

**How accurately does architecture reflect prevailing ideology? Do all successful ideologies require architectural support?**

Architecture is inevitably a medium of expression between the architect and the masses. As part of this expression, architecture reflects a certain interpretation of prevailing ideologies - dominant beliefs that guide society during that time.

We will propose three reasons why the *core tenets* of prevailing ideologies are accurately represented in architecture.

First, proponents of dominant ideologies have the financial capacity to commission architectural projects. This is because such ideologies either have powerful and wealthy sponsors, such as the state or dominant social groups, or mass support. This translates to a concentration of wealth in the hands of the proponents of these ideologies, giving them the ability to commission architectural projects. As these proponents commission architectural projects, they have the ability to dictate the building's design and design it to reflect the prevailing ideology. For example, throughout the Renaissance, the Catholic Church enjoyed tremendous wealth and influence. Accordingly, the architecture of the Vatican, commissioned by the Church, heavily reflected Catholic theology, as seen in the Saint Peter's Basilica or the Sistine Chapel.

In fact, we argue that proponents of these ideologies have an incentive to commission grand pieces of architecture to promote their ideology. This is because architecture is a spectacle that has the potential to create an image that attracts the masses to buy into. The grandeur of these buildings project not only superiority, but also the desirable qualities of the ideology itself. Architecture, in this instance, reflects the core tenets and beliefs of the ideology, thereby creating a visual image of the ideology that resonates with the people. For example, the neo-classical style of Nazi architecture projected traditional values of Aryan society, in a climate where the German people sought the glory days of the past. This created a reminder of German greatness and spurred support for the Nazi Party then. From this, we can see that successful ideologies often have architectural support to bolster its presence in the public eye.

Second, architecture accurately reflects prevailing ideologies because architects themselves may often also buy into these ideologies. Here, we recognize that architecture isn't *always* dictated by the rich and powerful in society, and that architects often have the space to inject their own views into their designs. The premise of this argument is that dominant ideologies typically emerge as a result of societal factors that make them particularly appealing to the people. Modernism as a school of thought gained traction in the wake of the Industrial Revolution, where the prospect of progress and rapid technological advancement captivated the imaginations of millions. Architects are a part of the societal construct and are thus undeniably influenced by societal trends. Hence, it is often the case that architects become shaped by societal factors, such that they buy into the prevailing ideology of society – allowing these ideas to permeate into their designs. This can be seen in how the Soviet architect Moisei Ginsburg voluntarily designed the characteristic structure of Soviet apartment blocks with minimal individual kitchens, but instead more communal facilities like a common canteen designed to promote the ideals of communism. He was not commissioned to

design structures with the specific purpose of breeding unity; he simply bought into the post-October Revolution fervor of people's unity and wanted to contribute to the building of a new kind of society. Hence, architecture also reflects the prevailing ideology through the efforts of architects.

Finally, architecture accurately reflects prevailing ideologies because these ideologies percolate throughout society and its ideas manifest in architecture. Successful ideologies have themes that transcend beyond specific aspects of human life and permeate society as a whole. This allows such ideologies to take form in architecture and extend the existing movement. For instance, mass production and efficiency became the rule in industry and subsequently the economy, following the first moving assembly line for cars in 1913. With efficiency becoming the dominant belief of that time, progressive architects started to move towards mass-producing housing, and as a result, we saw the standardization of architecture during that time. The movement continued to grow until the late 1960s, becoming a "religion" for architects who designed houses in the post-war welfare society. This shows us how a belief that started with car assembly lines, permeated into society, took shape in architecture and gradually became an ideology that shaped the whole of industry and the economy.

Therefore, successful and prevailing ideologies find their way into the architectural landscape and it is often accurately reflected in the architecture of that time, even though architectural support may not be necessary for an ideology to be successful.