

READING REPORT 1 NEO - CLASSICAL ARCHITECTURE

Neo-classical Architecture was developed between 1750 - 1900 as a result of changing norms of society. What changed the previous norms was development in relationship between man and nature. In this period man became a more conscious object that can form superiority over nature and proposed technical development. Also, these changes were shaped by cultural shift of fading aristocracy and the empowering of bourgeoisie. In general architects were pushed to create neoclassical style in order to meet new demands society: public markets, railroad stations, public and charity institutions, housing for workers were covered.

As Frampton stated, development in man-nature relationship lead a new path called neoclassical architecture. The 18th century architects were more developed and educated than ancient civilizations, they were able to travel and observe historical buildings. Fortunately they took those advantages and searched for a true style by learning from past. They observed the ancients though they did not copied the works. They only obeyed the ancient principles in order to create an verisimilitude identity. As well as exploring historical structures architects like Perrault and Cordemoy worked on Vitruvian man to standardize functions. Further more, Cordemoy related Vitruvian man to utilitarian and commercial structures which was totally a new concept developed by neo-classical architecture. Another main point that Frampton highlighted was, they did not seek ornamentation but geometric purity: articulation of spaces aimed means of “continuous spatial system” (Frampton, 14). However in early 19th century we see a new concept assimilated: establishing “ a universal building methodology (...) by which economic and appropriate structures could be created through modular permutation” (Frampton, 15). The last main point of this period is how revolution affected this concept. While they were trying to accommodate institutions, they were also creating a national identity/expression through the structures. This identity was actually divided into two era: Structural Classicism of Labrouste and the Romantic Classicism of Schinkel. Labrouste emphasized the structure where as Schinkel enabled spectators to judge articulation of spaces means of facade characteristics with a romantic taste. In conclusion, in this reading, Frampton gave main points of Neo-classical Architecture through its progression while respecting

the past and analyzed many examples like Bibliotheque Nationale Paris, Altes Museum Berlin, Cenotaph for Isaac Newton, etc...

If we compare Roth's findings to Frampton, it is feasible to say that Roth explained better how they did form a national identity by architecture where as Frampton only implied it. Also, the way Roth explains how did the materials and technology developed completes Frampton's examples. We can see materials(steel, glass...) mentioned in Roth's findings were explained carefully in Frampton's examples like Labroute's library. Also Roth included American aspect of Neo-Classic period but in general their findings are very similar and complete each other. It is also worth to compare this period to previous lectures in order to get better understanding of the Neo-Classism. Previous lectures were more focused on analyzing fixed styles in terms of structural problems and how they met the very basic needs of society. However, in Neo-classics, we observe how they developed a new style with respect to newly introduced norms and needs of society in a more developed way. In other words, we learned which aspects are considered when we are generating a style.

With Frampton's and Roth's understanding, this period can be interpreted as learning from the past in order to solve future and today with current techniques and materials. In this context, Neo-Classics proposed there profound questions. First one was, *what should be the images of those new building types* where as second was one, *how appropriate the historical allusion in conveying the image of internal function was*. The last one and the most well-depicted one throughout this period is *how archaeologically correct the form of the building and its details were*.

In conclusion, Neo-classical architecture is very important period that we can both observe the ancients and 18th-19th century in just a one period. It also depicts a progress for students how to explore architecture and combine past to today.

REFERENCES

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Culture and Industry: Germany 1907-1914

Alan Colquhoun analysis the reflection of German sense of modernization on architecture in this reading which was the root of German Expressionism in the 1920s. Although *The Arts and Crafts Movement* began in Britain, it was flourished through the Europe (especially in France and Germany). Between 1880-1890, The Arts and Crafts movement in Germany was much more related to national identity than it was in France. In spite of the idea of national identity, romanticism and rationalism existed at the same time.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, there was a chief agent of artistic and cultural reform in Germany which is called *Deutscher Werkbund*. The foundation started with traces of Arts and Crafts movement though it grew out of it since it foresaw that machines became an indispensable part of history. As Colquhoun states, *Deutsche Werkbund* realized that mass production excluded artist and aesthetics from products. More over, they realized they need to include back the artist into the designing process of mass production since “many people do not have the money to hire artists (...)” (Colquhoun, 58). In this process, there was two main idea that shaped the merge of the machine and the artistic principles: Gestalt(form), Muthesius. Gestalt was an undeveloped step to solve the problem between artist and mass-production. It pointed out form was predominant over function, material and technique. On the other hand Muthesius defended that cultural order eliminated the artist from mass-producing rather than the machines. According to Muthesius, we should standardize artistic quality in production which was a quite bureaucratic method. However, opposition of group of artists such as Van de Velde emphasized they can't fix cultural disorder by motivating typical forms. In this context, we can say both Muthesius and Van de Velde tried to include artist in mass production whereas Van De Velde's idea was more realistic and Muthesius concept was more focused on national identity.

Muthesius and Van de Velde generally concerned about artist and mass production whereas architects like Henrich Tessenow, Peter Behrens and Walter Gropius worked on mass housing and factory designs as a result of industrialization. In this context, Colquhoun suggests form, proportion and details carved out the architecture in Germany between 1907-14. For Tessenow mass housing was substantial to romanticize and support middle class whereas Behrens and Gropius formed the foundation of symbolism in modern architecture, particularly in Germany. For Behren “architecture of the machinery age should be

based on classicism” that a form should be resistant to modern metropolis rather than confirmation of it. Turbine Factory by Behren demonstrates this resistance by mimicking Greek temple. For example Behren replaced plastic skill of column with steel stachions. Moreover Behren’s details of buttresses conveyed a feeling of mass which introduced technical positivism and classical humanism to German Architecture. In particularly Walter Gropius was the one who paved the way of German Expressionism by introducing “district and abstract - a matter of geometry” (Colquhuan, 69) to architecture. Colquhuan states that Gropius preserved Behren’s thoughts on social implications of machines but on the other hand he supported the concept of totalization. As well as supporting totalization, Grapious also grew out of Behren’s symbolism as we see in Fagus Factory. Colquhuan evaluates this design as mystical (use of glasses) in which “art and pragmatism seem to coexist” (Colquhuan, 71). In conclusion, we can say that German Architecture was developed with respect to mass production trends and concepts.

If we compare Colquhuan and L.M. Roth’s findings, we can see that Colquhuan is particularly focused on German Architecture and mass production between 1907-14 while referring to The Arts and Crafts movement. On the other hand, we can say that Roth had given brief information about Arts and Crafts movements and then continued with German Expressionism in Architecture while only mentioning this period in few sentences. In this context, reading Colquhuan’s findings first and continuing with Roth’s readings would be better to understand this period and modernization. 1907-14 period in Germany can be summarized as a period of laying a bridge between machine and artist to create right form of mass production and understanding the trends of mass production in architecture. In general, Colquhuan motivates three profound questions through out the reading: how to adapt the artist to the designing form of mass production, how to fuse bureaucratic and nationalistic identity in mass production and how to develop German architecture with respect to artistic conceptualization and social implications of machine production.

In conclusion, Alan Colquhuans reading analyzes German Architecture and modernization with respect to mass production between 1907 and 1914. This reading is very informative source to get better understanding the traces of modernization in Germany.

References

Colquhoun, Alan. 2002. “Modern Architecture”. Oxford Press
Roth, L.M. & Clark, A.C. R. 2014. “Understanding Architecture”. Westview Press

NEW OBJECTIVITY OF GERMAN ARCHITECTURE: The Modern 1920-33

After World War 1, there were a significant shift from Expressionism to returning to order both in Germany and France. Throughout the *Weimar Germany: the Dialectic of the Modern 1920-33*, Alan Colquhoun particularly explores this development. This movement also known as *Neu Sachlichkeit* that suggests a new reality in architecture. This period depicts that workers understood their role within industrialized society. With this movement German Architecture progressed into social housing and divided architects into two categories: functionalist and rationalist.

Neu Sachlichkeit was emerged in Bauhaus which was a school started in an expressionist vein. It is founded by Gropius to teach transformation of German artistic culture, especially in architecture era. Its main purpose was using spiritual revolution to oppose the trend of materialism and industrial capitalism. According to Colquhoun, Bauhaus was affected by Russian Constructivism. Thus, *Neu Sachlichkeit* was aroused. In other words “modern architecture in dynamic functional direction without ornament or moldings” (Colquhoun, 162) was introduced in Germany. In this context, there were two leading statement of new objectivity. Gropius perceived it as “fusion of artist and technician” (Colquhoun, 162) where as Muechler looked down on the relation between fine arts and technology. It is concerned with social problems rather than individual ones. In this term, as a result of World War 1 and industrialization, there was a need of affordable housing for workers. As Colquhoun explained, German Architects solved this problem means of *Neu Sachlichkeit*. Therefore, architects ended up building much more denser to cope up with generic problems: they introduced parallel apartment blocks to solve accessing to basic needs. (sunlight, fresh air, etc...). It is important to notice the of public facilities and basic needs were solved since they were remained unresolved in rental barracks. As Colquhoun implies, not only social housing was developed, there was a progression in materials choice too: attempt of producing prefabricated concrete wall panels, vernacular look like windows... As taking this improvement as a reference, we can say that German Architecture leveled up in construction methods as well. Unfortunately, *Neu Sachlichkeit* hadn't succeed to produce affordable social housing. The working class couldn't afford the houses and there was significant support for vernacular trends by many German architects. At that point, German architects divided into two as Functionalists and Rationalists. Adolf Behne interpreted, Functionalists were the ones creating for specialized purpose that cannot be part of a whole where as Rationalists were the ones searching for most appropriate and repeatable solutions to respond society's needs. Lastly, Colquhoun evaluates the

spiritualization technique with respect to Mies van der Rohe's design. Mies was an important figure to simplify German architecture that he reconciled neoclassical objectification and Neoplasticism fragmentation. His main purpose was responding modern life situation that he shifted "from mimetic eclecticism to constructivist abstraction" (Colquhuan, 173). In this context, buildings were perceived as problems and form was just a result, not something was sought. Further more, Mies spiritualization brought modern technology and classical closure together. In later development of his work, we interpret that he idealized nature through his designs. He reflected his senses while thinking in a Neoplatonic way. Lastly, opposition of materialism and idealism was an important aspect of German approach. They basically adapted Mies' ideas to mass production as emphasizing architectural language on serial production.

If we compare Colquhuan and L.M. Roth's findings, we can say that Alan Colquhuan had a deeper understanding of *Neu Sachlichkeit* and Mies' progression. He generally divided the topic into subtitles where as Roth had explored this topic by analyzing important architects' products one by one. More over, Bauhaus and its concepts were explained under a title by Colquhuan where as Roth only talked about in two short paragraph. We summarize Colquhuan findings as, *Neu Sachlichkeit* was a movement concerned generic problems in which there was strong connection between architecture and industrialization to bring dynamic functional manner to German architecture. Social housing was an important part of this connection that gave rise to functionalists and rationalists. Lastly Mies' progression was important to resolve the relationship between constructivism and form. In contrast to Art's and Crafts movement, form was not something achieved but an end product that there were only building problems. In a nutshell we can say that Mies had achieved simplicity by fusing Classical clarity and industrial production. Lastly, Colquhuan motivates three profound questions through out the reading: how did Bauhaus develop *Neu Sachlichkeit* movement out of expressionism and solve social housing problem, what were the ideological differences between functionalists and rationalists, how does Mies' progression explain the dialectical tendency of German Idealism.

In conclusion, this reading analysis the post War period Architecture and movements that took place in Germany. More over, their main concern was creating an architectural language reflected to serial production that deals with social problems.

References

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