

**STUDYING, EXPLORING AND DEFINING THE ARCHITECTURAL EVOLUTION OF LANDMARKS DURING LAST DECADE**Yusra Safdar<sup>1</sup> (Principal author), Muhammad Faisal Rehman<sup>\*2</sup>, Yasmeen Ahmed<sup>3</sup>**Original Article**

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**Abstract**

*Architectural evolution has been a universal and widely prevalent phenomenon in the world. Architecture is the manifestation of culture and these cultural elements are equally found in old and new architecture. Our country is Pakistan is centre of hundreds heritages, and architectural evolution has been associated to the history and culture of Pakistan. In Pakistan, we usually categorize architecture into four broad periods including pre-islamic period, the Islamic period, the colonial and post-colonial period. The research paper will discuss the contemporary architecture of Pakistan in the form of Landmarks. Further this research was based on the analysis of the different relevant architectural case studies in last ten years of capital city of Pakistan, Islamabad. Particular focus was given to the design evolution process and its influences. The research is organized in set of a decade and would be strengthen with the comparative analysis of case studies of famous buildings in the given period.*

**Keywords:** Architectural evolution; Landmarks; Comparative analysis, Culture.

**Introduction**

Architecture has been one of the prominent source of national identity because every nation has its own architectural history. Architecture also represents the socio-cultural aspect of a nation and contain an imbibe message for political integration, economic motivation and pluralism. Besides, the architecture of any region or country also indicates the deeply engraved realities such as minority presence and elitism. The intellectual history Pakistan is also preserved in different architectural buildings and architecture also show the relationship between past, present and future (Qasmi, 2019). Architecture indeed are a direct part of heritage expression and advocates the value of buildings and it inform us about life that takes place around heritage sites. It is that part of a heritage that transmits past philosophy to a nation, enrich it with present modalities and convey future prospects (Moffat, 2021).

The social and cultural element embedded in architecture is a source of pressing significance in Pakistan. Architecture represents society's health and its historical background. Although, Pakistan has a rich history of architecture, however; modern architecture has obtained immense attention in Pakistan, and it also conveys a message of transition from tradition to modernity in architecture in Pakistan (Tabb, & Deviren, 2017).

Pakistan is the country, owning a deep long and magnificent history. Due to the residence of immense cultures and ethnic groups here its architecture genre is the blend of multicultural tinges. It has landmarks from Indus valley civilization (Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa ruins) to Persian, Mughal, and colonial architecture. Therefore, the evolution of contemporary architecture in Pakistan can be observed from modified and influenced design factors and elements from the past. While taking a look on early modern buildings built like National Mausoleum, the tomb of the founder of Pakistan, Muhammad Ali Jinnah (Roose, 2009). The design evolution synthesis depicts the influence of Mughal Architecture as gardens, terraces, fountains, and unicolor elevation along with Moorish arches from past and blended it with a square plan giving it contemporary look with gigantic dome (Moffat, 2021). Likewise, the Faisal mosque's architecture is unique and modern and is a departure from the long history of South Asian Islamic Architecture and fuses contemporary lines with the more traditional look of an Arab. Bedouin's tent with its triangular prayer hall and four minarets.

### Landmarks:

#### Pakistan Monument

The Pakistan monument is located at the west of Shakarparian Hills in the federal capital Islamabad, Pakistan. This wonderful building is a magnificent representation of the cultural heritage and history of Pakistan with regard to patriotism. This monument was inaugurated during 2007, and is mainly divided into two sections i.e. giant memorial shaped like the petals of a flower that explains the different historical events that resulted in the creation of a separate homeland. The other side (the museum) accumulated the history in form of a museum (Harper, 2010). The Pakistan Monument was inaugurated in Islamabad on 23 March 2007 as a national monument embodying the country's history and is in effect rich with significant cultural references.



Figure 1 Pakistan Monument- Petals Design

#### 1.1.1 Design

For its design, architect Arif Masood drew

Inspiration from the figure of a blossoming flower to represent the four provinces (Figure 1) and three territories into which Pakistan is subdivided. The structure consists of four bigger 'petals' (the provinces), alternated with three smaller ones (the territories), built in granite and decorated with murals on the inner sides. Seen from above, the monument meaningfully recalls the five-pointed star on Pakistan's National Flag (Figure 2). Below the petals, metallic crescent is found which is inscribed with verses by Pakistan's founder Mohammad Ali Jinnah and Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal.



Figure 2: Central platform- star Shaped

### Conception

The plan for a national monument was first envisioned in 2005 by Uxi Mufti, son of Mumtaz Mufti. The idea was later adopted by Ministry of Culture led by Hamad Kashif and in 2005 the Pakistan Council of Architects & Town Planners organized a national monument design competition based around the theme of signifying strength, unity and dedication of the people of Pakistan into an icon representing an independent and free nation. The final design proposed by Arif Masoud was selected. Gardens in design were influenced by the historical Mughal emperors' heavenly gardens (Figure 4)



Figure 3 Moon at Monument



Figure 4 Terraced Gardens (influenced by Mughal Gardens)

### 1.1 The Centaurus

The Centaurus is a mixed-use development project constructed in Islamabad, Pakistan. The project involves over 6.59 acres of land in Islamabad's arterial corridor, called Blue Area. The complex is designed by Atkins, whose portfolio includes the Burj Al Arab and Jumeirah Beach Hotel in Dubai, and the Bahrain World Trade Center in Bahrain. It is a project of the Pak Gulf Construction (Pvt) Ltd (PGCL) in Islamabad. Pak Gulf Construction Company is a joint venture between Al Tamimi (Saudi Arabia) and Sardar Builders (Pakistan). (Gtroad.pk)



Figure 5 3-towers

Besides serving residential, commercial, and business purposes, the complex is intended to symbolize the growth of Pakistan, and to enable it to host international conferences and seminars in Pakistan's capital city. The Centaurus is a dynamic real estate project of epic proportions, progressing from concept to reality at an incredible pace, is bound to be the next icon of Pakistan. (Figure5)

The Centaurus consists of 6.6 acres (27,000 m<sup>2</sup>) of architectural brilliance in the heart of Islamabad-Pakistan.

The highest tower of this multipurpose building will house a total of forty-one floors. This building good enough to get it a good ranking amongst some of the tallest structures in Pakistan. The Centaurus Tower, upon its completion will comprise of three buildings including corporate offices, state of the art apartments and a five-star hotel (Heegaard, 2011). All these three buildings will be connected together through a shopping mall that will spread/stretch the length of all the three towers. (Figure 6).



(Zameen.com) Figure 6 Centaurus

### 1.2 World Trade Center Islamabad:

World Trade Center Islamabad is strategically and ideally located at Defense housing Authority Islamabad Phase II. It is facing the ancient Mughal trading route, on the G.T. Road at a distance of 10 minutes from Benazir Bhutto International Airport. It is the most prominent landmark development in the form of an eye-catching structure. It offers a blend of intuitive services and blissful pampering, Royal Style. (Figure 7,8 & 9)



Figure 7 WTC Giga Mal

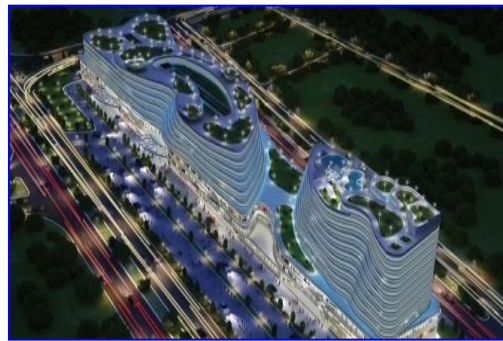


Figure 8 WTC Plan

This iconic development plays a major role in Pakistan's Corporate sector and add significant value to the economic growth, tourism, FDI and Foreign trade. World Trade Center Islamabad acts as a gateway of interaction with over 750,000 International Businesses based in more than 300 Associated World Trade Centers in around 100 countries. It is a catalyst for exploring new foreign trade opportunities as well as to expand local and national businesses in the best working atmosphere that Islamabad has never seen and in a setting previously unimaginable. The design of this building



Figure 9 The iconic WTC

has been a magnificent architectural design with a complex multiplicity of objectives. This building is built to fulfill number of requirements and this is one of the famous iconic buildings of the twenty first century. This is an integrated architectural design that fulfills a range of economic activities, social exchange and gatherings with a blend of technology and innovation (Yaneva, 2009). Figure 10 The iconic WTC

### Saidpur Village:

Saidpur is a historic village located in a ravine in the Margalla Hills, near Islamabad and the Daman-e-Koh overlook. The village's historic core, its abandoned Hindu temple, and its Sikh gurdwara were restored in 2006. This village is a combination of old infrastructure, modernity, congestion and a hub of financial activities. This village stretches from Margalla hills towards Rawalpindi, and after the development this village though underwent significant transformation still hosts old fashioned, constructed and preserved architecture. In historical context, this village was inhabited by Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs before partition, while it became a part of the Capital Development Authority (CDA) (Khan, 2011).

Saidpur Village is often quoted as an example of modernization and tradition, however; in the past two decades it has witnessed a massive transformation due to economic growth, and change in social life of the people. Currently, it has been one of the famous places with several avenues for economic investment (Bajwa, 2015).



Figure 11 Saidpur village (keep historical influence)

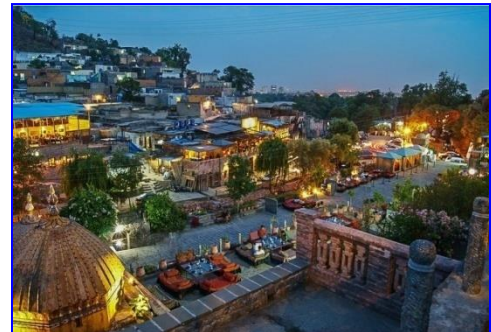


Figure 12 Restaurant Aerial View

### 1.5 Historical Background and Today's Contemporary Usage:

The village is estimated to be around 400 years old and has been part of a number of civilizations including Gandhara, the Greeks, the Buddhists, the Mughal Era, Ashoka and the colonial period (Mallgrave, 2009).

Raja Man Singh converted the village into a place for Hindus to worship. A number of small ponds—Rama Kunda, Sita Kunda, Lakshman Kunda and Hanuman Kunda — were carved out. The region is home to many Hindu temples that have been preserved and depict the history of Hindu civilization and architecture in the region.

The Saidpur model village preserves a courtyard where three religions co-existed. The gurdwara, a church and a Hindu temple all stand alongside one another. A mosque is also located near the complex alongside the stream which was once a source of clean drinking water (Saran, & Pandey, 1992).

The village now houses several high-end restaurants, and attracts Islamabad residents and tourists alike. (Figure 10,11) The Capital Development Authority completed the remodeling of Saidpur into a tourist attraction by giving it the look and feel of a quaint village. The key changes that have come

about include the re-doing of a temple, the cleaning up of a stream running through the village and giving the mud houses a facelift. The village reflects

- the traditional ambience.
- the temple,
- the stones used on the walls,
- the stacks of hay,
- the horse-drawn carts and everything else depicts the history of Pothohar region.

(Figure 12,13)



Figure 13 Remodeled Village



Figure 14 Saidpur Village (keeping its regionalism)

## 2. Analysis of Contemporary Architecture of Case Studies:

Contemporary architects and designers believe that new technology render old styles of building obsolete. Modernist designers typically reject decorative motifs in design, preferring to emphasize the materials used and pure geometrical forms as discussed in above case studies of landmarks of capital city of Pakistan, Islamabad.

Contemporary architects created designs that embody all the differences in styles, making the buildings of the times masterpieces. Cutting away from the Modern architectural designs of the late twentieth century, today's architecture features eco-friendly whimsy and creativity by considering the clean lines. New architecture makes use of oversized windows to invite an abundance of natural light and large open spaces, providing a sense of airiness, often being given unique shapes as we observed in Centaurus, World Trade Center (Giga Mall). Contemporary architects focused on eco-friendly designs which can be observed in Pakistan Monument and Saidpur Village.

## 3. Analysis of Change of Material and Construction:

Today, imported materials are easily available and the cheaper ones are sometimes cheaper than their Pakistani equivalents. Also, a whole range of industrially produced imported building materials are available and extensively used. They differ from each other. Their use has increased the cost of construction and finishes although they have not necessarily helped in producing better designed and/or more technically sound buildings. They have also introduced a variety and often discordant surface finishes and issues of scale. However, they have made it easier for architects and developers to copy international design.

Although Pakistani contemporary architecture is looking for a definitive and clear direction, the constant search for appropriate and applicable architecture has begun to show results.

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