate young architects with enough technical design to prove that architects alone are trained to coordinate the entire elements of building system for human settle-

ment. All the young architects study the selection of materials and to understand how structures are built, in order to restore the mechanical side of architectural skills and to justify the owner's reliance on the architect as his shepherd.

To reverse powerful forces is not an easy task, nor can anyone be certain of the outcome. But the vision of what lies ahead if the attempt is not made may justify the efforts. One thing is clear: "if architects are themselves unwilling to make that effort, no one else will do it for them."

In conclusion, I would like to say to young architects, who are about to embark upon their careers in architecture that, they are now the custodians of a sacred heritage. So, go forth into the world, armed with the three eternal entities, armed with courage and vision. May the entire modern archi-

tecs serve faithfully, neither as slaves to the past, nor as those parvenus who preach originality for its own sake, which attitude is only ignorant vanity. The modern architects have many rich, active years before them and leave as they depart from this world, their foot prints on the sands of time.

## REFERENCES

The Fountainhead, Ayn Rand. ■

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### ARCHITECTURE TRIVIA QUIZ

- Which is the largest inhabited castle in the world?
  - Inventory Castle
  - Edinburgh Castle
  - Windsor Castle
  - Aleazar Castle
- In which country could you visit the Shwe Dagon Pagoda?
  - Cambodia
  - Myanmar
  - China
  - Japan
- What is the tallest monument in the United States?
  - Statue of Liberty
  - Bunker Hill Monument
  - Washington Monument
  - The Gateway Arch

Answers: 1. Windsor Castle, 2. Myanmar, 3. The Gateway Arch

### THE CALIBRATED VIEW

