



The Enduring Influence of Tradition and Craft on Contemporary Space Design

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Abstract: The mix of modern and traditional aspects forms any art and speaks to the identity and cultural richness of the environment. The relationship between heritage, work, and space atmosphere is a constant in contemporary design. Focusing on different approaches from design theory, cultural studies, and architecture, this study investigates how traditional materials and artistic techniques are involved in contemporary places with a sense of the past, authenticity, and human connection. The importance of tradition on how it is a source of continuity and inspiration for the design process. It also discusses how craftsmanship shapes the sensory experience of modern spaces. The paper discusses how using artisanal methods custom details, artisanal finishes, and handcrafted furniture can give spaces a more authentic aesthetic and better quality than mass-produced variants. The study aims to improve our understanding of the complex interaction of tradition, craft, and ambiance in defining the built environment. The paper revolves around the idea of the study of craft and the traditional influence of Punjab.

Keywords - Tradition, Craftsmanship, Interior Designing, Punjab

I. INTRODUCTION

In the constantly evolving field of modern design, where innovation is highly valued and technology is constantly evolving, there is a value for the lasting impact of workmanship and tradition. Modern space design and atmosphere are still shaped by timeless workmanship and cultural traditions, even with the quick advances in technology, materials, and processes. This contrast between the old and the new, the traditional and the modern, enhances our built environment and proves the close relationship between the past, present, and future. Over time, cultures have left impressions on their environment by developing craftsmanship and preserving cultural traditions. From delicate woodwork in ancient temples to ornate tile patterns in historic palaces, these objects show us the skill and passion of artisans who worked to turn the ordinary into remarkable pieces of art. The papers have observed case studies that have been conducted on two types of resorts to analyze the use of craft and culture to create an identity in the interior space by understanding the type of materials and artesian techniques used in the building. These case studies will also help in understanding the elements that have been used in the resorts and how they can attract visitors Also a literature case study was done based on the cultural identity of a specific region, which includes the type of art and crafts practiced in the region and the types of types of furniture present the region for further implementation of design. One such rich tapestry of heritage may be seen in Punjab's art and traditions, which are rooted in history and known for their colorful culture. Punjab, with its long history, features a broad range of artistic traditions that have aged the test of time. The region is known for its rich and varied creative legacy, which ranges from the exquisite workmanship of Phulkari embroidery to the subtle beauty of Punjabi frescoes. These traditions passed down through centuries, capture the essence of Punjab by reflecting its values, beliefs, and distinct personality. Furthermore, incorporating heritage and craft into contemporary design has a function that extends beyond aesthetics.

The gap in current research lies in the comparative analysis of how diverse cultural traditions and craft techniques impact contemporary space design. Numerous studies delve into the significance of tradition and craft within specific cultural contexts. Understanding the variations in design principles across cultures could elucidate whether certain elements are universally applicable or culturally specific. Moreover, there is insufficient exploration into how traditional elements and craft techniques are being reimagined and integrated into contemporary design practices. By investigating how designers adapt and innovate upon traditional practices in response to modern challenges and aesthetics, we can gain deeper insights into the evolving relationship between tradition, craft, and space design.

1.1 CONTEMPORARY INTERPRETATION OF TRADITION AND CRAFT

Nowadays, more and more modern designers are experimenting with adding traditional features to their creations, taking inspiration from artisanal techniques and a variety of ethnic backgrounds. This method promotes respect for cultural diversity and a sense of historical connection it also gives modern designs more depth and richness, Moreover, this repurposes conventional craft methods to modern creations, which opens up new opportunities for experimentation and innovation, thus expanding the limits of what is possible in design.

1.1.1 Reinterpretation of Traditional Elements:

Traditional design components, such as motifs, patterns, materials, and architectural styles, are frequently reworked in contemporary design to fit new settings. By keeping aspects of old working methods and modifying them to fit them into modern trends and lifestyles, in this way designers can still preserve their cultural values. This process involves a balance between the heritage and authenticity of traditional elements while giving a chance for creative exploration and innovation.

1.1.2 Merging of Craft Techniques:

Contemporary design approaches are increasingly using traditional craft techniques including weaving, metalwork, pottery, and carpentry. Designers now can provide a sense of authenticity and work to places by working with experienced artisans or incorporating handcrafted elements into their designs. The blending of these craft skills gives contemporary environments a distinct sensual texture and unique handmade character.

1.1.3 Adaptation to Modern Challenges and Aesthetics:

The use of old craft processes is influenced by the issues that contemporary designers face, including sustainability, technology improvements, and shifting user preferences. Modern sustainability can be met by adapting traditional craftsmanship with eco-friendly materials and methods. Additionally, nowadays designers experiment with combining futuristic or minimalist aesthetics with traditional workmanship to create contrasts that show how tradition and modernity meet.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Tradition and Craftsmanship in Contemporary Design:

Contemporary design is often associated with innovation, technology, and sleek aesthetics. However, among the fast-paced advancements of the modern world, there is a notable interest in tradition and craftsmanship within the design realm. These traditions and craftsmanship play a significant role in contemporary interior design. The design and implementation processes are crucial in analyzing craftsmanship. Traditional architecture acts as a valuable source of inspiration for contemporary designs. In contemporary design, tradition, and craftsmanship serve as bridges between the past and the present. As cited in the paper [1], Contemporary style spaces exhibit flexibility, dynamism, and diversity, creating spatial relations that are more transparent, permeable, and dynamic. One of the defining characteristics of traditional craftsmanship is its emphasis on manual skill and expertise passed down through generations. However, there is a growing disconnection between contemporary interior design practices and craft culture in countries like India. [2] The paper discusses the notions of craft, space-making craft, and contemporary interior design practices in India, highlighting the transformation of built landscapes into standardized and homogenized structures with little cultural significance [2] The traditional Moldovan-Romanian style represents a valuable cultural heritage, with a focus on folk art and a connection to nature [3] By integrating craftsmanship and traditional crafts into contemporary interior design, designers can create spaces that honor tradition while embracing innovation and functionality.

2.2 Integration of tradition and craftsmanship in contemporary design:

The integration of tradition and craftsmanship in contemporary design is a topic of interest in cultural studies. Craftsmanship and tradition are combined well in modern design, embracing traditional methods and artisanal abilities in an approach that blends in both the past and the present. Contemporary designers recognize the richness and depth of traditional craftsmanship and the cultural heritage it represents.

Several papers provide insights into this area. [4] M. Hassan et al. discuss the factors of craftsmanship at the intellectual and executive levels in contemporary local products, emphasizing the importance of the interaction between these levels. Also, in research we see many other examples of how the cultural and contemporary value of traditional crafts, proposes the use of many technological resources to fill the gap between traditional crafts and art design. The preservation and adaptive reuse of heritage buildings play a crucial role in maintaining and enhancing these ambiances, as they provide a tangible link to the past and contribute to the overall character of a place [5]. Analysis of the traditional elements used in the design leave a mark of tradition of a nation [6] discusses the impact of traditional works in any interior space. Precision and attention to detail go hand in hand with craftsmanship. This approach goes beyond aesthetics in modern design to provide well-built space and user experience. Every element of a design—from form to function—is thoughtfully chosen and executed to improve the overall standard and usability of the item or area.

2.3 Craftsmanship and Materiality:

Craftsmanship plays a significant role in shaping the materiality of modern interior spaces. The evolution of artistic crafts from utilitarian activities to forms of decorative and applied art has influenced the creation and development of interior spaces. Crafts such as lacquer panels, traditional paper, and soil panels are increasingly being used as interior finishing materials, connecting the interior environment to elements of health and well-being [7] Craftsmen have adjusted their conceptions and practices to continue working in the face of modernity and industrialization. Fine furniture makers have positioned their work as a critique of modernity and offer something valuable to society. Various crafts such as stonemasonry, carpentry, pottery, stained glass making, and weaving played a significant role in forming interiors for functional and decorative purposes throughout history [7]. Craft customs are often passed down through the generations in the groups of makers. To take use of their knowledge and broaden their own creative perspectives, modern designers might work in collaboration with artisans.

III. LITERATURE CASE STUDY

The literature case study focuses on studying a specific region to identify the culture and craft of the place.

3.1 Punjab: History and Culture

The name "Punjab" is formed from the words "Panj" and "Aab." In Persian, the word "Panj" means five, whereas "Aab" represents water. The Jhelum, Ravi, Beas, Sutlej, and Chenab rivers flow across Punjab, receiving it as the "land of five rivers." Punjab has the following borders: Pakistan to the west, Jammu and Kashmir to the north, Himachal Pradesh to the northeast, and Haryana and Rajasthan to the south. The state is physically divided into the Sutlej-Ghaggar Plain and the sub-Shivalik Strip. The Sub Shivalik strip includes the top areas of the districts of Ropar, Hoshiarpur, and Gurdaspur. The Sutlej-Ghaggar plain embraces the remaining districts of Punjab. Punjabi literature covers poetry, philosophy, spirituality, art, music, gastronomy, science, and education. [8]

3.2 Punjab Handicrafts:

Table 1 Punjab Handicrafts

| Crafts | Explanation |
|--------------|--|
| Woodwork | artistic beds are made with mirrored backrests, low seats known as Peeras or Peerian, and colourful, carved legs known as Pawas. wooden toys, boxes, and ornamental items in addition to furniture designs. lacquering wooden objects, embellishing them with reflective materials, carving wood, and inlaying ivory—now reduced to white plastic. |
| Phulkari | Flower work is both a remarkable needlework style and an integral aspect of daily life. adds a splash of extra colour and richness. Followed by several patterns and motifs. |
| Leathercraft | Punjabi jutties are covered in a multitude of patterns of embroidered gold and silver wires. |
| Metalwork | Some of the products that these craftsmen work on are metal pots and utensils, lights and trumpets that are required for religious ceremonies, and some decorative pieces like lampshades. |
| Durries | Punjab has a long history of weaving durries, or cotton beds or floor spreads, in a variety of motives and patterns. These are also woven in stirpes, checkboards, squares, and motifs of plants, animals, and birds. |
| Chowk Purna | The mud walls of rural houses in Punjab are painted with patterns and designs that captivate the eye. These paintings are meant to entice blessings and welcome Lakshmi, the goddess of abundance and prosperity. |

IV. CASE STUDY:

Two case studies were done to understand the impact of tradition and craft in crafting up a space, Observations are made through comparative analysis as in the table.

4.1 AMANDARI RESORTS, INDONESIA:

Amandari is in the heart of Bali, specifically in the town of Kedewatan, near the cultural hotspot of Ubud. It was named from the Indonesian word 'Aman,' which means as 'peaceful' or 'safe', as well as a few others derived from Sanskrit. [9] The resort is beautifully situated away from the Ayung River. The major goal of this company was to supply hosts of tourists interested in witnessing the cultural lives of the people of Bali." Thus, the site was chosen for its cultural richness rather than its proximity to the ocean. It seeks cultural integration in a contemporary setting.

In Bali, the village concept is based on clear distinctions between private and public spaces. Each family has its own privacy, with a wall to protect the house," Peter Muler desired Amandari to blend with the environment like another community. The integration of natural materials in the site and carvings on the wall represents the tradition in Bali. Amandari reflects traditional Balinese architecture with its thatched roofs (see Fig.1), open-air pavilions (see Fig.2), and use of locally obtained materials including wood, stone, and bamboo. The design merges in with the natural surroundings, resulting in a calm retreat that appreciates Balinese craftsmanship and beauty.



Figure 1 Thatched Roofs (Source: <https://www.aman.com/resorts/amandari>)



Figure 2 Open Pavillion (Source: <https://www.aman.com/resorts/amandari>)

4.2 THE OBEROI SUKH VILAS RESORT, NEW CHANDIGARH:

Sukh Villas is a resort located in New Chandigarh. The Oberoi Sukhvilas Spa Resort is situated against the backdrop of the 8,000-acre Siswan Forest Range [10] and the Himalayan foothills, with a setting of magnificent gardens featuring fountains, reflecting pools, and traditional architecture. It is a resort inspired by Rajput and Mughal architecture. Involving all architectural aspects and traditional furniture that represent the area's heritage. The main elements used were traditional cusped arches (see Fig. 4), colonnaded verandas, and ornate plaster work.

Ar. Ravi Kumar Gupta took inspiration from the stone jaalis to create the baradari with carved stone columns, conveying a sense of the past and nostalgia as well as Rajput and Mughal architectural patterns. The resort's interior areas are decorated with beautifully carved pillars, elegant archways, and Mughal-inspired murals, generating a sense of awe and grandeur. Each house and tent have been designed to provide a luxurious getaway with contemporary amenities elegantly blending into the classic decor.



Figure 3 Four poster bed. (Source: <https://www.oberoihotels.com/hotels-in-chandigarh-sukhvilas-resort/> [10])



Figure 1 Cusped Arches (Source: <https://www.oberoihotels.com/hotels-in-chandigarh-sukhvilas-resort/> [10])



Figure 5 Tent Villas (Source: <https://www.oberoihotels.com/hotels-in-chandigarh-sukhvilas-resort/> [10])

Table 2 Comparative analysis of case studies

| | Amandari resorts, Indonesia | The Oberoi Sukh Vilas resort, New Chandigarh |
|---------------------------------|--|---|
| Architectural Style | It's Traditional Balinese architecture with Balinese style thatch roof and with open air pavilion. | It is a Fusion of Mughal and Rajput architecture with grand Mughal inspired facades. |
| Interior analysis | Elegant Balinese decor Handcrafted furniture And by including the traditional Balinese village setting, that explains the architecture of suites and the interior layout to experience life in Bali. Open air lobby, for example, was designed after a wantilan, or village meeting place. | luxurious decor with modern features and ancient Indian influences, which includes with four-poster beds, chandeliers, furniture touched in gold, deep-soaking tubs and exquisite handcrafted furnishings. 60 accommodations split into rooms, villas, and luxury tents and 13 tents all with a private pool. |
| Materials Used | Locally sourced wood, stone, rattan, bamboo, teak, and coconut wood | Marble, stone, wood -teak and sheesham with Intricate carvings |
| Colour Palette | Earthy tones with browns, greens, terracotta, and monochromatic shades of brown. | Rich hues: gold, red, deep blues which shows the richness of Mughal and Rajput cultures. |
| Room Design | Spacious suites and villas Private gardens and private pools. Suites feature four-poster beds (see Fig.3) decorated with classic Kamasan tapestries representing the culture. It has 30 thatched roof suites. | Luxurious villas and tents with 60 accommodation and 13 tent villas own a private pool furnishing. Rooms inspired by traditional Rajasthani haveli mansions. Tent rooms inspired by the majestic caravans of deserts (see Fig. 5) like from during the times of the British Raj-tent. |
| Architectural Highlights | Traditional thatched roofs Carved wooden details. walkways, shrines, gardens, and high paras stone walls. | Ornate archways Intricately carved pillars cusped arches (see Fig.4), colonnaded verandas, and ornate plaster work along with flaming torches. |
| Interior Highlights | Balinese artworks, textiles, crafts, bamboo poles, woven fabrics, brick, and Stone panels carved with artistic precision. | Mughal-inspired frescoes, four-poster beds, chandeliers, deep-soaking tubs with Rajasthani design features. |
| General Ambience | Calm and peaceful, surrounded by the atmosphere of Balinese culture. But with a contemporary perspective of the Balinese culture. | Opulent and grand, evoking a regal Mughal-era atmosphere with modern amenities and architectural details. |

V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, incorporating tradition and craftsmanship into contemporary design creates an effective blend of heritage and innovation. Designers create things and environments that are unique, beautiful, and culturally significant by honoring ancient traditions, embracing artisanal talents, and putting sustainability first. This beautiful blend of heritage and contemporary not only enhances our surroundings, but also promotes a stronger link to our shared human history and cultural identity. This seamless fusion of tradition and contemporary not only results in aesthetically beautiful and efficient designs, but it also enhances our lives by maintaining cultural heritage promoting a greater appreciation for the creativity and craftsmanship of the past. As we go through the challenges of modern life, the timeless ideals of tradition and craftsmanship serve as a foundation for developing meaningful and long-term design solutions.

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