



# Facadism: A Happy Medium to the Dichotomy of Demolition and Conservation

**Naveed Iqbal**

*Department of Architecture, School of Art, Design and Architecture (SADA), National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST), Islamabad, Pakistan, [ar.naveed9@gmail.com](mailto:ar.naveed9@gmail.com)*

**Waqas Ahmed Mahar**

*Department of Architecture, School of Art, Design and Architecture (SADA), National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST), Islamabad, Pakistan, [architectwaqas@hotmail.com](mailto:architectwaqas@hotmail.com)*

**Tania Ali Soomro**

*Department of Architecture & Planning, NED University of Engineering & Technology, Karachi, Pakistan [architecttania@gmail.com](mailto:architecttania@gmail.com)*

**Reena Majid Memon**

*Department of Architecture & Planning, Dawood University of Engineering & Technology, Karachi, Pakistan [reenamemon09@gmail.com](mailto:reenamemon09@gmail.com)*

## Abstract

The conflict between urban development and heritage conservation remains a significant challenge in modern architectural practice. The preservation of historic structures plays a crucial role in safeguarding cultural and architectural heritage; however, this often comes into conflict with the demands of economic growth and urban expansion. Conversely, while demolition offers an opportunity for new development, it entails the significant cost of erasing historical continuity. Situated in between, Facadism has emerged as a controversial yet increasingly embraced architectural strategy that seeks to preserve the façade of a heritage building while integrating new construction behind it. Despite frequently facing criticism for its perceived superficiality and potential compromise of authenticity, facadism offers a negotiated middle ground that aims to balance the preservation of architectural heritage with contemporary functional and economic demands. This paper critically examines facadism as a potential 'happy medium' in the dichotomy of demolition and conservation. Through a structured literature review, it explores the origins, typologies, advantages, and limitations of facadism, along with the socio-cultural and urban conditions that justify its application. The analysis is supported by a series of



cases that highlight the diverse outcomes of facadist interventions in different urban contexts. Ultimately, the paper argues for a nuanced understanding of facadism, not as a universally applicable solution, but as a context-dependent strategy within the broader discourse on adaptive reuse and heritage-led redevelopment.

**Keywords:** Facadism, adaptive reuse, conservation, demolition, urban regeneration

### Introduction

Facadism, broadly defined as the architectural practice of preserving the exterior façade of a historic building while replacing or significantly altering its internal structure, has become an increasingly prevalent, yet polarizing, strategy in contemporary urban development and conservation. Positioned at the intersection of heritage preservation and economic pragmatism, facadism responds to the growing pressures of urban densification, modernization, and real estate speculation, particularly in heritage-rich yet rapidly transforming cities.

The rationale for opting for this approach is solely objective-driven. It often questions the rigors of the policies. Is it really necessary for the facade of a building to reflect what is going on behind? A connection between the new and the old potent? And when is it suitable to opt? Equally, where it is not possible to retain a building in its entirety, and the loss of at least its interior is unavoidable.

While proponents argue that facadism offers a viable compromise, maintaining the visual continuity of historical streetscapes while allowing for functional and spatial upgrades, critics contend that it reduces complex architectural and cultural histories to superficial imagery. This critique is rooted in concerns that façade retention often lacks contextual integrity, divorcing the preserved exterior from its spatial, material, and socio-historical essence. As Jonathan Richards (1994) describes, it can become a mere "divorce between the interior and exterior" of architecture, raising important questions about authenticity, memory, and the ethics of conservation.

In the context of the Global South, particularly in cities like Peshawar, Lahore, or even Karachi, Pakistan, where heritage structures are under constant threat from unregulated development and population growth, facadism is emerging as a default, if contested, approach. The historic cores of these walled cities accommodate organic plot typologies situated in narrow streets, often sandwiched between two or three plots. The varied typological formation also gives way to this kind of approach.

Here, the lack of robust conservation policies and the urgency of urban expansion often led to the partial preservation of buildings deemed not significant enough for full restoration. In such cases, façade retention serves as a strategic intervention aimed at preserving the symbolic or aesthetic value of the urban landscape, even when the physical and cultural integrity of the structure is compromised. Façadism as a legitimate conservation strategy is condemned in

doctrinaire publications published by reputable conservation organizations such as UNESCO and ICOMOS (Kyriazi 2019).

This paper critically examines the defining characteristics of facadism, its advantages and limitations, and its broader implications for architectural heritage and urban identity. Through international precedents and context-specific examples, it seeks to evaluate facadism not as a monolithic or inherently flawed methodology, but as a complex and evolving conservation tool, one whose success depends on careful negotiation between historical value, architectural coherence, and contemporary urban demands.

### **1. Methodology**

This study employs a qualitative research methodology grounded in interpretive and critical heritage studies. It aims to explore the multifaceted practice of facadism as a negotiated solution between urban development and architectural conservation. The research integrates case study analysis, visual documentation, and discourse analysis to examine how facadism operates across different socio-cultural and architectural contexts, particularly in cities undergoing rapid transformation.

### **2. Built Heritage Future**

Built heritage is subject to various forms of transformation over time, and its trajectory is largely determined by the values ascribed to it. These values, whether historical, aesthetic, cultural, or architectural, play a critical role in shaping decisions regarding their preservation, adaptation, or removal. Typically, sites that are widely recognized for their significant or tangible heritage value are safeguarded through institutional protection and community advocacy. In contrast, those perceived as less valuable are more vulnerable to neglect, deterioration, or demolition. The possible future developments of built heritage generally fall into a set of recognizable patterns or outcomes, each influenced by prevailing socio-cultural and economic priorities.

#### ***3.1 Demolition:***

Rapid urbanization, particularly in central urban areas, has intensified the pressure on land and property, leading many developers to favor a tabula rasa approach (clean slate), advocating for the complete demolition of existing structures to allow for new development. From a commercial perspective, this strategy is often perceived as more economically viable, enabling higher-density or functionally updated constructions that maximize return on investment (Bullen & Love, 2010).

However, such practices raise significant concerns, both culturally and environmentally. Demolishing historic or longstanding buildings can result in the irreversible loss of cultural heritage and collective memory. The built environment plays a crucial role in shaping social identity and fostering a sense of continuity within communities (Pendlebury, 2009). When

buildings that hold cultural or historical value are erased, the associative meanings and symbolic significance embedded in them are also lost (Lowenthal, 1985).

In addition to cultural disruption, the environmental impact of demolition is substantial. Buildings encapsulate a considerable amount of embodied energy, the total energy expended in material extraction, processing, transportation, and construction (Langston et al., 2008). Demolition leads to the forfeiture of this energy investment, while also generating large volumes of construction and demolition waste that pose challenges for disposal and landfilling (Pacheco-Torgal et al., 2016). Moreover, the production of new construction materials and the processes involved in rebuilding significantly increase carbon emissions, thereby exacerbating the environmental footprint of urban redevelopment (Dixit et al., 2010).

In light of these considerations, demolition not only disrupts cultural continuity but also undermines environmental sustainability. This calls for more balanced urban strategies, such as adaptive reuse, that attempt to mediate between development demands and heritage conservation imperatives.

### **3.2 Conventional Preservation**

Conversely, the drive to preserve all elements of the built environment, without clear criteria or contextual consideration, introduces a distinct set of challenges. Rem Koolhaas (2004) provocatively observed that "preservation is overtaking us," critiquing the contemporary trend of extending conservation beyond monumental architecture to encompass warehouses, industrial buildings, and even ordinary residential structures (Rem Koolhaas, 2009). According to Koolhaas, this broadening of the preservation agenda risks stagnating architectural progress by imposing rigid constraints on design innovation. The insistence on maintaining buildings exactly as they are, often based on abstract notions of authenticity, can limit the flexibility architects require to address present-day social, technological, and environmental demands (Choay, 2001).

This critique is especially pertinent in the context of rapidly urbanizing and resource-constrained regions, such as Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh, where the feasibility of long-term conservation is often undermined by financial, administrative, and spatial limitations. In such settings, heritage preservation is frequently treated as an idealistic endeavor rather than a practical strategy integrated with contemporary urban needs. The absence of sustainable adaptive reuse frameworks further exacerbates the situation, leading either to neglect and decay or to insensitive redevelopment (Orbasli, 2008).

Moreover, land scarcity and high population densities in these regions intensify the pressure to prioritize new construction over conservation. Without appropriate policy mechanisms, incentive structures, and public awareness, heritage sites are often perceived as obstacles to development rather than assets with potential for economic and cultural regeneration (Pendlebury, 2009). The conservation of buildings without viable functional adaptation can impose burdens on public and private stakeholders, especially in economies where funding for

maintenance is limited. Therefore, preservation should be approached not as an absolutist act but as a dynamic process, one that balances historical significance with contemporary relevance, community needs, and environmental sustainability.

### 3.3 Adaptive reuse

The emergence of adaptive reuse as a distinct paradigm within architectural conservation offers a nuanced approach to the longstanding dichotomy between demolition and traditional preservation. While the reuse of buildings has historical precedence, practiced informally for economic or pragmatic reasons across civilizations, it is only since the late twentieth century that adaptive reuse has gained recognition as a systematic and theoretically grounded discipline within architecture and heritage studies (Douglas, 2002; Plevoets & Cleempoel, 2011).

Adaptive reuse refers to the process of repurposing buildings of historical, cultural, or architectural value to accommodate new functions, thereby extending their lifecycle while preserving key aspects of their identity. Unlike conventional conservation, which often aims to preserve a structure in its original form and function, adaptive reuse enables contemporary interventions that respond to current technological, spatial, and environmental needs. It is a strategy grounded in sensitive transformation, allowing architects, interior designers, and planners to engage with existing structures through deliberate and thoughtful modification (Bullen, 2007; Bullen & Love, 2011).

Central to adaptive reuse is the preservation of a building's authenticity, material integrity, and *genius loci*, the spirit of the place, while accommodating necessary changes. This demands a careful design methodology that balances continuity and innovation. Interventions must be undertaken with precision, often described as *surgical*, to ensure that new additions respect the existing materiality, construction techniques (tectonics), and architectural language of the structure (Cantell, 2005). Such an approach enables designers not only to conserve the tangible and intangible values embedded in the building but also to reinterpret them through contemporary architectural expression.

In doing so, adaptive reuse fosters a dialogue between the past and present. It contributes to cultural continuity, sustainability, and innovation simultaneously, offering a dynamic response to urban pressures, environmental concerns, and heritage conservation imperatives. It is increasingly recognized not merely as a technical solution but as a critical design practice that integrates historical awareness with future-oriented thinking.

### 3. Facadism

The origins of facadism as a formalized strategy can be traced to urban redevelopment practices in Brussels during the 1980s, where it was coined *facadisme* (Lah, 2019). Since then, the practice has gained traction in various global cities. Notable examples include the Caixa Forum in Madrid, which integrates a new volume behind the preserved façade of a former power station, and several projects in Bruges and Barcelona where historic urban fabric is visually preserved but functionally redefined. In North America, facadism has become widespread in

urban centers such as Montreal, Philadelphia, and New York, particularly in commercial redevelopment projects.

Despite its pragmatic advantages, facadism remains controversial. Critics argue that the approach often severs the relationship between a building's exterior and its interior, leading to a superficial form of preservation that undermines historical authenticity (Plevoets, 2021). The disjunction between the preserved façade and the contemporary interior, both in materiality and spatial logic, can result in what is sometimes described as a 'decorative skin', devoid of the original building's meaning or narrative. For instance, the Ostende Hotels project in Bruges exemplifies this disconnect, where the internal redevelopment bears little relationship to the historic exterior it preserves. (See Figures 1 & 2)

Nevertheless, proponents of facadism highlight its value in contexts where full preservation is not feasible. In dense historic urban areas undergoing transformation, such as traditional marketplaces or high-demand commercial zones, facadism offers a means to retain the visual memory and cultural identity of the streetscape. While not a substitute for holistic conservation, it can serve as a compromise that balances heritage concerns with developmental pressures (Douglas, 2002).

In contemporary urban development, particularly in high-pressure real estate markets, the demand for modernization often leads to the demolition of historic structures. While conservation and adaptive reuse are widely advocated by preservationists and architects, economic imperatives sometimes privilege new construction over the integrity of the built heritage (Plevoets & Cleempoel, 2011). One controversial yet increasingly adopted compromise is facadism, a practice in which the façade of a historic building is retained while the rest of the structure is demolished and replaced with new construction.

Facadism, also known as façadomy or façade retention, involves preserving the street-facing exterior of a building, typically its most publicly visible and symbolically rich element, while inserting a modern structure behind it. This method is often employed by supporting the façade in situ, either through scaffolding or steel bracing systems, as a new building is erected behind it. In many instances, the retained façade is not structurally integrated into the new construction and serves primarily as an aesthetic veneer (Richards, 2006). An alternative but less common approach involves reconstructing a new façade that responds to the historic character of the surroundings, either by reusing original materials or designing in stylistic continuity with the urban context. (see Figures 3 & 4)

Facadism can be characterized by several typologies:

#### **4.1 Façade retention**

Where the original façade is preserved and braced during redevelopment. Façade retention is an alternative to façadism. This is done out of necessity, when the internal structure is unstable for contemporary use, but the façade retains architectural significance, following a tactful manner with sensitivity and transparency.

#### 4.2 Contextual façade design

Wherein the new building's façade is designed to harmonize with the historic streetscape, even if not directly imitative. It can be a valid method of urban conservation, which enables the retention of familiar historic streetscapes or formal set pieces of urban design, offering an adequate solution on an urban scale (Richards 1994) as the façade cannot be seen separately from the internal form of the building (Plevoets 2021).

#### 4.3 Shell preservation

where only the external envelope of a structure is retained while the interior is completely restructured, is often seen in the adaptive reuse of churches, warehouses, or industrial buildings. In South Asian contexts, where the opportunity cost of new construction is significantly more than the heritage itself, this strategy is becoming more and more popular (Soomro 2024). The methods used for this approach determine how well the new and old are integrated. There are frequent disparities in the scale of the structure since the new structure, constructed inside the shell, is typically taller than the old façade.

The three above-stated facadism typologies differ not only in their underlying ideologies but also in the requirements that influence how they are used. Each approach is often guided by a singular purpose, which is often established mostly by the site's characteristics. These site-specific factors, such as urban context, structural constraints, cultural significance, or regulatory guidelines, have a significant impact on the typology chosen and the manner in which it is used. Table 1. Facadism and its several typologies are measured on specific parameters

Parameters	Façade Retention	Contextual Façade Design	Shell Preservation
➤ Intent	Sensible preservation	Coherent with the historic streetscape	Only the external envelope was retained; interior was completely restructured
➤ Treatment of Façade	Integrated into new construction	New construction with a historic look	Depends on the methodology
➤ Integrity of Heritage	Partial to full preservation	New construction using historic materials	Compromised, as the new structure is often taller than the old one
➤ Level of integration with the historic facade	Well integrated	Façade and the rest of the building as one entity	Depends on the methodology
➤ Examples	Ombú Madrid, Spain	George Town Malaysia	Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, Germany

(UNESCO WHS)

➤ Picture ©architizer.com ©imjustagirl16 ©Wikipedia2025



#### 4. Methods of Facadism:

Facadism, often critiqued within the discourse of architectural conservation and redevelopment, encompasses a range of methods whereby the façade of a historic structure is preserved while the rest of the building undergoes substantial alteration or complete reconstruction. The following are key methods commonly associated with facadism, illustrating the varying degrees of architectural intervention and conservation intent.

##### 5.1 Façade Retention (Preservation in Situ)

The most prevalent form of facadism involves the retention of the original façade in its existing location (in situ), supported temporarily by scaffolding, while the remaining parts of the building are demolished and replaced with new construction behind the preserved frontage. This process, known as *façade retention* or *façade preservation*, results in the façade serving no structural function in the new development.

A notable example can be observed on Ernest Feysplein Street in Oostende, Bruges, where three historical hotels—*De la Gare*, *Des Voyageurs*, and *De l'Esperance*—were subject to this treatment. The original façades of these early 20th-century buildings were retained to visually preserve the streetscape, while a contemporary multi-storey hotel was constructed behind them (Figures 1 and 2).



Figure 1. Ostende- hotels -place Vander Zeep, image by V Caille.



**Figure 2. Ernest Feysplein Street, Ostende Image: B.Topo.**

### ***5.2 Façade Retention with Structural Degradation***

In cases where the structural integrity of the façade is compromised due to deterioration of brick bonds, corroded lintels, or general material decay, the retention process becomes precarious. Even with scaffold support, the risk of collapse increases significantly. In such scenarios, a detailed structural and material assessment must precede any conservation work. If the condition of the façade proves beyond preservation, original materials may be salvaged and reused in the reconstruction of the façade as part of the new intervention.

### ***5.3 Partial Retention and Contextual Replication***

Where significant environmental or mechanical damage has rendered the original façade unusable, a hybrid approach is adopted. This involves the retention of a portion of the original façade while reconstructing the remainder using either original or new materials. In London, this approach is visible in various redevelopment projects across the East End, where one-dimensional façades are braced in place while a new structure is erected behind.

A comparable but stylistically interpretive approach was applied in the Peshawar Heritage Trail Project in Pakistan. Although not strictly a case of facadism, this project illustrates contextual replication: newly constructed façades were designed to reflect the traditional architectural language of the area. Elements such as *jarokas* (projecting balconies) and *jali* (lattice screens) were integrated to evoke the Mughal-era aesthetics of the 18th century (Figures 3 and 4).



**Figure 3. House on Bazar-e-Kalan, Peshawar; source: siast.pk**



**Figure 4 Exterior of Sethi house, Peshawar, image by I. Khan**

#### ***5.4 Shell Retention and Interior Gutting***

A more radical approach involves retaining only the external shell of a freestanding building while the interior is entirely gutted and redeveloped. This method is often employed for adaptive reuse of redundant historic buildings such as churches, forts, warehouses, and industrial structures. A case in point is Blencow Hall in Cumbria, a Grade I listed fortified manor house, which was converted into a luxury country hotel in 2008. The original exterior shell was preserved to maintain historic character, while the internal spaces were entirely reconfigured to suit contemporary hospitality functions (Figure 5).



**Figure 5. Blencow Hall, Cumbria; source: ruralretreats.com**

#### ***5.5 Facadism in Pakistan - South Asia***

In South Asian contexts, especially the developing countries like Pakistan, where heritage preservation is not prioritized, facadism pays paths for many opportunities. It sometimes may result in systematic demolition of the heritage, but as long as the commercial activity (in certain cases) persists without interruption, it stays. This indicates that the stakeholders seem to place

more importance on the structures' economic viability than on their historical significance. But in many facadism approaches, the facades are not intentionally braced with new structures, which increases the facade's susceptibility to collapse if left unmaintained. The most obvious instance of this is the Burhani Building (Figure 6), which is now the Habib Bank Limited [HBL] Tower. It is located in Karachi at the intersection of Shahrah-e-Altamash (Napier) and Shahrah-e-Liaquat (Frere) Roads, where the original facade continues to stand apart from the current building. The disconnection has reflected in less upkeep and maintenance, making it far more vulnerable. Although in certain scenarios, concealing a new building under a historically significant façade may appear altruistic, façadism exposes the market-driven political and economic dynamics that shape our cities (Walsh 2019). There are some other examples, such as the Hatim Bhae Building (Figure 7). The project of historic facade retention of this building is carefully carried out. The project boasts a highly appealing visual aesthetic that makes it distinct. The result is a contemporary design that harmonizes modern functionality with historical conservation. However, it is essential to note that the building's interiors present several challenges. It has created a positive impact as it respects the skyline of the historic neighbourhood, the context, adhering closely to the contextual requirements, achieved through diligent coordination with the Culture Department's guidelines and conservation principles.

The Sindh Zamindar Hotel in Karachi is another example of Facadism in Karachi, Pakistan. Originally constructed by the British in 1920, the hotel was acquired by a developer in 2002. The architectural firm Arif Hassan & Architects Polak undertook the transformation, modernizing the hotel while employing the concept of facadism (shell retention), which involved preserving the building's exterior. While the streetscape retains its original character and visual continuity, the once-dilapidated interior has been replaced with new construction, leaving only the façade intact (Figure 8).



Figure 6. Burhani Building, currently HBL Tower, Karachi, TS2025



**Figure 7. Hatim Bhae Building, situated on Napier Road, Karachi, TS2025**



**Figure 8. Sindh Zamindar Hotel Karachi, Photo by SAP architects**

##### **5. Critical review of facadism**

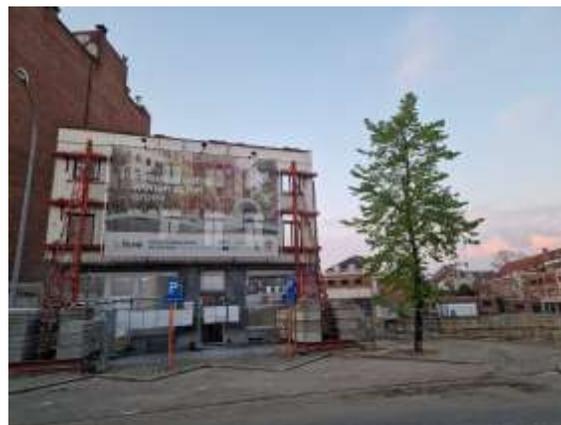
In the ongoing discourse of architectural conservation, facadism emerges as a contentious yet increasingly adopted strategy. It involves retaining the street-facing façade of a historic building while allowing for significant alteration, or complete redevelopment, of the structure behind. This approach is often employed in contexts where the full preservation of a building is deemed economically or functionally unfeasible, particularly in dense urban settings where development pressures are intense.

Rather than preserving an entire structure, facadism prioritizes the visual continuity of a city's historic streetscape. The façade, as the most publicly visible and symbolic component of a building, is treated as an architectural artifact, often disconnected from the building's spatial, functional, and material integrity. While this strategy allows for the integration of modern usage and technological requirements, it frequently does so at the expense of historical authenticity and structural coherence.

Critics argue that facadism reduces architecture to a form of visual nostalgia or "architectural theatre," where the historic exterior becomes a mere skin masking a contemporary interior. This condition raises serious concerns about the integrity of conservation practices. The retained façade, when paired with incongruent new constructions, often results in a jarring juxtaposition, one that compromises both the old and the new. Architectural historian Mark Crinson (2005) describes this as the "flattening of history," where depth, material memory, and layered narratives are sacrificed for a superficial visual token of the past.

Examples such as the Ostende hotels illustrate the aesthetic and spatial imbalance that facadism can produce. The retained façades appear dwarfed or overwhelmed by the mass of new construction behind, undermining the very urban character they aim to preserve. In other cases, such as the Blencow Hall Cottages in Cumbria, the historic shell is preserved primarily for its picturesque value, while the interiors are radically modernized, blurring the boundary between conservation and pastiche.

The practice can be controversial! When executed erroneously, façadism might resemble an extravagant, mismatched, and distasteful architectural Frankenstein. However, when executed well, it serves as a useful link between the past and the present (Hilscher 2017). The worst instances of façadism are buildings with isolated façades in front of them that have no architectural connection to the assigned elevation (Hernowo 2015). This is sometimes exploited by developers as a means to evade taxes and secure financial advantages. (Figure 9).



**Figure 9. Facade piece retained in front of a multi-story condominium to be built behind, Hasselt, Belgium, NA 2023.**

The implications extend beyond individual buildings. At the urban scale, facadism can disrupt the rhythm and grain of historic districts. In organically evolved urban fabrics, like the courtyard-based havelis of Peshawar's Sethi Mohallah, removing interior partitions and spatial hierarchies for redevelopment not only distorts the building itself but also undermines the social and morphological logic of the neighborhood (see figure 6). The value of such heritage lies not solely in façade articulation but in its embeddedness within a complex spatial and cultural ecosystem. Yet, facadism is not without merit. In contexts where full-scale conservation is constrained by budget, land scarcity, or regulatory limitations, it can serve as a compromise, allowing for development while maintaining a degree of historical reference. Especially in South Asian cities experiencing rapid urbanization, facadism offers a pragmatic, if imperfect, response to the conflicting demands of heritage and modernization. When applied judiciously and with sensitivity to scale, materiality, and urban context, it can function as a bridge between historical continuity and contemporary needs.

Ultimately, the success or failure of facadism lies in its execution. When used as a shortcut for heritage branding, it risks trivializing the very values it claims to protect. But when deployed critically, with a nuanced understanding of context, fabric, and meaning, it may serve as a viable strategy within a broader spectrum of adaptive heritage practices.



**Figure 10. Sethi Mohallah, Peshawar, Pakistan; Source: Author**

## **6. Conclusion**

Facadism occupies a contested position within contemporary architectural and conservation discourse. As a mediating strategy between wholesale demolition and complete preservation, it reflects the ongoing negotiation between heritage conservation and urban development. While frequently criticized for reducing architectural heritage to mere surface aesthetics, facadism,

when employed thoughtfully, can offer a pragmatic compromise in contexts where competing pressures of modernization, densification, and economic growth are unavoidable.

This study demonstrates that facadism, despite its limitations, can contribute meaningfully to the continuity of urban character, particularly at the level of the streetscape. By retaining the external façade of historic structures, it allows for the integration of modern functions and spatial programs behind a preserved architectural frontage. This approach is especially relevant in rapidly urbanizing regions where demographic pressures and developmental demands often necessitate new construction.

However, the efficacy of facadism depends largely on the specificity of its application. When reduced to a cosmetic gesture devoid of structural or spatial coherence, it undermines the integrity of the built heritage it seeks to protect. Conversely, when embedded within a broader, context-sensitive conservation framework—one that acknowledges the historical, material, and spatial dimensions of heritage, facadism can serve as a productive mode of architectural intervention.

Rather than viewing facadism as a universal solution, this paper positions it as one among several conservation strategies, whose appropriateness must be critically evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Its deployment must be guided by a nuanced understanding of place, historical value, urban morphology, and the socio-cultural significance of the built environment. Only through such a calibrated and interdisciplinary approach can facadism transcend its perceived superficiality and contribute meaningfully to the evolving discourse on architectural heritage in contemporary cities.

#### References:

- Bullen, P. A. (2007). Adaptive reuse and sustainability of commercial buildings. *Facilities*, 25(1/2), 20–31. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02632770710716911>
- Bullen, P. A., & Love, P. E. D. (2010). The rhetoric of adaptive reuse or reality of demolition: Views from the field. *Cities*, 27(4), 215–224. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2009.12.005>
- Bullen, P. A., & Love, P. E. D. (2011). Adaptive reuse of heritage buildings. *Structural Survey*, 29(5), 411–421. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02630801111182439>
- Cantell, S. F. (2005). *The Adaptive Reuse of Historic Industrial Buildings: Regulation Barriers, Best Practices and Case Studies*. <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/The-Adaptive-Reuse-of-Historic-Industrial-Barriers%2C-Cantell/afd049c24cc4a7ae628b779ba104c3deebd66cf>
- Choay, F. (with Internet Archive). (2001). *The invention of the historic monument*. New York: Cambridge University Press. <http://archive.org/details/inventionofhisto0000choa>
- Dixit, M. K., Fernández-Solís, J. L., Lavy, S., & Culp, C. H. (2010). Identification of parameters for embodied energy measurement: A literature review. *Energy and Buildings*, 42(8), 1238–1247. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.enbuild.2010.02.016>
- Douglas, J. (2002). *Building Adaptation*. Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Lah, L. (2019). Adaptive Re-use of the Built Heritage Obnova i prenamjena graditeljskoga naslijeđa: Fundamental Principles in the Doctrine of Heritage Conservation Temeljna načela očuvanja naslijeđa. *Prostor*, 27, 140–151. [https://doi.org/10.31522/p.27.1\(57\).11](https://doi.org/10.31522/p.27.1(57).11)

- Langston, C., Wong, F. K. W., Hui, E. C. M., & Shen, L.-Y. (2008). Strategic assessment of building adaptive reuse opportunities in Hong Kong. *Building and Environment*, 43(10), 1709–1718. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.buildenv.2007.10.017>
- Lowenthal, D. (with Internet Archive). (1985). *The past is a foreign country*. Cambridge [Cambridgeshire]; New York: Cambridge University Press. <http://archive.org/details/pastisforeigncou0000lowe>
- Orbasli, A. (with Internet Archive). (2008). *Architectural conservation: Principles and practice*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Science. <http://archive.org/details/architecturalcon0000orba>
- Pacheco-Torgal, F., Cabeza, L. F., Labrincha, J., & Magalhaes, A. G. de. (2016). *Eco-efficient Construction and Building Materials: Life Cycle Assessment*. Woodhead Publishing.
- Pendlebury, J. R. (with Internet Archive). (2009). *Conservation in the age of consensus*. London; New York: Routledge. <http://archive.org/details/conservationinag0000pend>
- Plevoets, B. (2021). Juxtaposing inside and outside: Façadism as a strategy for building adaptation. *The Journal of Architecture*, 26(4), 541–558. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13602365.2021.1923552>
- Plevoets, B., & Cleempoel, K. van. (2011). *Adaptive reuse as a strategy towards conservation of cultural heritage: A literature review*. <https://doi.org/10.2495/STR110131>
- Rem Koolhaas. (2009). *Preservation Is Overtaking Us*. Columbia GSAPP. <https://www.arch.columbia.edu/books/reader/6-preservation-is-overtaking-us>
- Richards, B. (2006). *New Glass Architecture*. Laurence King Publishing.
- Kyriazi, E. (2019). Façadism, Building Renovation and the Boundaries of Authenticity. In *Aesthetic Investigations, Special Issue -Restoration Vol 2, No 2 (2019)*, 184-195
- Richards J. (1994). *Façadism*, 1st Edition, ISBN 9780415756020, Published July 18, 2015 by Routledge
- Soomro, T.A. (2024). Reflections on the importance of built heritage inventory as a tool for preservation in Karachi—a case study of Wadhmal Odharam (Jail) Quarter in Karachi, Sindh, Pakistan. *Built Heritage* 8, 3 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s43238-023-0011>
- Hilscher, D. (2017) How Architectural Façadism Keeps the Old New: Building Preservation that meets modern structural standards, online Blog published on Reliance Foundry since 1925. Website consulted in June 2024. <https://www.reliance-foundry.com/blog/architectural-facadism>.
- Hernowo B. (2015) *Heritage Façadism: An Economical and Architectural Approach*, Utrecht University
- Walsh N., P., (2019). *Facadism: When Walls Talk, and Lie*, Online Blog published at Arch Daily. Website.