



## **Redefining: Cultural Impression in Princely States During Colonial Period**

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### **Abstract**

India is well diverse with a variety of cultural and traditional practices. Impact of age-old practices redefined the idea of culture and tradition, not only as a hereditary system, but also as part of art and architecture. Factors such as the cultural changes between North and South India, impact of the British, changes in spatial organization and patriarchy and matrilineal system drew an impact on cultural impression of India through time.

Palaces (04<sup>th</sup> — 18<sup>th</sup> century) and the lifestyle of the heirs, being a soul example to exhibit the Indian uniqueness, gradually inclined towards British culture and morals. This influence brought a change in the architectural design of palaces, which is the core study area in the thesis.

Comparing the architectural planning of palaces from the 13<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> century showed a clear change on how British influenced Indian palace design. This became one of the finest reasons to identify cities with palaces based on their culture and tradition, and on art and architecture. In addition to finding how it has brought the influential change and what is the present scenario of the same palaces.

**The architectures that were adopted in India was a form of true traditional architecture which is been followed through a very long time and hence it was collaborated with Italian, French, Indo Sarcenic or European style.**

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### **Keywords**

Colonial period; Hierarchy; Architectural layout planning; Collaboration; Princely state; Culture and tradition

### **1. Cultural impression, Indian Identity**

Facts are fragments told through history. The architectural fragments are a part of culture, custom and tradition. Architectural fragments have framed it to become a part of cities identity also. Thus, history becomes a custom, a tradition or a value that is followed through time. It's an aspect of human life, beginning from shelter to the lifestyle adopted.

The culture, custom and tradition are intangible belief that is passed down over time. Ethics is defined as the significance of practicing the custom that is passed down through generations. Ethics closely inclined to custom and culture, is also associated with art and architectural methods followed.

Indian tradition and culture are dated back to Indus Valley Civilization. The process that follows the progressive development of a change from tradition to whole new cultural practice saw the revitalization through time.

The local tradition, culture, values and custom had challenged the colonial and modernization that tried to anchor India. It was during the paramount of British Raj that they put forward the idea of hybrid style of intervention in architecture to bring together the tradition of their home to Indian soil. Finally, a new style was evolved, which is Colonial style. This led to a creative intervention in India that began from early 13<sup>th</sup> century, giving way to revive the existing culture and simultaneously raising the modern culture for the era. Being rich in culture and tradition the present generation in India has adopted it, being the ethics that needed to be followed.

India being very diverse in her cultural and traditional values shows a drastic change in the architecture of the place. North, South, Central, East and West were unique in its own way. The rituals and tradition were customs followed by rulers and people, and interventions happened after the British came to India. Cultural changes occurred in the north than in the south. Along with the cultural impact, British brought a change in the architecture in the North India Precisely looking at the Art and architecture in the North gave India a much higher value towards cultural impression, in turn creating a unique identity. While South of India still tried not to get influences by the impact of British.

### **What is Culture?**

“Culture is defined as a system of intellectual production comparing the creation, preservation, spread and consumption of intellectual values, standards, knowledge concept and principles. The idea holds that culture is structurally undifferentiated. This is known as custom, which is been followed through time. Culture here is virtually synonymous with “tradition”, or customary ways of behaving. “(According to “Boris Eraser and Yogendran Singh, the Sociology of Cultural, Rawat Publication ed. 2006. Pp.22”)

Culture is precisely oriented to an individual and their psychological outlook than to a larger society. Culture as a custom exists in each individual and it differs from person to person. Difference in culture can be observed among people on basis of how they adopt and engage in the attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors that constitute their culture and tradition that is followed.

### **Method of analyzing the entire thesis:**

The pattern of research is sub-divided into the following phases:

#### **Phase 1:**

Critical analysis – palaces of north and south - with the similarities and overviews of the changes occurred.

Intervention through colonial period – ideologies implemented in India

#### **Phase 2:**

Culture – “a personal characteristic of an individual or group of individuals”.

Theoretically proving culture a backbone for spatial organization

Theoretical Conclusion

### **PRINCELY STATE A CULTURAL and ARCHITECTURAL GROWTH**

Palaces in India are a house that rules and governs. More to this it is also a residence and it is an important to note purpose of the place. While considering this as one of the stately home in the history, it is a sad fact that there are very few of them remaining even functioned as a palace even today.

Out of 560 princely states, during the 04<sup>th</sup> century, only 8 princely states were known to have a great impact on Indian architecture. Along with a wide improvement in architecture and various landmark constructions, along with this came a change in culture and tradition

Palaces in Gwalior, Baroda and Thiruvananthapuram are still functioned as royal residences since 18<sup>th</sup> century.

There was a huge time difference between the constructions of palaces. Though it was in the between the late 17<sup>th</sup> to the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, there is a huge change in the pattern architecture. This was mainly to show on how the palaces were classified within the era. The interior layout planning changed the manner of movement in the palaces.



Figure 1. PRINCELY STATES IN INDIA(SOURCE: Princely States Gazetteers of India)

Though there was a lot of building that was raised after the British collaboration. It was required to classify structure from the period of 17<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> can be classified into introvert and extrovert structure. These two types of architecture are generally distinct and dominant forms of traditional architecture. The inner details or interior of the structure are more oriented towards traditional architecture and style that is practiced, while the external architecture or exterior design details the collaboration of different style.

3 palaces that are consider for the study are Laxmi villas palace baroda, Jai Villas palace Gwalior and Velliya kottaram Travancore.

#### **Laxmi Villas Palace – Baroda**

The year 1890, the Gaekwads of Baroda decide to build a new palace in Baroda. The new palace is Laxmi Villas Palace. It has claimed it self to be one of the finest example of Italian Gothic style, the largest private domestic residence erected in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Even though is elaborate in plan, luxurious in finish and extraordinary in look, it's an example of one of the remarkable building. Laxmi Villas Palace (LVP) means “the abode where and prosperity level”.



The palace took twelve years to get raised. Totally built in Indo Sarcenic architecture, yet a mix of different other styles such as Muslim architecture, Christian architecture, Jain and finally Hindu construction. This is identified from the external vista of the edifice.

The design layout of the palace was planned more into the accessibility of spaces and more naturally turned into an environment supporting structure. There was no symmetrical pattern that led to the flow of another style into the design of the citadel. The layout design of the palace, is in such a way that there are many open space and the

privacy of the space is to be maintained in spite of providing many open spaces.

**Jai Villas Palace – Gwalior**



Jai villas mahal also called as Jai villas palace was built in 19<sup>th</sup> century in Gwalior. It is established during 1874 by Jayajirao Scindia, the Maharaja of Gwalior and is still the resident of the state. Italian in style, and architecture the building has used various iconography that shows the colonialism that has come in India through time. Raja Jiawaji was fond of various furnitures, and so he bought many various kinds of furniture's and accessories for decorating the palace, from different places like Italy, England, New York, Egypt, Japan, China and much more. The princes exchanged their traditional forms of enclosed and fortified palace complexed for Westernized building, which had elaborate façade and were far from the city center of their state capitals. They had incorporated aspects of Mughal imperial architecture during the per- colonial period, to emphasis many other styles into the building. The general style maintained in the interiors of the building are inclined to the adapted style brought in by the British.

The list of palaces falls into the area where the archeologist and writer Dr. George Michell, had listed few palaces into different category subdividing it considering based on the size, uniqueness and the range in the size of the building. The history has brought to knowledge many more palaces that are built during different period of time. There has been a huge phase in the construction of palaces that began since the time the Mughals has invaded India.

Velliya Kottaram , Travancore

Council chamber

Queen mother's palace

Performance hall

Central mansion

Southern palace



Valiya kottaram fort complex began its developments since the time of early 13th century which followed the matrilineal hierarchy system. There has been a series of development since then, which had to the pattern of palace in the fort area. The fort complex construction began since the time of 13th century. There are evidences of another puthen malika in place of kuthira malika.

Velliya kottaram



Since then till the time of 1885 there was new and modernized palaces yet tradition in planning were constructed. The last palace or the construction of the palace like structure ended with Kowdiar palace. Kowdiar palace was much more advanced when it came to development with colonial style zoning of the fort area was according to the custom and tradition that is inherited in the individual. It is a known fact about the culture and tradition that is been followed but ever since the time of the British Era, that began the changed.

#### Kowdiar Palace

The models and architectural terminology of 1600 Italian Renaissance architecture, a combination of Palladian architecture and neo classical architecture, were synthesized with picturesque aesthetics. Thus this style was enhanced and brought into architectural form during the Neo Renaissance time.

#### **Imperial India: how the network build**

The North, south East and West zone of India had different impacts mainly because of the cultural changes. Defining the cultural changes, the Britishers has emphasized there power on cultural aspect of the state. Be it from the selected princely states there are various changes in the cultural background, while the difference lies in the architecture that is implicated in these regions.

The British had a close relation with the Gaekwads and the Scindias, while the relation with the life of the Travancore was much different comparatively. British has bought a huge change in the core culture of the state that in turn has led to a change in the architecture and that has directed a change in the space organization of the palace designed.

#### **Comparative analysis**

The main reason for creating a section of zoning such as public, semi-public, semi-private and private is, in palaces the there is a huge category of people that are associated with the life of the palace. As the palace is a house that rules, governs, a court and as well a residence it is important to categorize. General analysis from studying the layout, will develop the idea of how the hierarchy has brought an effect to the planning of the citadel. This will be the secondary study which will include the patriarchal and the matrilineal system. The influence of the hierarchy on the layout planning, is one key aspect. This shows the change in the design layout from the 1500 to the late 1800 and 1900. The regional impact adds on to the design features of the layout of the palace. This is future supported with the regional study of the selected region which will vary for generations. Along with the region study of the place, economic study of region, the cultural and traditional aspects are referred. This will detail out the importance of the palace of study and in turn, will lead to the addition of the society and the development of the region.

#### **Frame Work for Analysis**

Visual Experience and Quality: Symmetry of the Building

Visual Experience and Quality: Form and Function

Space Organization: Analysis of Plan

Space Organization: Heriarchy

Space Organization: Accessibility

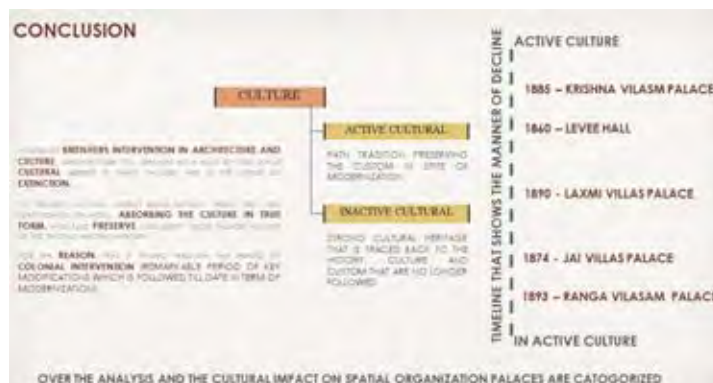
Space Organization: Cosmo Connection





OVERALL VIEW OF ANALYSIS	ZONING	COSMO CONNECTION	GENDER	CULTURE CHANGES
<b>RANGA VILASAM PALACE</b> 1839	7. PALACE NOW USED AS A HERITAGE MUSEUM FOR HISTORICAL, CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES. THE PALACE IS USED FOR VARIOUS FUNCTIONS LIKE MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, AND OTHER SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.	THE PALACE IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF A PALACE THAT HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A MUSEUM. THE PALACE IS USED FOR VARIOUS FUNCTIONS LIKE MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, AND OTHER SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.	THE PALACE IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF A PALACE THAT HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A MUSEUM. THE PALACE IS USED FOR VARIOUS FUNCTIONS LIKE MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, AND OTHER SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.	THE PALACE IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF A PALACE THAT HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A MUSEUM. THE PALACE IS USED FOR VARIOUS FUNCTIONS LIKE MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, AND OTHER SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.
<b>LEVEE HALL</b> 1860	THE PALACE IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF A PALACE THAT HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A MUSEUM. THE PALACE IS USED FOR VARIOUS FUNCTIONS LIKE MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, AND OTHER SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.	THE PALACE IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF A PALACE THAT HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A MUSEUM. THE PALACE IS USED FOR VARIOUS FUNCTIONS LIKE MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, AND OTHER SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.	THE PALACE IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF A PALACE THAT HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A MUSEUM. THE PALACE IS USED FOR VARIOUS FUNCTIONS LIKE MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, AND OTHER SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.	THE PALACE IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF A PALACE THAT HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A MUSEUM. THE PALACE IS USED FOR VARIOUS FUNCTIONS LIKE MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, AND OTHER SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.
<b>KRISHNA VILASAM PALACE</b> 1885	THE PALACE IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF A PALACE THAT HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A MUSEUM. THE PALACE IS USED FOR VARIOUS FUNCTIONS LIKE MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, AND OTHER SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.	THE PALACE IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF A PALACE THAT HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A MUSEUM. THE PALACE IS USED FOR VARIOUS FUNCTIONS LIKE MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, AND OTHER SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.	THE PALACE IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF A PALACE THAT HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A MUSEUM. THE PALACE IS USED FOR VARIOUS FUNCTIONS LIKE MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, AND OTHER SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.	THE PALACE IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF A PALACE THAT HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A MUSEUM. THE PALACE IS USED FOR VARIOUS FUNCTIONS LIKE MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, AND OTHER SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.
<b>JAI VILLAS PALACE</b> 1874	THE PALACE IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF A PALACE THAT HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A MUSEUM. THE PALACE IS USED FOR VARIOUS FUNCTIONS LIKE MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, AND OTHER SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.	THE PALACE IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF A PALACE THAT HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A MUSEUM. THE PALACE IS USED FOR VARIOUS FUNCTIONS LIKE MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, AND OTHER SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.	THE PALACE IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF A PALACE THAT HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A MUSEUM. THE PALACE IS USED FOR VARIOUS FUNCTIONS LIKE MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, AND OTHER SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.	THE PALACE IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF A PALACE THAT HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A MUSEUM. THE PALACE IS USED FOR VARIOUS FUNCTIONS LIKE MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, AND OTHER SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.
<b>LAXMI VILLAS PALACE</b> 1890	THE PALACE IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF A PALACE THAT HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A MUSEUM. THE PALACE IS USED FOR VARIOUS FUNCTIONS LIKE MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, AND OTHER SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.	THE PALACE IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF A PALACE THAT HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A MUSEUM. THE PALACE IS USED FOR VARIOUS FUNCTIONS LIKE MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, AND OTHER SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.	THE PALACE IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF A PALACE THAT HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A MUSEUM. THE PALACE IS USED FOR VARIOUS FUNCTIONS LIKE MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, AND OTHER SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.	THE PALACE IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF A PALACE THAT HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A MUSEUM. THE PALACE IS USED FOR VARIOUS FUNCTIONS LIKE MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, AND OTHER SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.

Figure 4. COMPARISON ON BASES OF CULTURE AND ARCHITECTURE



India! The land of ancient times. Its heritage is not featured only to historic and cultural events but also to the objects or elements that become a part of space over time. India is influenced by many rulers, both from this soil and from abroad. Henceforth Indian culture, history, tradition and custom can be considered as the melting point of important world civilizations. Regional kingdom were settled in India from the time of 700 AD. Since then there is a fusion of different cultural events that occurred. Similarly, from 17<sup>th</sup> century, a fusion of typical Indian culture (1200 – 1500 AD) and foreign culture exists in the regional architecture. It's a fact that is commonly spoken about India, as the country exhibits a huge diversity in culture which varies from time to time and region to region. Diversity in culture in India exists as a trade mark in most of the states in present Indian context.

Palaces as a typology is selected for the important reason that the life of the Indian royals depicts the sophisticated cultural context that followed through time. Even the super imposed format of the cultural changes is implemented in Palaces as an example. The art and architecture of the considered princely state gave an identity to the cultural expression of India. Citadel of Baroda, Gwalior and Travancore as the chosen case study express the life of royal family. The friendly association with these kingdoms shared with the British Empire had contributed to the rapid shift in the architectural vocabulary from the regional to the Colonial. This in turn had its impact on the culture and lifestyle of the respective royals. In India, all the princely states followed Patriarchal hierarchy while only Travancore as a princely state follows matrilineal system. Through this understanding, analysis of the selected palaces is carried. Analyses of the spaces in palaces are according to the movement of the royal member. Focus of study is précised into accessibility, visual expression of building, spatial understanding through zoning, circulation and movement and also space relationships.

A palace as termed does not mean it's purely residential as a typology. It's a multifunctional structure that began its requirements since 700 AD. Multifunctional in relation to palace means it handles administration (governance), religious activities, and royal ceremonies. On basis of multifunctional purpose planning and design developed for royal families are future classified into public, semi-public, semi-private and private spaces. Emphasizing on the cultural activities of the space in the palace was to show the required purpose for such a space. Being influenced highly by the western cultural aspects, the space requirement is specifically designed as an addition to the cultural fusion. Culture is an integral part of architecture. Any space designed and used by the royal members are categorized and do have a cultural intension. Culture being intangible and is defined as an appreciation and understanding of a tradition that is passed through time. But through analysis, it is evident that elements and objects cannot compliment a space. There is entirely two new dimension developed to cultural aspect after the analysis.

Active cultural according to the analysis carried out followed the path tradition preserving the custom in spite of modernization. The spaces that are categorized into existing cultural continuity specifies the value of tradition that followed through time.

Inactive cultural defines the strong cultural heritage that is traced back to the history. Culture and custom that are no longer followed, but are facts that are remembered. Impacts formed are thus parts of history.

The cultural impact on the states of India did show the architectural changes that were incorporated and how that changed the face of art and architecture. But slowly through the uniqueness of the building, many structures gained prestige value, as it turned to be a part of heritage and identity of the city.

## 2. List of figures

FIGURE 1: PRINCELY STATES IN INDIA (SOURCE: Princely States Gazetteers of India)

FIGURE 2: COMPARISION OF CASES OBSERVED

FIGURE 3: ZONING PATTERN IN PALACE

FIGURE 4: COMPARISION ON BASES OF CULTURE AND ARCHITECTURE

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