

Then and now: a glimpse of the ancient and modern coliseum essay

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Lord

Byron, in reference to the Coliseum, said in his poem that while Rome's Coliseum stands, so shall stand Rome.

And when the Coliseum falls, Rome will fall as well. And finally, when Rome falls, so shall the rest of the world. After more than two millennia, that very colosseum, though several of its parts are marred and spoiled, still stood strong and persistent. Started at the dawn of 70AD and fulfilled in 80 AD, the Roman Coliseum, or Flavian Amphitheater in its original name, was enthused by Vespasian's vision of a venue for the Romans' joyful entertainment as well as a place to serve the people's miscellaneous needs.

Vespasian's brilliant idea, realized through the founding of the Coliseum had proved Imperial Rome's grandeur and power as well as the splendid culture of the ancient Roman times. The Flavian Amphitheater had not only shown its effectiveness by standing through the tests of time but had also been an inspiration to the founding of more elegant structures and bastions. Such of an example is the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum. Built in May of 1923, the Coliseum of Los Angeles, pronounced as a National Historic Landmark on July 27, 1984, holds the title of being the only stadium in the world to host the Olympic Games for two times, once in 1932 and in 1984. Its structure is unquestionably of a modern architectural design. But despite that fact, it holds some similar characteristics to its predecessor, the Flavian Amphitheater. But what are these resemblances that connect the L.

A. Coliseum to Rome's Coliseum? And what are their major

dissimilarities?

The Flavian Amphitheater and the Coliseum of Los

Angeles are both called “ the Coliseum.” However, though they share a common name, distinctly separated by the variation of location and time frame of building, there is a huge difference when it comes to the symbolic importance of each. Vespasian, in one hand, have tried to use the ancient Coliseum as a sign that Rome could stand up after a blood-curling civil war, a triumphal monument to remember a victory by, and perhaps made to put off the people’s fear instilled by Nero’s reign. Having built the coliseum between the valleys of Caelian, Esquiline, and Palatine Hills, east of the Roman Forum, and found at the very heart of Rome, the amphitheater is situated at the exact location of Nero’s former Golden House.

On the other hand, the Los Angeles’ Coliseum was established as a commemoration to the veterans of the First World War. It is constructed at the Exposition Park, next to the L. A Memorial Sports Arena, and adjoining the campus of the University of Southern California (USC).

Later in 1968, the stadium was rededicated to all the veterans of war.

Both the Los Angeles Coliseum and the ancient Roman coliseum are equally designed as well to particularly hold sporting events. The L. A.

Memorial Coliseum boasts of housing various football leagues, from the University of Southern California Trojans, the UCLA Bruins, the Los Angeles Dons, Rams, Dodgers, Wolves, Raiders, down to the Los Angeles Dragons. It was modeled as a lively outdoor sports stadium by John and Donald Parkinson and was initially capable of seating 76, 000 people, the largest to scale during its opening. It was even for sometime called the Olympics

Stadium, thanks to it having been the Olympiad site for two times. Contrary, Rome's Coliseum, made out from Curio's original amphitheater design, hosted gladiatorial games, the pride and finest form of Roman entertainment, as well as pretend sea battles, animal hunts, executions, re-enactments of famous combats, and dramas based on Classical mythology.

It was supposed that a number of 500, 000 people and more than a million animals died during the Colosseum games. Activities that are further held in the Flavian Amphitheater were of workshops, quarters of a religious order, and up until today, a Christian monument. The vast foundation of both the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum and the Flavian Amphitheater had proved to be of superb structural genius, holding firm against time and standing past natural disasters and corrosion. But there are slight differences that make the two distinct from one another. The Roman Coliseum is built with an elliptical shape, consisting of three intricately designed arcades or storeys and formed with a split inner and outer wall. Able to seat 80, 000 spectators at the most, each of the amphitheater's level were crafted from different materials and adorned by the three different orders or column. The basic level and the whole of the structure's foundation made of solid concrete, was held by Doric columns due to its stern base and heavy form.

Ionic orders were then used for the second level with travertine utilized for the tiers and the arcades. The top storey, originally made from wood and replaced by concrete, made use of Corinthian orders. The battle arena of the amphitheater commenced as an oval ground made of flat timber and covered with sand for draining blood with an underground basement that

stores the animals, prisoners, and gladiators, as well as equipments, weaponry, and other materials for gaming events. A tough monument of Nero called the Colossus greets the spectators, although as of today, only its base remains.

Conversely, the L. A. Coliseum is designed as a rough oval ground with grass as surface floor. Now capable of accommodating a maximum of 115, 300 people, the L.

A. Coliseum's main entrance is adorned by the Olympic rings symbols and the Olympic torch still stand its ground above the peristyle at the east end of the stadium. Two bronze nude statues, one of a male, modeled on water polo player Terry Schroeder, and another of a female, formed after long jumper Jennifer Innis from Guyana, welcomes the coming people as they form the Olympic Gateway.

But as the abovementioned qualities of the two coliseums show the similarities and sets the differences between ancient and modern architecture, it could not be denied that any artifact, disregarding its time foundation, holds significant details or facts about the culture it had originated from.

The Flavian Amphitheater, for one, shows the luxuriant lifestyle and exotic taste for amusements of the Romans at that time. The use of different qualities of construction materials as well as the deliberate employment of limestone shows how rich the dynasty it had once belonged to. The kind of entertainment and activities held at the Roman Coliseum also explain the nature of the ancient Romans. With a liking for death battles such as gladiatorial fights, the Romans show an explicit taste

for combats of courage and wants for freedom and fame, with everything at stake.

On the other hand, the L. A. Coliseum presents a fair idea of how modern people think. The construction, completed in two years show that careful planning is shortened as time passes by and the ideology "Time is Gold" is more put into thoughts. While the architectural design shows a standard style that last through the changes of people's taste and even fashion, it is certain that the structure still owes some concepts learned from ancient structures such as seeing the need for immediate filing and evacuation of people.

Ringling out more than a single entrance is a solution ancient people have first derived. Evaluating the Coliseums in general, we could say that the L. A. Coliseum proves to be a structure that, with several variations, could be identified as a replica of the Roman Coliseum.

There are many differences between the two, but the basic characteristics are intact and the same. The gap in their time of structure also proves to be a setback for their shared traits to be seen but there is little doubt that if the two were built close to each other's time of building, they could look very much like a structural plan spliced into two buildings. But since they are not, we can see, more discretely their major variations. The Roman Coliseum had been a monumental structure at its prime and today it still stood as wonderful as ever, even with many of its parts ruined. And while the L. A. Coliseum found its way to having new facilities and features that the ancient

architecture lacks, as it had the advantage of modern times, it has yet to beat the two century standing record of the Flavian Amphitheater.

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