

Relationship between tourism and architecture  
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Figure 1: Different styles of architecture based on colonialization

## ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

In this booklet, I will examine different architectural styles that are influenced by tourism. I will focus on the relationship between tourism and modern architecture and how they are dependent on each other. Over the past centuries, the built environment and tourism has become inseparable; Thus, I am going to talk about seven different ways tourism are defined in the modern days and provide each with architecture references to further strengthen the argument.

## TRADITIONAL STYLE FROM COLONIZATION

In the early years of Caribbean, there is a rich colonial architectural legacy. Because there are many different canonizations, there wasn't any define "styles". Thus, it is considered as "Traditional style". There are Spanish-colonial churches and houses; French and English architecture, along with Baroque and Neoclassical styles. As you can see in figure A, different styles of architecture are influenced by colonization.

In addition, architectural styles differ from island to island and country to country. Each Island has its own "identity". For instance, larger island such as Puerto Rico would possess a strong heritage of religious building built of masonry and rooted in the classical architectural language of Mediterranean. However, smaller island such as Martinique would have a strong French influence with mansard roofs and decorative quoins. Lastly, English Island such as Jamaica have an abundance of Palladian inspired buildings, which are mostly symmetrical made out of masonry.

Last but not least, I have observed that on different islands, homes would have different porches. Some would have the porches recessed in the house while some are attached to the house. Although it is not a significant difference, it is evident that culture and colonization play an important role in local architectural styles

## INTERNATIONAL STYLE

In the 1950s, tourism became popular in Caribbean. Many wealthy visitors came for vacations living in expensive hotels. As a result, architecture began to shift into international style. As cruises industry developed which made it easier and cheaper for Americans to visit Caribbean, it is inevitable that Caribbean abandoned the more traditional forms and embrace the more modern style that would save costs and has a better efficiencies. Tourism allowed government to sponsor tourist buildings such as hotels and casino, which is detached from the local architectural style.

Figure 2: Mass tourism and international style



## MASS TOURISM

Mass tourism are made possible by cheaper flights and abundant cruises. As a result, tens of thousands of tourist are able to visit Caribbean. As Poon suggest “Mass tourism refers to the movement of a large number of organised tourist to popular holiday destinations for recreational purposes.” In fact, mass tourism is not a specific number of tourists, but rather when there are too many for a destination to accommodate.

Why is this important? Well, because mass tourism has significantly changed the design intention of architecture. As opposed to building an identity, most resorts and homes are simply designed to accommodate and create recreational pleasure. As a result, in the era of mass tourism, international style took over traditional styles where the culture identities from colonization disappear.

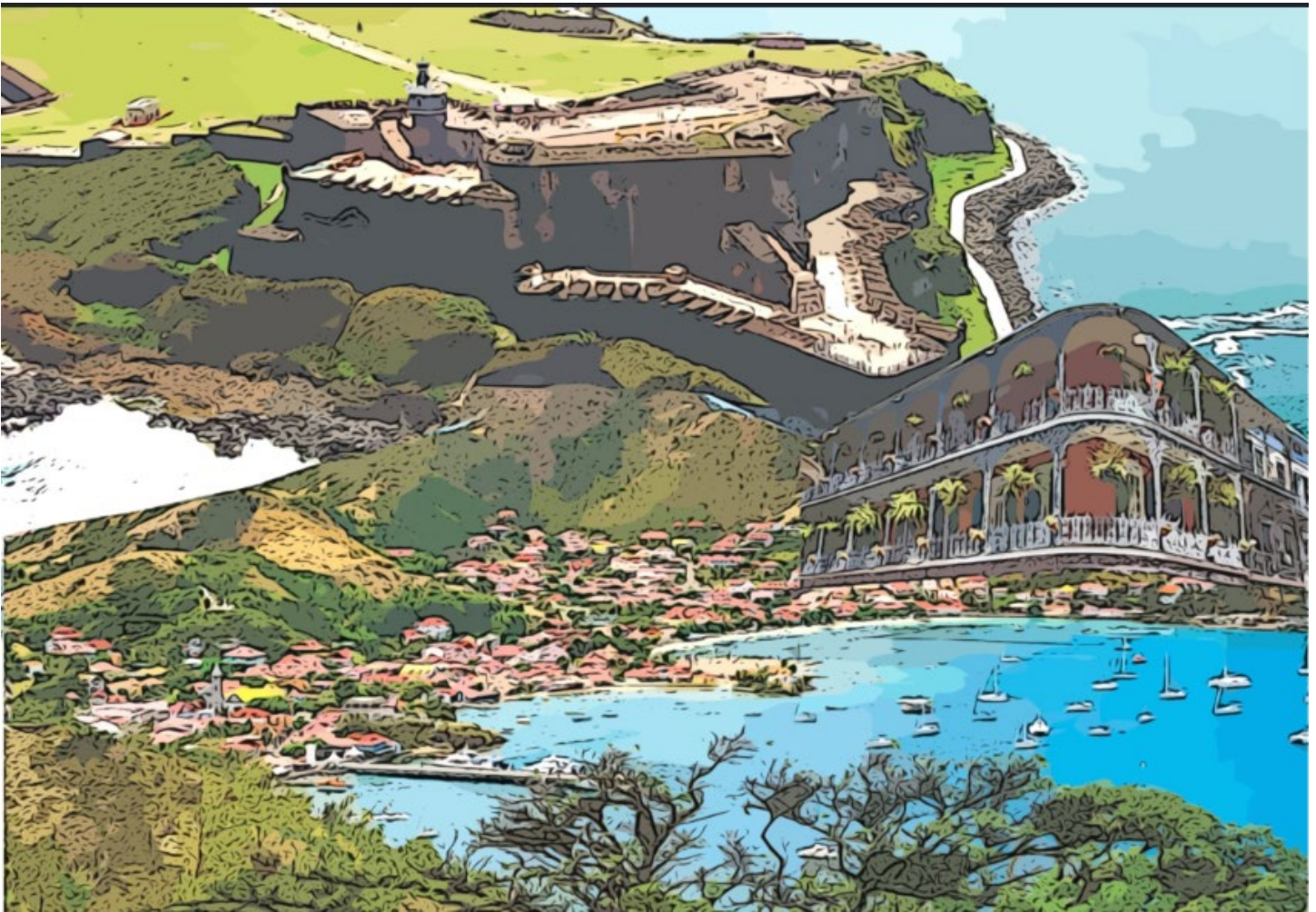


Figure 4: quality tourism in caribbean

## QUALITY TOURISM

After mass tourism, tourists began to look for ways to distinguish themselves as well as the resort. Consequently, quality tourism became an alternative way to attract tourists by creating local culture and architectural styles. In fact, this method is adopted throughout the 1980s as residents and tourists consider this approach to create a deeper cultural connection to the region and encourages more interactions between the locals and tourists.

Quality tourism has embraced the traditional style architecture of the region. More than ever before, the traditional elements of the Caribbean architecture are celebrated as a cultural legacy and the identity of each island is promoted throughout different real estate properties. Developers and owners became more interested in recognizing and preserving individual historic properties. As a result, many sites are preserved and then turned into a small niche hotel where tourism is promoted at the same time when local plantations and culture are restored.

STEP 1: IDENTIFY WHAT IS HISTORIC



STEP 2: REJECT SUPERFICIAL STYLES



STEP 3: CREATE A RESTORATION



Figure 5: 3 steps of quality tourism



Figure 6: Charlotte Amalie shopping district

### CARIBBEAN STYLE

Caribbean style is a result of quality tourism where traditional style began to be seen as a cultural legacy which represent a unique identity for each island. It started as renovation that focuses on preserving recognized plantations and local materials.

However, there are problems that many restorations are only a romantic approach to architectural conservation that is only loosely grounded in recognizing preservation and conservation techniques. For instance, In Charlotte Amalie shopping district, the street used quality tourism that only kept the appearance of the historic street and storefronts.

As a result, it would only appear that the street contains cultural value but in fact, it is only a very superficial construction that appeals only to tourist. This method became prevalent but the superficial construction began to take away from the island uniqueness and create a mass produced view of what Caribbean architecture is.

In fact, the new Caribbean style is far from the traditional style. New design influences began to merge into the new constructions. In the reading A little more Gingerbread, the author elaborated on the new “gingerbread” decorations as “superficial applications of bright Caribbean colors, sawn-wood decorations, latticework, widely spaced stock rails, balusters, plywood shutters and repetitive concrete arches”. These elements are not common in historic building, but have nevertheless become local features, especially in tourist oriented development.

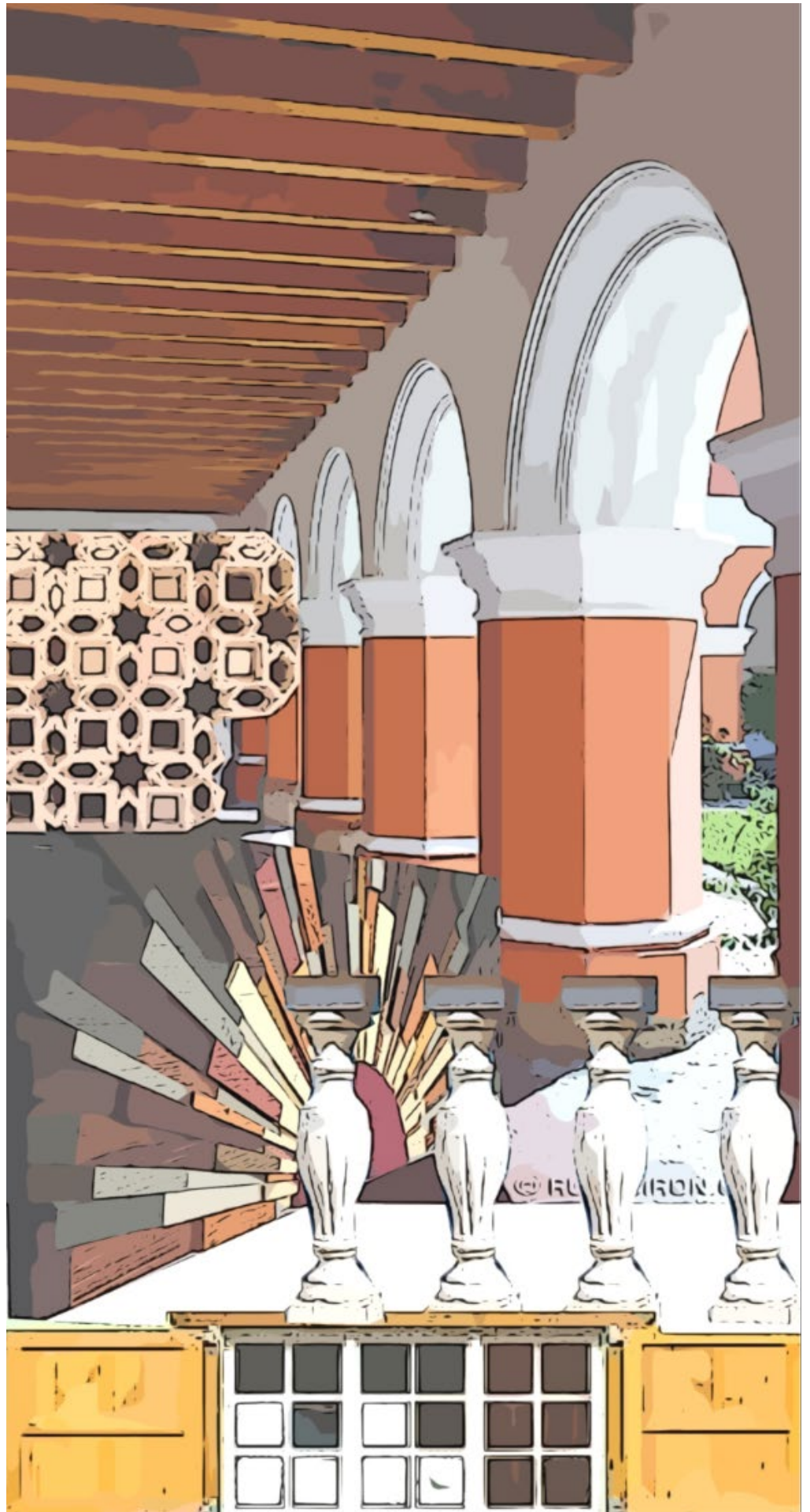


Figure 7: Gingerbread element



Figure 8: Toledo Alcazar and spanish revolution

## POLITICAL STYLE

Tourism are often defined by politics to promote a propaganda. As shown in figure 8, this is Toledo Alcazar. The building became a symbol during the Franco regime. The structure was a significant monument in the spanish revolution, and as a result, played an important role in the Facist retelling its story. As the author of tourism perception, performance and place suggest “

By celebrating the site, the Fascist leaders were able to draw a parallel between the Spanish empire and the new political order”. In fact, tourist who come to visit the place will be embedded with the story and ideas of the time and therefore, the architecture is able to recast tourism as a form of patriotism.



## SOCIAL IDENTITY STYLE

How does social identity affect architectural styles? Well, tourism can often be defined by social identities. In the late 19th and early 20th century, middle class women often travel as a process of self discovery. The movement also have a big impact on tourism as tourism provides the means to build behavioral codes, that are often seen as a process of self-edification. By drawing upon published letters, sketching and taking photographs, many single women became more confident and self fulfilling. As a result, architectural design are seen as a provocation of rising social identities.

Figure 9: Middle class women traveling



Figure 10: Roman souvenir

The BEST One-of-a-Kind  
**SOUVENIRS**  
to buy in Rome, Italy



## PATRIMONY TOURISM

Tourism are defined by patrimony. This is especially true in Rome. The image of the city is represented by souvenirs that are often seen on the internet and social medias. For those who have never been to Rome, its souvenirs and images helped to recreate the fragmentation and collection of the city. In fact, the souvenirs has became so significant that it helped to standardize a collective set of memories. Seeing the image in this slide, you can see that these 3d printed items gives the tourist expectations and perceptions of the architecture of Rome. As a result, as Benson argues “souvenir acts as a site of negotiation between myth and reality, local and global patrimony”

Figure 11: Romantic resort

## TOURIST PERFORMANCE STYLE

Architectural can also be influenced by tourist performance. This is apparent in many resort. For instance, the right image is a photo from Sugar Beach Resort on Marutius. The resort function as a stage set, with different roles such as waiters, managers, choreographers and directions to build an domesticated “show”. The customers, or in another word, tourist, are therefore in a role-playing performance with an unique experience.

In the island of Marutitus, architecture are often cast by sexual imagination. As you can see in figure 11, the heart shaped bath tubs with mirrored ceilings create an environment of sexual fantasy and is therefore become “integral to the construction and maintenance of a hegemonic idea of romance”





Figure 12: Learning from vegas

### ARCHITECTURE BY TOURIST EXPERIENCE

Last but not least, architecture can also be defined by tourist experience and imagination. As architectural students, we all know “Learning from Vegas”, however, the strip has changed drastically and is therefore very different from before. However, I argues that the new buildings has become emblematic of a new kind of tourism. The luxor casino hotel has been renovated to attract more audience. The past has been selectively reconstructed along with new decorations and technologies. As a result, the architecture is forcing the tourist to become an intrepid explorer to identify the past and the present. As a cultural geographer has argued “such environments represent a new type of monument as well as a new way of interpreting and presenting history”.

### CONCLUSION

To conclude, tourist and architecture are inseparable from each other. From the the mass tourism to quality tourism, we can see how architectural styles have changed in Caribbean. Outside of Caribbean, architectural designs are influenced by many other tourism movements. Living in the modern era, we have to understand that tourism and architecture are constantly evolving and changing. Different countries, different culture may attract different tourist that can lead to different architectural intentions. In this booklet, I elaborated on many interconnections between the two industries and I believe that tourism and architecture will continue to be come inseparable and dependant on each other.

## CITATION

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