

Postmodernism assignment

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The term ‘ Postmodernism’ is the buzzword that has been widely debated and engaging political, social and cultural ideas since the late 1960’s as it is apparent in various fields such as architecture, visual arts, literature, and technology. Though it has become incredibly universal practice, its connotations are tremendously complex and versatile, to the extent that it is often mutually contradictory.

Charles Jenks (1978) defines Postmodernism as double coding ” the combination of Modern techniques with something else usually traditional building in order for architecture to communicate with the public and a concerned minority, usually other architects. “ Each person defined Postmodernism differently. If a number of people consider it as a sanctification or an appreciated development, others think it as lack of self-individualism. In order to Postmodernism to be recognized, one must be able to understand the term of ‘ Modernism’.

Modernism began in the 1890’s along with its later abandon which brought to the emergence of Postmodernism. Modernism is about adopting new technology by producing new architectural techniques. Modernism is minimal, true use of material and absence of ornament or decoration, whereas postmodernism is the rejection of strict rules (ibid.). Modernism is flashy with its use of building techniques, angles, stylistic references and decoration. Postmodernism in relation to architecture has become apparent as a series of architects’ response in opposition to Modernism.

The primary distinction between Modernism and Postmodernism is that Modernism is about the search for universal truth and concentrate on simple

individuals whereas Postmodernism believes there is no universal truth and is concerned with the humanity in the buildings dealing with different and complex culture. Postmodernism is a reaction to Modernism, typically, the negative critique to modernism. Post modernists believed that modernism was “ soulless” and so, believed buildings should cater for humanity .

Postmodernism is described by the combination of historical elements in a mixture style by the application of decorative elements and by borrowing elements from the old buildings and reintroduce in a new form.

Postmodernism is derived from variety of areas. At the beginning of the 20th century, the role of anthropology, semiotics and Semiology emerged in Postmodernism and were moderately new form of academic review that offer a method of describing culture in universal and more particularly traditional from Modernism. Anthropology is the study of cultures and humanities..

Anthropology in Postmodernism eliminates the universal theories and enlighten other cultures. Postmodernism conceal the division between high and low culture that led to challenge a varied of cultures. The cultural movement are noticeable in architecture buildings. The efficient and dignified space of Modernism have been substituted by variety of styles, aesthetics, and forms in a new way. Postmodernist architects design buildings. Semiotics is the study of signs and symbols as components of language and the formation of communication.

In Saussure’s terminology, the signified, and the signifier are the elements of the sign which is found in various terms. According to Saussure, a sign are made of two separate components, a signifier which means the auditory of

the spoken word as heard by the receiver of a message and a signified which is the meaning described forth in the mind of the receiver effect from the stimulation of signifier (Gottdinier, 1995). The sign is the signifier, the signified, and the combination of the two as he declared (ibid).

Saussure theory of signs explains the term ‘ signifier’ for the sound image, and the ‘ signifies’ for the concept. As a result, the sign is generated by the relations. The components of the ‘ signifier ‘ is material such as sound, objects and images. However in Semiology, one has to deal with a various systems in which a number of materials are involved. The concept of the typical signs implies that the verbal sign, the graphic sign, the iconic sign, the gestural sign are the typical signs. Saussure emphasized that the ‘ signified’ is a mental representation of the ‘ thing’.

The sign is place is identified in a sequence of conditions which have resemblance and contradictories with it such as signal, icon, index and symbol (Barthes, 1964) . The sign is a compound of a signifier and a signified. The plane of expression the signifiers composes the plane of expression and that of the signified the plane of content (ibid.). Gottdiener (1995) states that ” According to Saussure, signs express ideas and provided that he did not share a Platonic interpretation of the term idea. Such ideas must be mental events that a concern a human mind.

The sign is implicitly regarded as a communicative device taking place between two human beings intentionally aiming to communicate or to express something” . Thus, in relation to architecture, sign is applied to communicate efficiently with the society. Krampen states that all culture is

accessible through linguistic analysis and this statement is fallacy. Barthes (1964) states that “ The linguistic fallacy implies that since all languages are made up of words, all words are signs, all things made up of signs are languages.

This translinguistic approach to culture has come to characterise “ pop-semiotic” analysis, just as architecture has been endowed”. Cultural movement and the use of signs and symbols are visible in Piazza D’ Italia building . The Piazza D’ Italia, popularly considered as one of the spectacles of the world, is a remarkable creation produced by the human virtues of artistry, endurance, aesthetics and the spirit of adventure and inspired by the emotion of adoration. Piazza, located in New Orleans, was designed by the 19th century Architect, Charles Moore.

Charles Moore borrows the elements from the Disney’s imaginers. He created classical form of building and applied the playful fantasy design. Littlejohn (1984) describes “ A thin walled, eighty- four- foot tower, a dramatic study in the modern cut out shapes, illuminated at night by exotic stage lighting and a small piped formed pergola in the shape of classical temple. ” Moore designed the space to represent the contribution of the Italian community to the New Orleans Culture. Moore?? appropriates the design of old Nicola Salvi’s Fontana in Rome in 1733. Moore applied an enormous quantity of architectural components. The uniquely designed buildings, shops, offices and cafes surround the circular piazza and its Roman-fantasy fountain which would incorporate the piazza’s vivid and illusionistic walls added with solid architecture and encircled by people who are able to admire its classical forms and shapes . The designs of the shops and offices

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are derived from the design of the Ghirardelli square in San Francisco (Littlejohn, 1984).

The superior craftsmanship of its builders and the high quality of the materials used to build on, ensure the building against possible damages by the elements of Nature. The structure, as a whole, retains its lustre and reflects its glory to the extent that. It continues to arouse awe and admiration in the numerous people who visit it round the year. The greatness of Piazza D' Italia is not confined to its fantastic beauty, both inside and outside.

It is perhaps the structure of its kind, a variety of colour are used to create marvellous effects. Furthermore, the used of cultural elements and signs are applied in The Portland building. The Portland building was designed at Portland, Oregon by Michael Graves in 1980. The used of various colours, a variety of materials, pyramid patterns and small square windows made The Portland building as a symbol of Postmodernism . he combines the traditional form of designs and Italian decorative components into symmetrically well arranged design.

Ghirardo (1996) explains " the unusually bold and richly chromatic decorative scheme explicitly referred to Italian architectural history, and gave rise to heated polemical battles over the appropriateness of the style and the colours in the context of an attractive city center. " In addition, Frank Gehry's house in Santa Monica, 1978, is associated with cultural aspects and semiotics with its wood frame, chain link and corrugated metal construction system.

Ghirardo (1996) describes " although more provocative in the unorthodox use of materials and Jerry Seinfeld's built imagery, triggered far less controversy. "

In conclusion, Piazza D' Italia building by Charles Moore, The Portland building by Michael Graves, and The Frank Gehry's House by Frank Gehry explains the role of anthropology, semiotics and signs in the emergence of Postmodernism. Postmodernism in architecture have inclined to reintroduce the signs and symbols in the design of building. Architectural anthropology looks at the cultural aspects of society by not assuming universality .

Postmodernism is remembering the ' humanity' in buildings and confronting pure abstraction, universality and unity of modernism with that humanity whereas postmodernism is a part of modernism, it is normally a generally negative critique against modern design. Postmodernism wasn't born after modernism, but was in it all along. Postmodernism coexists with modernism. Postmodernism is the critique of modernism that exists in modern forms, thus it is a " self-critique". It is always present in any modern design, so it is an essential part of modernism. Postmodernism drew concepts from other fields such as philosophy and history, but also anthropology and the use of signs. Bibliography Barthes, R 1968, Elements of semiology, Editions du Seuil, USA. Ghirardo, D 1996, Architecture after modernism, Thames and Hudson, Singapore. Gottdiener, M 1995, Postmodern semiotics, Blackwell, Massachusetts. Littlejohn, D 1984, Architect: the life and work of Charles Moore, 1st edn, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York. Loveday, T 2010, 3121 history and theory 1, University of New South Wales. Woods, T 1999, Beginning postmodernism, Manchester University Press, New York.