

Challenge Response

African Leadership Academy

Architecture is a strong indicator of human evolution in terms of beliefs, culture, values and functions.

Evidently architecture plays different roles in different regions of the world and an examination of this sheds a different light on what culture is and what represents culture in different regions of the world. The evolution of architecture is also a testament to an emergence of a sort of 'third culture' in the world. Arguably, over time architecture has become less symbolic and more functional. This could be perceived as a shift in identity rather than a loss in identity in the sense that the citizen sometimes is the true depiction of a national culture rather than the buildings in that country. It is a clear depiction of how human priorities and needs have shifted over the centuries.

Architecture in the past could be said to have had less restrictions as opposed to the present where you have different circumstances that influence how a building is constructed. This varies from existence of laws that dictate specific details by which a building has to be constructed or what materials have to go into the building, to economic restrictions.

Practical steps that can be taken to best influence social, material and spiritual progress over time should create a sustainable framework that caters to utilize the resources around us, act as a tool for social progress whilst still maintaining a sense of identity.

- Creating awareness that 'place attachment' is still a valid concept and acknowledging our changing notions of cultural identity as well as concepts of place identification and community belonging.
- Use of an environmentally friendly approach in the construction of buildings. [LEED certification programme becoming more widespread to incentivise environmental consciousness during construction.
- An attempt to involve the individual as a key stakeholder in the architecture process. [Involving the public from the infant stages of the architectural design process- seeking feedback and iteration]
- Creation of more adaptable spaces- which are flexible and can be tailored for different functions as well as for multicultural inclusion.
- Cultivating architectural styles that represent a more modern and global culture.