

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PUBLIC SPACE IN ASSESSING ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE

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Abstract. This study examines the relationship between public spaces surrounding heritage buildings in Arequipa, Peru, and social perceptions of these structures. Focusing on buildings recognized as significant architectural landmarks by the magazine “El arquitecto Peruano” founded by Belaunde Terry. The research reveals a weak correlation between the quality of the surrounding public space and the society’s appreciation of the architectural edifice. However, certain buildings stand out in public esteem, notably Plaza de Armas, Convento de Santa Catalina, Iglesia de la Compañía, Templo de Yanahuara, Iglesia de San Agustín, and Iglesia de Cayma, primarily due to their Ba-roque-mestizo architectural style. The text emphasizes the pivotal role of public spaces in the evaluation of architectural heritage. This research sheds light on the complex interplay between architectural heritage, public spaces, and social perception, offering valuable insights for urban planning and heritage preservation initiatives.

Keywords: Arequipa, heritage, public space, social valuation.

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1. Introduction

Arequipa, which received the prestigious title of UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2001, stands as a symbol to architectural richness, blending European and native influences (Chávez Gómez, 2015). This recognition underscores the significance of the “mestizo” architecture within the Historic Center. The fusion of styles and cultures has been important since the Athens Charter of 1931, emphasizing the need to preserve this cultural legacy.

A crucial factor in conserving the architectural heritage lies in the importance and appreciation society assigns to it (Carta de Atenas de 1931). Valuation stems from those who interact daily with these historic buildings, be they local residents, tourists, or occasional visitors. These designated heritage sites become landmarks in the daily cityscape, transcending mere utilitarian purposes. These spaces can transform into environments of coexistence, where users feel not only comfortable but also emotionally connected to their surroundings, thus influencing the appreciation and valuation of the constructed landscape (Camprubí et al., 2009; Zamudio Vega, 2011; Doctor, 2000).

Since receiving the UNESCO World Heritage status, Arequipa has embarked on a continuous process of reevaluating its emblematic structures. However, it is not clear

what the protection status of the areas surrounding these buildings is. This question impulses the central purpose of this text: to analyze the characteristics of spaces adjacent to Arequipa’s representative buildings and establish a direct relationship between these features and society’s perception of the studied buildings.

In this interplay between architecture and society, the culture of society is where the appreciation of historic buildings intertwines with the quality of the public spaces surrounding them. When these spaces are carefully designed and maintained, they serve not merely as thoroughfares but as lively settings where people meet, interact, and immerse themselves in the aesthetic enveloping them (Gehl, 1936). This connection between architecture and its public environment underscores the importance of sensitive and high-quality urban planning, which preserves not only the physical structure but also the identity of Arequipa as an unparalleled cultural treasure on the global stage.

2. State of the art

Before delving into the important aspects of space valuation, we must discuss the typology of spaces and spatial elements. To do this, we advance important aspects commented on by Jan Gehl, among others. Gehl specifies

the types of spaces as interior and exterior, valuing the relationship that exists between them (Gehl, 1936, p. 22), emphasizing the importance of the uses surrounding these public spaces and questioning the flexibility of interior and exterior spaces. Regarding spatial elements, it should be noted that these include individuals, buildings, vehicles, pets, and furniture, among others, which, in motion or static, generate interactions (Gehl, 1936, p. 14).

One of the most important aspects of valuing heritage spaces is the relationship between culture-society and tourism. This relationship is intuited by Immaculada Mercado when she divides the population between tourists and residents, if the tourism have been introduced such essential component of the live (Mercado Alonso, 2018). Victor Martin relates these two population poles through culture, which a society identifies with, as a generator of tourism (Martín, 2006). Understanding that to value a space, one must not only consider the space or its layout but also the relationship with the culture that surrounds it and the discourse. This implies that when society has profound knowledge about its culture, it can explain it better, making it easier to attract tourism. Mao Yao indicates that the facades of heritage buildings are cultural expressions that benefit their surroundings (Mao et al., 2020).

A second important aspect to Gehl is the typology of activity. It is understood that a space is of quality when it has areas for passing and staying. Spaces for staying can be categorized into 3 main groups where activities take place: necessary activities, optional activities, and social activities. It is indicated that spaces for passing should be dimensioned to accommodate 10 to 15 pedestrians per minute in relation to the street width (in meters) (Gehl, 1936, p. 134). The author Whyte demonstrates that the detailed design of public spaces, including the arrangement of benches, the placement of trees, and the location of water features, has a significant impact on people interaction (Whyte, 1980).

A third important aspect to Gehl is the requirements for staying. Spaces for staying require a definition of their needs to exist; these requirements include a long perimeter that allows support for activities both inside and outside, irregularities in this perimeter, multiple opportunities to rest, among others (Gehl, 1936, pp. 149–156). Antony Durante indicates that the orientation of spaces considers factors such as lighting, signing and the number of users which affect pedestrians' behavior (Durante et al., 2018). These factors, in turn, affect the territoriality of the heritage site in the urban context. To understand this, Alfonso Doctor speaks of the itinerary as an ideal tool to assess its overall diversity and the multiple interactions between elements of the territory and heritage (Doctor, 2000).

A final important aspect is the relationship between the sense of belonging, activity, and security. José J. Resendiz asserts that individuals develop a sense of belonging to the architectural object within the city (Resendiz, 2016). Gehl, once again, helps us understand that the quality of spaces and their activity can improve space usage (Gehl, 1936, p. 34). He focuses on defining a quality space by limiting it, marking an ideal space as one that is 25 m wide and

at most 110 m long (Gehl, 1936, p. 163). And if the sense of belonging generates activity, activity provides security simply by having people around (Gehl, 1936, p. 27).

Regarding the valuation of heritage buildings by users, the works of Pérez Gálvez should be considered, delving into the importance of sociodemographic characteristics, (Pérez Gálvez et al., 2020). The same author, speak about the article "The core of heritage tourism" by Poria, focuses on the emotional perceptions of users (Poria et al., 2003, as cited in Pérez Gálvez et al., 2020) and speak about the article "Towards a classification of cultural tourism" focused in the cultural motivation of tourism (McKercher, 2002, as cited in Pérez Gálvez et al., 2020). Other element to consider is explained by Yao in his text "Impact of the heritage building facade in small-scale public spaces on human activity: Based on spatial analysis" in which he considers mobility and transit between buildings (Mao et al., 2020). Finally, other element is the one Pérez Gálvez captures about space valuation and how people experience it (Pérez Gálvez et al., 2020).

3. Method

The study method is developed in three steps: the first is the study of the site, the second is the assessment of the society and in order to relate these two concepts, a comparison of variables will be developed through the Pearson rating developed through the Excel program.

The first step is the study of the places. The method of studying the spaces will consist of a qualitative analysis of the area aiming to present its current state. The goal is to relate the perceptual information collected in the survey, corroborate the data, and discuss a possible solution to improve the situation.

The study is visual and is conducted through an onsite visit and photographic documentation of the location. Photographic records will be captured using a digital camera, focusing on observing the state of the urban environment surrounding the studied buildings, including public furniture present on sidewalks or public spaces where various heritage buildings are located and in front of them.

For the list of elements searched for in the photographs and counted, the texts of Gehl, Durante and Doctor have been used. (Gehl, 1936; Durante et al., 2018; Doctor, 2000) The elements are: Urban context; public furniture; roadway width; platform width; platform width; acces ramps; pedestrian crossings with traffic lights; businesses (formal or informal); street lights; building visibility and vegetation.

About the society evaluation, it is important to understand the quality of the space, for which it will be necessary to resort to surveys that qualify it on the part of the Society. The survey is divided into 4 sections following the categories defined based on the relevant authors cited in the literature review: Definition of sociodemographic characteristics of respondents, questions about perceptions, emotions, mobility, and transit in front of the buildings, questions about space valuation (Table 1). The test has been made through google-form.

Table 1. Test applied to society

<p>Emotional and Perceptual Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Please select your age range - Please indicate your nationality - Please select your highest level of education - Please select your current employment status - Are you a tourist or a resident in the city of Arequipa? - How long have you been living or staying in Arequipa?
<p>Perception Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are you familiar with the various heritage buildings in the city of Arequipa? - Which heritage buildings in the city of Arequipa are you familiar with? - Please rate the following buildings on a scale of 1–5, with 1 being the least appealing and 5 being the most appealing
<p>Emotional Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For the heritage buildings in Arequipa that you are familiar with, what emotions do they evoke? - During a typical week [with 1 being the least frequent and 5 being the most frequent], how often do you visit the aforementioned buildings? - During a typical week [with 1 being the least frequent and 5 being the most frequent], how often do you pass by the aforementioned buildings? - Can you properly appreciate the buildings from your car? - Can you properly appreciate the buildings from the sidewalk? - On a scale of 1–5, rate the safety of the streets where the following buildings are located, with 1 being very safe and 5 being very unsafe.
<p>Questions on Mobility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do you usually travel, by car or on foot? - Do you use any of the aforementioned buildings as a meeting point? If yes, which one? - Do you have defined routes that you regularly follow? - Do any of the aforementioned buildings lie along your regular routes? - On a scale from 1 to 5, how frequently do you pass by the aforementioned buildings during your daily routine in a week? - If you travel by car, do any of your routes pass by any of the aforementioned buildings? - Why do you choose these routes over others? - Which feeling best describes your initial impression when being in the vicinity of the various heritage buildings? - Which feeling best describes your current impression when being in the vicinity of the various heritage buildings? - How do you perceive the pedestrian flow on the sidewalks where the following heritage buildings are located in Arequipa? - How do you perceive the vehicular flow on the streets passing in front of the following heritage buildings in Arequipa?

This comprehensive test aims to comprehend the relationship between historical architecture and the surrounding public spaces. It explores how the interaction between these elements influences society's perception and appraisal of heritage. The qualitative and quantitative analysis will offer a profound understanding of this intricate dynamic, providing valuable insights for urban planning and heritage conservation in Arequipa.

The two previous steps must be studied together in order to find possible links. To do this, the Pearson Correlation Coefficient is applied through the Excel program.

4. Study case

The study focuses on the city of Arequipa (Figure 1), which holds the prestigious title of UNESCO World Heritage Site

**Figure 1.** City of Arequipa



Figure 2. Images of some important buildings in Arequipa: a – Plaza de Armas; b – Barrio de Selva Alegre (Hotel de Turistas); c – Aeropuerto Rodríguez Ballón; d – Teatro Municipal; e – Club Internacional de Tiro; f – Templo Yanahuara

since 2001. This recognition highlights Arequipa's architectural richness, blending European and native influences (Chávez Gómez, 2015). It is important to understand that the city of Arequipa is much larger than the area declared as heritage by UNESCO, and that society can therefore connect with heritage through spaces and buildings that are not on the founding grid.

The study method will be applied to the buildings in Arequipa with architectural value that the magazine "El Arquitecto Peruano" has described and praised throughout its publication. These are buildings that, over the course of the magazine's publication, were cited as examples of architecture from a specific period, representing colonial, modern, or vernacular architecture. "El Arquitecto Peruano" magazine was published from 1937 to 1977 and was founded by architect Fernando Belaunde Terry with the aim of disseminating professional activities related to urban planning and architecture.

The results of the magazine dump "El Arquitecto Peruano" indicate the buildings that are cited throughout the magazine are: El teatro de Arequipa (Concurso para..., 1939; Obras realizadas..., 1940; Apuntes a..., 1945; Arequipa, la..., 1950; Una acertada..., 1950). El Hotel de Turistas (Apartado Noticiario, 1939; Jochamowitz, 1941; Montero, 1941; Algo sobre..., 1944; Apuntes a..., 1945; Arequipa, la..., 1950), La Casa del Moral (Peña Prado, 1939; Apuntes a..., 1945; Arequipa, la..., 1950; Una acertada..., 1950; Ortiz Zevallos, 1950), Convento de Santa Catalina (Sabogal, 1940; Valega, 1945; Los maestros..., 1953; Calvo, 1953b), El Aeropuerto (Obras realizadas..., 1948), Club Internacional de Tiro (Club Internacional..., 1948; Arequipa Construye..., 1956; Ortiz Zevallos, 1950), El templo de Yanahuara (La hermosa..., 1960), Templo de Cayma (García Pike, 1960), la Facultad de Medicina (Apuntes a ..., 1950), Hospital del Seguro Social (Apuntes a..., 1954), Iglesia de la Compañía (Von Breyman, 1939; Arequipa, la..., 1950; Calvo, 1953a; Núñez, 1957; Harth-Terré, 1958; La Iglesia..., 1959; García Pike & García Bryce, 1960; Linder, 1963), Igle-

sia de San Agustín (Los maestros..., 1953), Plaza de Armas (La Iglesia..., 1959; Arequipa, la..., 1950), Edificio del Virrey (Presidente del Banco..., 1967) (Figure 2).

5. Results

The results are categorized into three sections based on the research method: the evaluation of public spaces, the assessment of buildings by users and the study of correlation of variables.

For the assessment of public spaces, 399 photographs were taken of all the public spaces adjacent to heritage buildings, aiming to identify the study parameters. These parameters include urban context, public furniture, road width, sidewalk width, access ramps, pedestrian crossings, peripheral shops, public lighting, and building visibility. To conduct a comparative study of all spaces, a presence or absence study was carried out, indicating '1' for cases where the item was present and '0' for cases where the item was absent (Table 2).

From the identification of the study parameters, the adjacent spaces that best meet these criteria, with a 100% of the parameters, are Plaza de Armas, Plaza de Cayma, and Plaza de Yanahuara. These three spaces were designed as "social gathering" plazas and currently feature vegetation, public furniture, adequate road and sidewalk width, pedestrian crossings, shops, and offer good visibility of heritage buildings. There is a second group of buildings that meet the study objectives at a rate of 55.56% to 77.78%. These include Rodríguez Ballón Airport, the Club de Tiro. Municipal Theater, the atrium of the Church of La Compañía, the Convent of Santa Catalina, Casa del Moral, Edificio del Virrey, and the Faculty of Medicine. The adjacent spaces of this second group mostly belong to transit streets. A third and final group includes Palacio Rickets, the atrium of the Church of San Agustín, Hotel de Turistas, and

Table 2. Identification of the elements of public space and quality of building

	Urban context	Public furniture	Roadway width	Platform width	Access ramps	Pedestrian crossings with traffic lights	Businesses (formal or informal)	Street lights	Building visibility	Vegetation	TOTAL fotos	%
Aeropuerto	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	9	77.78
Casa del Moral	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	9	55.56
Iglesia de la Compañía	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	9	66.67
Convento Santa Catalina	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	9	66.67
Plaza de Armas	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9	100.00
Club de Tiro	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	9	77.78
Palacio Rickets	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	9	44.44
Iglesia de Yanahuara	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9	100.00
Teatro Municipal	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	9	77.78
Iglesia de Cayma	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9	100.00
Iglesia de San Agustín	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	9	44.44
Edificio del Virrey	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	9	55.56
Hotel de Turistas	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	9	33.33
Hospital Seguro Social	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	9	33.33
Facultad de Medicina	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	9	55.56

the Hospital del Seguro Social, meeting 33.33% to 44.44% of the study requirements.

Regarding the evaluation of buildings by society, the sociodemographic profile of the respondents indicates that 66% are under 30 years old, 91% are of Peruvian origin, and 65% have a university-level education. Regarding mobility, it should be noted that 46.3% of people travel on foot, while another 45.8% use cars. 81.2% of the respondents follow specific routes, with 63% of the surveyed buildings being on their way, and Plaza de Armas being the preferred meeting place.

The respondents tell, the most recognized building is the Plaza de Armas with 195 votes, followed by the Rodríguez Ballón Airport with 180 votes, and the Social Security Hospital with 175 votes. Additionally, there is a cluster of buildings including the Municipal Theater, the Convent of Santa Catalina, the Hotel de Turistas, the Yanahuara Temple, the Church of La Compañía, and the Church of San Agustín, each receiving between 129 and 147 votes.

Other answers about Examining society's appreciation for the buildings, it can be observed that the most highly valued buildings are Plaza de Armas [69.23%], Convento de Santa Catalina [63.07%], Iglesia de la Compañía [44%], Iglesia de Yanahuara [36.9%], Iglesia de San Agustín [36.59%], and Iglesia de Cayma [34.53%]. These highly rated buildings represent an architecturally significant style

for Arequipa, mainly Baroque-Mestizo architecture constructed from Ignimbrite ashlar. They are emblematic of the intermingling in construction, leading UNESCO to declare their foundational grid as heritage.

Continuing with emotional perception of society, there are two variables that need to be compared: the most liked building and the feeling it evokes in the respondents. The buildings that are most liked by the respondents are Plaza de Armas and Convento de Santa Catalina, with percentages of 69.23% and 63%, respectively. However, this doesn't necessarily mean they remain within the median in terms of the pleasant sensation of different places (Figure 3).

In the buildings La Casa del Moral, the Church of the Company, the Convent of Santa Catalina, the Rickets

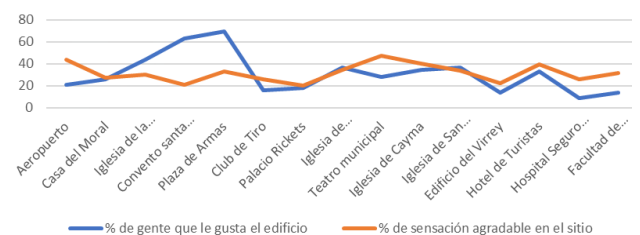


Figure 3. Percentage of people who like the building and percentage of people with a pleasant sensation

Palace, the Churches of Cayma and San Agustín, the building of the Virrey and the Social Security Hospital, the majority feel that the streets are narrow. On the contrary, in the Airport, the Plaza de Armas, the Shooting Club, the Church of Yanahuara, the Municipal Theater, the tourist hotel and the nursing school, the majority feel that the streets are wide.

Finally about the study of correlation, it should be noted that correlation studies between the variables "Quality of spaces" and "knowledge of the building" show a correlation coefficient of 0.31. The correlation study between "Quality of spaces" and "pleasant feeling at the site" indicates a correlation of 0.36. All of which are very low correlations. This suggests a weak relationship between the quality of the adjacent space and the appreciation of the building by society.

6. Discussion

The results reveal that a first group of spaces that fully meet the quality requirements of a public space are Plaza de Armas, Plaza de Yanahuara, and Plaza de Cayma. These spaces have been configured since the city's foundation, with religious buildings such as the Cathedral located within their perimeters, and the Cathedral-Plaza de Armas complex is highly esteemed by society, representing a significant landmark for the city.

Regarding the evolution of the Barroco-Mestizo concept, it is possible to trace the maturation of the concept through articles like Héctor Velarde's "El peruanismo en nuestra arquitectura actual" published in the "El Arquitecto Peruano" magazine in which the mestizo heritage of Arequipa is celebrated as an identifying feature reflected in its architecture (Velarde, 1939). Another article by Aura Mercedes García Pike titled "La Compañía, Una Joya del Estilo Mestizo" specifies the construction chronology of the Iglesia de la Compañía, labeling it a mestizo style (García Pike, 1960). The same magazine contains sections praising the city's architecture, such as the text "Arquitectura arequipeña" published in the viewpoints section or the text "Contraste de arquitectura peruana", expressing that Arequipa possesses the continent's most original and vigorous architectural expression thanks to the use of ashlar (Manfredi, 1942). These articles allow the evaluation of the article "The imaginaries in the perception of tourist places" by Laura Susana Zamudio, in which beyond the architectural values the tourist imaginary is important in which, citing Hiernaux-Nicolás, she explains that images, beliefs or evaluations are important for social evaluation (Hiernaux-Nicolas, 2002, as cited in Zamudio Vega, 2011). The same author, citing Camprubí, explains the importance of cognitive components, tangible elements and affective components (Camprubí et al., 2009, as cited in Zamudio Vega, 2011) giving importance to the processes of urban reevaluation or gentrification.

The Baroque Mestizo architecture served as an example for the development of modern architecture. Architect

Héctor Velarde, for instance, took inspiration from the facades of churches and the formal structure of civil windows in designing the pavilions of the Universidad Nacional de San Agustín. Another example lies in the architects Harth-Terré and Álvarez Calderón, who designed buildings such as the Municipal Theater and the Hotel de Turistas.

Moreover, it's important to note that this architecture influenced two Argentine architects: Martín Noel and Ángel Guido. They recognized Baroque Mestizo architecture in Arequipa as a perfect fusion of indigenous and Hispanic influences. Their works include the Argentina Pavilion at the Ibero-American Exposition of Seville in 1929 or the houses of Ángel Guido, Fracassi, or Ricardo Rojas in Argentina (Rios Vizcarra, 2015).

A relevant aspect of the selection of buildings is that there are two clearly differentiated and important styles, namely the Baroque-Mestizo style and the modern style. It must be understood that the magazine was developed in the midst of the development of the modern style. Another relevant aspect is the way in which the public space adjacent to the heritage building originated. In both cases, whether Baroque-Mestizo or modern style, we must understand that the public space is the result of careful urban planning, so these are architecturally controlled spaces. This is not the case of the Shooting Club, a building that has been highly transformed. Another case is that of the Municipal Theatre, whose façade invites us to look at it from a distance, with a certain perspective, but it is forced to be looked at transversally.

There is also a clear difference between the public spaces of both styles. In the case of the mestizo baroque, an important public space is developed in itself, as happens in the main square, where the space is the important thing. In the case of the spaces detected in the modern style, these are protected spaces, they are dock spaces with which the traffic noise is reduced, for example.

7. Conclusions

The study results highlight that the adjacent spaces of highest quality to the built heritage are Plaza de Armas, Plaza de Yanahuara, and Plaza de Cayma, all designed and built as public squares. These spaces have been carefully planned and maintain their authenticity as squares, making them high-quality areas that enhance the surrounding built heritage. This conclusion assumes that the spaces designed in the foundational grid of Arequipa and the surrounding towns are of high quality. These spaces contain vegetation, places to rest, good lighting and allow a perspective view of the surrounding buildings, all precepts announced by Gehl as meaning quality.

Regarding the most valued buildings by society, it is observed that most of them belong to the Baroque-Mestizo style. These buildings, constructed with ignimbrite ashlar, represent a unique fusion between indigenous and Spanish influences, making them key elements of Arequipa's architectural heritage. The Baroque-Mestizo

style is the reason for the UNESCO World Heritage declaration, and for which the citizens of Arequipa stand out by building buildings that continue with this style, such as the Municipal Theatre or the tourist hotel. This statement should not detract from other architectural styles that are in the process of reevaluation and study, such as the modern style.

It is important to note the low correlation found between the quality of adjacent spaces and society's appreciation. This means that the adjacent space is of little relevance for the assessment of a heritage building. This leads us to the hypothesis that use is also important, an aspect that Gehl already discussed. Gehl gives importance to use and insists that it means its environment. Another hypothesis brings us closer to the possibilities of the tourist and heritage discourse. This finding emphasizes the relevance of the discourse fostered by the magazine "El Arquitecto Peruano" in identifying and constructing the identity of Arequipa's architecture. The discourse not only focuses on the physical aesthetics of spaces but also on the cultural and historical narrative surrounding these spaces, rein-forcing their value and meaning for the local society. This focus on discourse and identity proves to be a crucial aspect for the evaluation and preservation of architectural heritage in Arequipa. These two hypotheses are proposed as future work in research on the ways in which society values architectural heritage.

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