

Physical Order and Disorder in Postmodern Architecture Style

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Abstract: Postmodern architecture began as an international style the first examples of which are generally cited as being from the 1950s, but did not become a style until the late 1970s and continues to influence present-day architecture. Postmodernity in architecture is said to be heralded by the return of "wit, ornament and reference" to architecture in response to the formalism of the International Style of modernism. Emphasis on new architecture is based on curved lines, unpredictable affairs, facetious decoration and imitation, and non-functional beauty. Transparent and mirror-like surfaces and tortuous are considered as major elements in postmodernist architecture. Eliciting style and manner of expression in architecture, referring to the climate (Regionalism, influenced by architectural demand to communicate with environment and specially climate), freedom in sense of combining, deviation from intellectual logic of color, personal or social signs, and enjoyment from near and far allegories are generally the achievements of Postmodernism which say that novelty and variation is in ways of expressing architecture. Basically, postmodernism is a selective combination of each tradition with its past context. It's both the continuation of modernism and going beyond that at the same time. The best works of post-modernism have the features of ambiguity and allusion and they picture unlimited choice, conflict, and dissociation of traditions. Because this Plurality apparently predominant over our pluralism. Max Bense who is one of the founders of informative aesthetic believes that, order has three degrees: chaos, being structured and being shaped. When we consider complete chaos that there are no regulations for connection between different components. In this case the possibility of prediction equals zero and innovation in maximum. Definition of being structured is one organized order with a structure that might have different forms. Bense calls the third part of order as a "chaos or disorganize order". In all three factors above replacement of components affected by a general organization whatever the rate of order is more and this order is more complicated, the informative content is less. In this paper first we have introduced this style briefly, we described order and disorder in the architecture and we have analyzed Evidences of order and disorder in this style.

Key words: Physical order and disorder, Postmodern architecture style, Evidence.

Postmodern Architecture:

Began as an international style the first examples of which are generally cited as being from the 1950s, but did not become a style until the late 1970s and continues to influence present-day architecture.

Postmodernity in architecture is said to be heralded by the return of "wit, ornament and reference" to architecture in response to the formalism of the International Style of modernism. As with many cultural fashions, some of Postmodernism's most pronounced and visible ideas can be seen in architecture. The functional and formalized shapes and spaces of the modernist style are replaced by diverse aesthetics: styles collide, form is adopted for its own sake, and new ways of viewing familiar styles and space abound. Perhaps most obviously, architects rediscovered the expressive and symbolic value of architectural elements and forms that had evolved through centuries of building which had been abandoned by the modern style.

Influential early large-scale examples of postmodern architecture are Michael Graves' Portland Building in Portland, Oregon and Philip Johnson's Sony Building (originally AT&T Building) in New York City, which borrows elements and references from the past and reintroduces color and symbolism to architecture.

Postmodern architecture has also been described as "neo-eclectic", where reference and ornament have returned to the facade, replacing the aggressively unornamented modern styles.

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This eclecticism is often combined with the use of non-orthogonal angles and unusual surfaces, most famously in the State Gallery of Stuttgart (New wing of the Staatsgalerie Stuttgart) by James Stirling and the Piazza d'Italia by Charles Moore. The Scottish Parliament Building in Edinburgh have also been cited as being of postmodern vogue.

Modernist architects may regard postmodern buildings as vulgar, associated with a populist ethic, and sharing the design elements of shopping malls, cluttered with "gew-gaws". Postmodern architects may regard many modern buildings as soulless and bland, overly simplistic and abstract. This contrast was exemplified in the juxtaposition of the "whites" against the "grays," in which the "whites" were seeking to continue (or revive) the modernist tradition of purism and clarity, while the "grays" were embracing a more multifaceted cultural vision, seen in Robert Venturi's statement rejecting the "black or white" world view of modernism in favor of "black and white and sometimes gray." The divergence in opinions comes down to a difference in goals: modernism is rooted in minimal and true use of material as well as absence of ornament, while postmodernism is a rejection of strict rules set by the early modernists and seeks meaning and expression in the use of building techniques, forms, and stylistic references.

One building form that typifies the explorations of Postmodernism is the traditional gable roof, in place of the iconic flat roof of modernism. Shedding water away from the center of the building, such a roof form always served a functional purpose in climates with rain and snow, and was a logical way to achieve larger spans with shorter structural members, but it was nevertheless relatively rare in modern houses. (These were, after all, "machines for living," according to LeCorbusier, and machines did not usually have gabled roofs.) However, Postmodernism's own modernist roots appear in some of the noteworthy examples of "reclaimed" roofs. For instance, Robert Venturi's Vanna Venturi House breaks the gable in the middle, denying the functionality of the form, and Philip Johnson's 1001 Fifth Avenue in Manhattan advertises a mansard roof form as an obviously flat, false front. Another alternative to the flat roofs of modernism would exaggerate a traditional roof to call even more attention to it, as when Kallmann McKinnell & Wood's American Academy of Arts and Sciences in Cambridge, Massachusetts, layers three tiers of low hipped roof forms one above another for an emphatic statement of shelter.

Aims and Characteristics:

The aims of Postmodernism, including solving the problems of Modernism, communicating meanings with ambiguity, and sensitivity for the building's context, are surprisingly unified for a period of buildings designed by architects who largely never collaborated with each other. The aims do, however, leave room for various implementations as can be illustrated by the diverse buildings created during the movement.

The characteristics of postmodernism allow its aim to be expressed in diverse ways. These characteristics include the use of sculptural forms, ornaments, anthropomorphism and materials which perform *trompe l'oeil*. These physical characteristics are combined with conceptual characteristics of meaning. These characteristics of meaning include pluralism, double coding, flying buttresses and high ceilings, irony and paradox, and contextualism.

The sculptural forms, not necessarily organic, were created with much ardor. These can be seen in Hans Hollein's Abteiberg Museum (1972–1982). The building is made up of several building units, all very different. Each building's forms are nothing like the conforming rigid ones of Modernism. These forms are sculptural and are somewhat playful. These forms are not reduced to an absolute minimum; they are built and shaped for their own sake. The building units all fit together in a very organic way, which enhances the effect of the forms.

After many years of neglect, ornament returned. Frank Gehry's Venice Beach house, built in 1986, is littered with small ornamental details that would have been considered excessive and needless in Modernism.

The Venice Beach House has an assembly of circular logs which exist mostly for decoration. The logs on top do have a minor purpose of holding up the window covers. However, the mere fact that they could have been replaced with a practically invisible nail, makes their exaggerated existence largely ornamental. The ornament in Michael Graves' Portland Municipal Services Building ("Portland Building") (1980) is even more prominent. The two obtruding triangular forms are largely ornamental. They exist for aesthetic or their own purpose.

Postmodernism, with its sensitivity to the building's context, did not exclude the needs of humans from the building. Carlo Scarpa's Brion Cemetery (1970–72) exemplifies this. The human requirements of a cemetery is that it possesses a solemn nature, yet it must not cause the visitor to become depressed. Scarpa's cemetery achieves the solemn mood with the dull gray colors of the walls and neatly defined forms, but the bright green grass prevents this from being too overwhelming.

Postmodern buildings sometimes utilize trompe l'oeil, creating the illusion of space or depths where none actually exist, as has been done by painters since the Romans. The Portland Building (1980) has pillars represented on the side of the building that to some extent appear to be real, yet they are not.

The Hood Museum of Art (1981–1983) has a typical symmetrical façade which was at the time prevalent throughout Postmodern Buildings.

Robert Venturi's Vanna Venturi House (1962–64) illustrates the Postmodernist aim of communicating a meaning and the characteristic of symbolism. The façade is, according to Venturi, a symbolic picture of a house, looking back to the 18th century. This is partly achieved through the use of symmetry and the arch over the entrance.

Perhaps the best example of irony in Postmodern buildings is Charles Moore's Piazza d'Italia (1978). Moore quotes (architecturally) elements of Italian renaissance and Roman Antiquity. However, he does so with a twist. The irony comes when it is noted that the pillars are covered with steel. It is also paradoxical in the way he quotes Italian antiquity far away from the original in New Orleans.

Double coding meant the buildings convey many meanings simultaneously. The Sony Building in New York does this very well. The building is a tall skyscraper which brings with it connotations of very modern technology. Yet, the top contradicts this. The top section conveys elements of classical antiquity. This double coding is a prevalent trait of Postmodernism.

The characteristics of Postmodernism were rather unified given their diverse appearances. The most notable among their characteristics is their playfully extravagant forms and the humour of the meanings the buildings conveyed.

Table of distinction between modernism and postmodernism from Ihab Hassan's view point:

Modernism	Postmodernism
Romanticism/Symbolism	Pataphysics/Dadaism
Form (conjunctive, closed)	Antiform (disjunctive, open)
Purpose	Play
Design	Chance
Hierarchy	Anarchy
Mastery/Logos	Exhaustion/Silence
Art Object / Finished Work	Process/Performance/Happening
Distance	Participation
Creation/Totalization	Decreation/Deconstruction
Synthesis	Antithesis
Presence	Absence
Centering	Dispersal
Genre/Boundary	Text/Intertext
Semantics	Rhetoric
Paradigm	Syntagm
Hypotaxis	Parataxis
Metaphor	Metonymy
Selection	Combination
Root/Depth	Rhizome/Surface
Interpretation/Reading	Against Interpretation / Misreading
Signified	Signifier
Narrative / Grande Histoire	Anti-narrative / Petit Histoire
Master Code	Idiolect
Symptom	Desire
Type	Mutant
Genital/Phallic	Polymorphous/Androgynous
Paranoia	Schizophrenia

Postmodern designers believe that they can easily bypass history and rejoin history of architecture to the original, new and innovative styles. They generally led their movements along with separatist and sectarian movements and were avoiding from extensive movements of civil right and human bond which could lead to growth and improvement of range and domination of group activities.

French postmodernist demonstrate this attitude to the world as a remarkable discovery and a key to prosperity and freedom in the new Pluralistic and Multi-god world.

As already mentioned, post-modernist thinking doesn't have a single direct orientation but revolves in numerous worlds of which don't have compatible themes and most of the time, have apparent ambiguities and ironies.

One of the most fundamental post-modernist themes spins around reality, lack of reality, or multiplicity of reality. Nothingness is a niche concept which has close relationship with fluid and unstable sense of reality. Statement "God is dead" of Nietzsche means that we cannot have certainty about anything anymore; morality is lie and truth is a myth.

Main themes of postmodernism can be the cases below:

1. A question about this fact that any human reality is an objective and simple representation of truth.
2. Attention and emphasis on how communities use language to make the facts of their own case; how communities use language to create fact.
3. Preference or priority for indigenous (local), objective and particularly against universal and generally abstract.
4. Renewed interest or attention to the narrative and storytelling.
5. To accept the fact that multiple and different descriptions could not be always used against or opposed to each other in a definite and final manner (it means objective and non-human).
6. Acceptance and willingness to accept the way things are in the level of surface and external instead of searching (in the style of Freud or Marx) to find deeper meanings.

Most of these subjects match with each other and seems appropriate but Postmodernist situation has a kind of stress or special disorder; on one hand tends toward decay, dispersion, and differentiation and on the other hand searches for broader framework for meanings.

Emphasis on new architecture is based on curved lines, unpredictable affairs, facetious decoration and imitation, and non-functional beauty. Transparent and mirror-like surfaces and tortuous are considered as major elements in postmodernist architecture.

On the other side, there's Las Vegas architecture which in learning from exaggerated interpretation of contemporary architecture, it has chosen way of extremist. You can read more details about in "Learning from Las Vegas" by "Robert Venturi". In this architectural style we encounter various combinations of different styles. The most obvious example is a building called Caesar Palace with sculptures, old statues, parking guards, and waitresses who are wearing in the style of ancient Roman. Here, the domination and hegemony of numerous colorful and sparkling signs, which catch sight of every client, is clearly visible and tangible over less interesting and less spectacular gambling tables and automatic selling food and drink machines.

Turning to history, eliciting style and manner of expression in architecture, referring to the climate (Regionalism, influenced by architectural demand to communicate with environment and specially climate), freedom in sense of combining, deviation from intellectual logic of color, personal or social signs, and enjoyment from near and far allegories are generally the achievements of Postmodernism which say that novelty and variation is in ways of expressing architecture.

The Postmodernism is to recognize again the presence of worldliness, creativity, diversity, and of course identical intellectuality which has a cosmetic orientation based on contemporary science.

Jencks has considered postmodernism as a divalent term; it means elite and popular and pairing of these antonyms: consistent and insurgent as well as new and old. According to him postmodern art is influenced by global network, and tenderness associated with it is to become allusive, global, and public.

Postmodern should be understood based on "Post" and "Mode".

Both traditions of Post-Modern and Late-Modern were started around 1960 and both of them reacted to the decline of modernism.

Postmodernist period is the time for ongoing choices; a period in which we cannot follow any established method without self-awareness and allusion and we should remember that all traditions have a kind of credit.

Basically, postmodernism is a selective combination of each tradition with its past context. It's both the continuation of modernism and going beyond that at the same time. The best works of post-modernism have the features of ambiguity and allusion and they picture unlimited choice, conflict, and dissociation of traditions. Because this Plurality apparently predominant over our pluralism.

We consider postmodernism as paradoxical duality and a doubt which its hybrid name means continuation of modernism or going beyond that and this fact is influenced by global village which its associated sense has the allusion of citizenship globalization. The term of being "Post" means "to be superior".

Charles Willard Moore wrote two books about postmodernism with the names: *The Place of Houses* and *Body, Memory and Architecture*

About postmodernism

1. Diversity among set of forms; Eclecticism.
2. Search for a synthesis which has all of the expectations and features of time to solve real issues.

3. The smallest methodological criterion; following real issues and choosing a method which is the product of thinking and patience.

Plan of London National Museum: Robert Venturi and his wife designed this center. The building has three facades.

Designing the facade of building is in accordance with neighborhood characteristics:

1. A traditional facade that is in direction of a historical museum.
2. A modern facade that is in direction of modern streets and buildings.
3. A facade inside the alley which is in accordance with local context.

Robert Venturi, American architect, was the disciple of Saarinen and Luis Khan and he was working in their office. He composed a book named "Complexity & Contradiction in Architecture".

In this book, Robert Venturi questioned the principles of ideas and world view of modern architecture. In this book, he solicited attention to humanistic features and architecture. Most of criticism and theories of this book was addressed to Miss Van De Rohe. On the other hand, he brings up the term "Less Is more, Less Is Bore" which means less boring. He believed that there are complexities and contradictions in building which cannot be neglected or omitted. Venturi believed that a building cannot have a specific form and for him forms like Italian mountain range homes, built based on people's needs and the climate, are the criterion.

Venturi did not have any belief to international style and instead believed in "Contextualism"; it means that every building must be designed and run according to cultural, social, historical, and physical backgrounds and the conditions of that site and building.

According to postmodernists, below conditions determine the form of building:

1. Cultural, social, historical, and economical characteristics of people who use that building.
2. Characteristics of city, street, square, alley, and shops.
3. Conditions of climate, humidity, cold, heat, forest, and desert.
4. Way of daily life of inhabitants of building, their needs, their mental backgrounds, and events.

Robert Venturi wrote another book named "Learning from Los Vegas". In this book, he draws architects' attention to the everyday culture and characteristics of life. In this book, he has noted that symbols are not those which intellectuals dictated to people but people themselves have designed these symbols and it's understandable to them. Forms of popular facades, shops, and volumes are things that have a specific charm and attraction in Las Vegas.

The house of Venturi's mother in Pennsylvania, at the same simplicity is complicated, at the same symmetric is asymmetric, and at the same unity has plurality. This building is the first construction in modern style. In plan of this house, there are symbols like pitched roof, arches, entrance frontispiece and windows. Inside the building has various and different spaces and the plan contrast has been shown on the facade of the building; facade of the building shows the mentality of a child from the building.

Physical Order and Disorder in Architecture:

The architecture is composed of different parts. The connection between these components has been organized. It means that all these components are subsystems of an organism. This system or organism might be very simple or complicated. Max Bense who is one of the founders of informative aesthetics believes that, order has three degrees: chaos, being structured and being shaped. When we consider complete chaos that there are no regulations for connection between different components. In this case the possibility of prediction equals zero and innovation in maximum. Definition of being structured is one organized order with a structure that might have different forms. Bense calls the third part of order as a "chaos or disorganized order". When we talk about this order that in which all materials have been replaced that displaying the choices have been picked up freely and in a united system.

In all three factors above replacement of components affected by a general organization whatever the rate of order is more and this order is more complicated, the informative content is less. But we should not think that more complication equals chaos automatically. This order couldn't be recognized easily and could even cause mistakes. More order equals less innovation. In complete chaos the probability of all components are equal, so squandering information equals zero and in consequence the possibility of new combination or maximum creation is possible.

Continuing of a style is in connection with order and squandering information and not to be with innovation. The contrast of styles comes from the difference of its components and its dominated order. In this case they have been more or less complicated and by means of that they have been connected by viewer or user. For example in Indian temples in India there is an order that they are not identifiable at the first glance because their components are almost complicated.

Order means obligation automatically. Whatever this order is sever the open space is less so it could be remained for the variety of components. And each part should obey these rules more and more. In a case that some these parts couldn't even do their main task and in reverse a kind of complicated order creates more freedom and this freedom creates more open space for forming the components and causing opacity. The two kinds of orders, of course, have some exceptions just in a condition that the main factors of organism stay stable and without changing.

Buildings which are in order and are not flexible give us less freedom. In the other word changing one factor in this system could hardly possible. But in the opposite, these architectures give us their messages very clear and straight and nothing for personal interpretation for buildings with complicated order the issue is something else. Here in this case, we are completely free to act. Personal interpretation and opacity are possible. Such building expects us to be more active. We ourselves should discover the order of that and also search for its system. We can compare this building with Picasso's painting named Guernica. In there also this is viewer wants to comprehend the painting and this is also the viewer who is obliged to search about the organism and thoughts, problems which lay behind of the painting.

Architectural styles of Mies van der Rohe and Venturi are eventually the same (Spectrum). The contrast between the two even influenced the choice of materials. But which one of these two styles is better or more beautiful?

For answering this question it would impossible find a definite answer. As we will see the value of aesthetic of objects could be measured or adjusted. This value equals with the consequence of the division of order by complication. Whatever a building is more complicated its organism should be more expanded that we will be able to find a measurement for its aesthetic.

Buildings with severe order like many of Mies van der Rohe's works, either gives no opportunity to complication or it ends to chaos. In the other words, the Robert Venturi's open order needs complication that wouldn't be naively.

The important note is that in each style should be equivalent between complication and relevant order the comparison between two styles is impossible. We couldn't consider any style as the best in architecture absolutely.

But which or who make it clear that how the dominated order should be, simple or complicated?

In T .Munro's opinion that: the complication in an organism continuously being increased in an art till it makes studying harder occasionally. The consequence of this hardship is the general turning point and return to a more simplified organism. The trueness of this Munro's idea could be confirmed by informative theory.

Peter smith proves that during architecture history, one phase with three steps is really recognition which has been repeated several times.

- A severe and distinct order dominates in first step. Coordination and simplicity has basic role in this era.
- The main characteristic of second step is tension.
- Lack of clarification and seduction are the main traits of third step. Order in here is that complicated which we are approaching to the maximum capacity of our conceptual.

There is a direct connection between the rate of regularity and division of information to semantic and aesthetics quota of semantic information and with the same ratio the effect of wisdom on emotion will be more and vice versa: when aesthetics information has had more quota or order is more complicated emotion dominates on wisdom.

An introvert person who is rationalist basically prefers the clear order and extrovert person is more emotionalists and prefers the complicated order more.

Evidences of Order and Disorder in this Style:

Charles Jencks believes that postmodern architecture has 10 prominent traits. To clarify his opinion we consider Philip Johnson's AT&T building in New York City:

1. The first postmodern architectural trait is the fact that it's a kind of- highly eclectic-pluralistic architecture which honors differences, distinctions, and etc. it adapts different styles and languages. AT&T skyscraper makes a large pendulum clock by glass and steel in a way that its legs are on the ground with incomplete and broken decoration of a pediment.
2. This eclecticism oriented architecture leads to a kind of contradictory beauty, an inharmonious coordination, a use of contrariety cases, and paradox. Of course there's a kind of difference between a building and a clock but this contradictory is facetious and witty, because lots of buildings are representing the clocks.

3. AT&T building as an example of postmodern building represents the third trait of postmodern architecture and distinguishes a kind of town integration and urbanization. This building, alone, doesn't have any significance and seems beautiful like other modernist skyscrapers but this building is the combination of mirrors, imitations, and derisions which causes the expansion of other buildings in its surrounding environment.
4. Postmodern buildings have human personality or Anthropomorphic form because their forms and decorations often represent the humanistic forms. Although the AT&T building doesn't have this characteristic directly but it reflects it indirectly through imitation of a man made things (that is clock).
5. This building represents the relationship between past and present. For example, large pendulum clock with its leg on the ground and modern skyscraper. This togetherness of different styles can put the past facing to present and facilitates the architect to not only gather the old styles but also imitate from them, cause the appearance of past-Nostalgia, and exceed in nauseous imitation.
6. Another trait of postmodernist architecture is the passion for content and meaning. This building represents "a large pendulum clock" rather than the mere expression of "a glass and steel box".
7. The seventh feature of postmodern architecture is the existence of double-encryption, combination, and togetherness of styles-buildings like pendulum clock and modernist skyscrapers- in a way that allusion, stirring, ambiguity, and irony peer beside each other. Post-modern buildings don't express "this or that" but "this and that". AT&T building expresses "this and that" by combining contemporary elements (skyscraper) with old elements (pendulum clock) and applicable elements (official building) with decorative elements (broken pavements of Chippendale) in a form of doubled-encryption. This building can represent tow meanings or be the meaning of tow things at the same time.
8. Postmodern buildings are multi-structural and multi-lateral. It means that it can have the meaning of many things at the same time. Unlike single-structural and single-lateral features of modernist building which only indicate one thing, "I'm a cube", post-modern architecture is multi structural, non-exclusive, elusive, resonant, and symbolic.
9. Postmodern architecture tries to reinterpret the tradition concept. This kind of architecture doesn't merely coping from the past, but reinterpret them. AT&T building is not the mere reviving of the past but tries to ridicule it in kind of witty and facetious way.
10. Most of Postmodern buildings have the passion to get back to the central social space.

Conclusion:

The first postmodern architectural trait is the fact that it's a kind of- highly eclectic-pluralistic architecture which honors differences, distinctions, and etc. it adapts different styles and languages. AT&T skyscraper makes a large pendulum clock by glass and steel in a way that its legs are on the ground with incomplete and broken decoration of a pediment.

This eclecticism oriented architecture leads to a kind of contradictory beauty, an inharmonious coordination, a use of contrariety cases, and paradox. Of course there's a kind of difference between a building and a clock but this contradictory is facetious and witty, because lots of buildings are representing the clocks. Unlike single-structural and single-lateral features of modernist building which only indicate one thing, "I'm a cube", post-modern architecture is multi structural, non-exclusive, elusive, resonant, and symbolic.

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