

Contemporary Art Thinking on Modernism Design

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Abstract

The influence of artistic trends on the field of design is profound and diverse, and the relationship between art and design is worthy of consideration. As time changes and artistic trends continue to develop, it can be seen that modernist design is of the form and characteristics of an artistic school. The modernist design movement was first embodied in architecture and subsequently influenced the fields of culture and art. From a historical perspective, the stylistic genres of art and modernist design are a relationship of critique and inheritance, and reflect the changes in aesthetic standards as time advances. The significance of the artistic genres on the production of modernist design is the direction that needs to be studied in this project. This paper explores the influence of artistic schools of thought on modernist design through an analysis of their expression in architectural interiors.

Keywords

Artistic Thinking; Modernism; Stylists; Compositionism; Interior Design.

1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

Contemporary art thinking is made up of many artistic genres and is also conditioned by the ideological, political, economic and cultural factors of the society at the time. The term "contemporary art thinking" encompasses the temporal dimension and represents artistic ideas at a particular time. It is also an expression of the aesthetic characteristics, concepts and spirit of painting in the field of artworks. Contemporary art thinking can be described as having both a tangible work and an ideological concept.

1.2 Reflecting the Significance of the Selection from the Interior Space

Art and design evolved in this way, starting with visual communication design, while interior design can be traced back to the exhibition 'Modern Domestic Spaces of the Past Fifty Years', held at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in November 1946, which traced the development of modern interior design in America from William Morris to the present day. Interior design has been influenced by the various schools of art and has evolved to its present form.

Interior design is supposed to be a fusion of art and architecture, but as society has developed, the study of interior design has tended to consider the technical aspects more than the influence of the artistic field on its development. The development of interior design from classicism to modernism to postmodernism is of historical interest. Its development has made it possible to compose the forms of architectural spaces, while at the same time reflecting the fact that modern art originates from the forms that compose the interiors of architectural spaces. It is therefore particularly important for interior designers to explore the process by which contemporary art thinking has developed.

Art and design should be mutually reinforcing and integrated. Design is to a certain extent more constrained than art, and design needs to take into account not only the designer himself, but also the constraints of the consumer, the client, the economy, the environment and so on. But art sometimes

simply represents the emotions that the artist wants to express, presented through the artwork, and to some extent only the artist himself. The constant development of artistic thought has driven the presentation of the form of architectural space. From the medieval architecture, the ancient Greek "columnar architecture", the ancient Roman "vaulted architecture", the Byzantine "dome" architecture, the Gothic "pointed cliff "The 'Pillar Architecture' of Ancient Greece, the 'Vault Architecture' of Ancient Rome, the 'Dome Architecture' of Byzantium and the 'Pointed Cliff' of Gothic, with their heavy structures and thick walls, show their styles and patterns. Looking at the architecture of the Western Classical period, Baroque architecture expresses dynamism with secular, distorted forms; Rococo architecture is more curved and proto-shaped, with more deliberate decorative techniques. The architecture of the Classical period had strict proportions and scales, resulting in spaces that gave a sense of heaviness and solemnity. The religious beliefs of the time led to the emphasis on an orderly space in Classical architecture, with a sense of equilibrium created by the relationship between axes. Before the advent of modernism, the religious art of classicism had been an important influence on the interior spaces of classical architecture. Spatial forms were characterised by precision, fixity and clarity, reflecting a rejection of ambiguity.

1.2.1 The 'Art Nouveau' Movement

The architect Cockerell had expressed his views on craftsmanship and machines in 1835, arguing that machines could not be used to replace craftsmanship for economic purposes and that this would be the destruction of art. Both Raskin and William Morris shared this view. Thus, the producer and the user were closely linked, and artwork also reflected attitudes to life and was a necessity. The innovative design pioneers in Britain attempted to revive craftsmanship with a romantic twist, pulling back to the Middle Ages, and the 'Arts and Crafts' movement promoted the Gothic style, influenced by Oriental art, particularly the decorative style of the Edo period in Japan. This was followed by the development of an even larger 'Art Nouveau' movement in various European countries. European interior design was still relatively conservative under the umbrella of the Academy, which saw classical French architecture of the 17th and 18th centuries as a means of satisfying the needs of the aristocracy and demonstrating wealth. In response to the conservative attitude of the academics, Belgian and French designers began to move away from the retro concept and gradually began to shift their clientele from the aristocracy to the middle class. "The "Art Nouveau" movement, which began around 1895 and lasted until around 1910, differed from naturalism, which combined art and craft, in that it was highly symbolic and decorative, using flowers, plants and other In his Manifesto of Symbolism, written in 1886, Moreaus argued that symbolism was a way of tapping into an expression that was in tune with the human mind and at the same time evocative of the inner world, and that it was not simply a formal exploration, but rather a medium in which form could be used as an aid to convey ideas. In fact, many of the figures of the 'Art Nouveau' movement were influenced by symbolism. Among them was Henri van der Velde. "The Art Nouveau movement placed little emphasis on historical style, but was still influenced by the naturalistic style of the Middle Ages. Later, the Art Nouveau movement was influenced by Henri van der Velde, who founded the Weimar Municipal School of Fine Arts, the forerunner of the Bauhaus, and was involved in the German Manufacturing Union.

1.2.2 The Austrian "Secessionists"

"The 'Art Nouveau' movement took place in various countries, including Vienna, Austria, where the 'Art Nouveau' movement was the 'Secession'. It was a collection of progressive artists and architects with different ideas from those of the academy. In 1896, Wagner published his book Modern Architecture, in which he explicitly opposed the classical revival of architecture and retrogressivism, seeking new forms and materials, and arguing that architecture should Wagner's Modern Architecture was published in 1896. Wagner's work on the Maiorica House is a reflection of his vision of design. Wagner's design principles were first applied to the Vienna Postbank in 1903, which became the earliest symbol of the modernist architectural movement, along with Wright's Larkin Building and Behrens' German General Electric turbine workshop.



Fig.1 The Vienna Postbank

2. Overview of Modernist Design

Modernist design originated from the 1920s to the 1970s. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, with the development of industrial civilisation and increasing levels of technology, new devices and products were invented all over the world. At the same time, visual communication design developed rapidly, for example in print advertising, newspapers, magazines, books and logos, but designers were confused as to how to deal with it effectively. Despite the influence of the 'Arts and Crafts' and 'Art Nouveau' movements, they were unable to solve the problem. It was therefore a breakthrough for modern designers to find an art that balanced the traditional tedium of decoration and industrial production, and the ideology of modernist design emerged to solve new problems and to serve modern society.

2.1 Modernist Architecture

The use of steel and reinforced concrete architecture structures, the formation of architecture, the redefinition of walls with aesthetic functions and the extensive use of new materials. A gradual move from the dull and heavy classical period towards a wide and open architectural space.

Modernism developed from architecture, and its representative, Mies van der Rohe's architectural work, *A Study in the Rhythm of Russian Dance*, ranges from concrete to abstract sketches reflecting the clarity of the 'dancer's' form to the blurring of the form's dynamics, and confirms Mies' idea that 'less is more'. "The sketches range from the concrete to the abstract, reflecting the clarity of the 'dancer's' form to the blurring of the form's dynamics. In the final presentation, the contours are clearly defined, but at the same time articulate and communicate with each other on the inside and outside, reflecting his focus on fluid space, giving a sense of movement and dimension to flat, two-dimensional paintings. Mies van der Rohe's use of materials, particularly the combination of steel and glass, is a masterclass in the use of materials, construction methods, form and space in the presentation of the German Pavilion at the Barcelona International Fair, which is a reflection of the 'less is more' approach to architecture. The pavilion is covered by a thin white roof and the wall panels are made of marble and glass, again in simple, translucent sheets. The pavilion is built in a spatially intertwined way, dividing the spaces and linking them together to create a unique traffic flow. The whole is supported by eight columns made of metal, presenting a simple, clear and flexible spatial effect.

Van Duesberg, also a representative of Modernism, believed that an artist should not only paint, but that he needed to integrate with practical design to form a stylistically unified living environment. Through his ongoing exploration, Duesberg contemplated the form of the interior spaces of buildings and found that taking the height, width and depth of buildings into account realistic factors and needs would express the state of open space. The café projects that Duesberg has worked on are influenced by the Stylists.

2.2 Modernist Formal Characteristics

Abandoning decoration and focusing on function as the purpose of design. A move away from the extravagance of retrogressivism and the Renaissance.

3. Design Examples Illustrating the Influence of Contemporary Art Thinking on Modernist Design

The development of Cubism, Constructivism and the Stylists led to the development of modernist design, creating new aesthetic forms and functions under industrial civilisation and in the face of ever-increasing technology. Thus, Cubism, Constructivism and the Stylists contributed to the development of modernist design.

3.1 The Influence of Cubism on Modernist Design

Cubism centres on how to represent the spatial form of a three-dimensional plane on a two-dimensional plane, and in practice rejects the traditional method of perspective. It was expressed through straight lines, curved contours and the stacking of blocks and variations in colour. Le Corbusier, the first to advocate the introduction of cubist art forms into design and a prominent representative of the French modernist architectural movement, was early influenced by Picasso's cubism and created 'purist' paintings, advocating that painting and architecture should express basic forms and that art should return to nature. "The geometric lines and blocks of colour in his 'purist' paintings reflect cubist elements. The use of curves in his paintings can be seen in his design for the French gallery church. His philosophy is that design is composed of human sensations through the arrangement of form and colour, and he emphasises the beauty of mechanics. In his work Villa Stan, Corbusier can be seen dividing space to create a variety of angles of vision. The Villa Savoy is also an example of the spatial richness that Corbusier embodied in the ingenuity of his architectural design. By dividing the space and thus reflecting the changes, the scenes are made more varied and rich. In addition, the choice of materials is in harmony with the space. The reinforced concrete frame structure makes for a light and airy appearance. The detailing of the building's interior is also ergonomic and very user-friendly. For example, the bathtub has a curved wide edge, as does the roof garden; the traffic flow through the garage is also carefully designed. He incorporates cubist forms and uses new materials. It is thus clear that the characteristics of Cubism in terms of pictorial expression influenced Corbusier's treatment of composition and design, and even the entire spatial form of modernist architecture.

3.2 The Influence of the Dutch 'Stylists' on Modernist Design

The Dutch 'Stylistic School' was developed under the influence of Cubism and emerged in the early 20th century, also known as Neo-Formism. The "Stylists", which originated in Mondrian's painting, sought to "abstract and simplify" art, returning the traditional features of architecture, furniture and painting to the simplest geometric elements and combining these structural monoliths, using colours such as the colour palette is also based on the three primary colours and neutrals. Mondrian focuses on the expression of line and the presentation of colour, seeing the simple geometric expression and colour as purely compositional, relational harmonies. His Red, Yellow and Blue Composition, with its purely horizontal and vertical lines and its colours of the three primary colours and black, white and grey, strives to achieve a balanced geometric abstraction with a high degree of rationalisation. Rietveld's Red and Blue Chair, whose design is influenced by Mondrian, also has no curves, is also coloured in three primary colours and black, and is simple in form. The Stylists' use of abstract geometric structures to express nature and the pursuit of balance also laid the foundations for modernist design.

3.3 The Influence of Russian Constructivism on Modernist Design

The Russian Constructivist movement took place around the time of the October Revolution, first in the field of sculpture and later spreading to painting, music and other fields. Its aim was to change the old social consciousness with new ideas. Russian Constructivism took structure as the starting point for architectural design and firmly proposed that design served society, arguing that Constructivist forms had a social meaning. The style of this period was characterised by the use of non-figurative, simple geometric forms and the use of new techniques and materials to express 'rationalism'. "Derived from the cubist 'collage', the obvious change is in the spatial aspect, moving

from a two-dimensional to a three-dimensional representation. Malevich, an important representative of Constructivism, founded Suprematism on the basis of Cubism and Constructivism, which sought to explore new ways of modelling, in which abstract geometry was placed on a monochrome background in a single colour, reflecting a sense of space through the placement of the geometry. For example, Malevich's *Airplane Flight*, with a white background, is a combination of rectangles and trapezoids of different colours, while a similar work, *Suprematist Composition: Red and Black Squares*, has a beige background with two large and small squares painted in black and red, with the red square at the bottom right rotated 45 degrees to the left. In another of Malevich's works, *Woman Carrying Water*, the author uses geometric figures, mainly conical front views, arranged in the same or opposite directions to form the figure of a woman, whose hands are also represented in squares, using light and shadow relationships and thus presenting a dynamic and free composition, clearly influenced by cubism. Constructivism sees structure as the starting point for design, with an abstract approach to representation. In contrast to the 'Stylists', Constructivism is more socially relevant and practical. In the use of architecture, such as Tatlin's 1913 work, the Third International Memorial Tower, he combined architecture with sculpture and explored the use of new materials. His focus on structure is in line with Suprematism, so there is no decoration in the work, only a structural skeleton. The centre of the memorial tower is made up of three parts, utilising glass materials, surrounded by a spiral ladder surrounded by steel, with the glass cube in the middle rotating once a year around its axis. Tatlin incorporates utility into function through painting, allowing his work to achieve a consistency between utility and function, a creative experiment in the conceptual and compositionism presented by the Third International Memorial Tower. The aim of Russian Constructivism was to change the old social consciousness with new ideas, using structure as a starting point, adopting abstract expression and thus exploring utility. In contrast to the Dutch 'Stylists', Russian Constructivism was therefore more practically relevant and revolutionary in terms of the expression of a new design language and the further development of modern industrial design. In 1921, compositionism was introduced to the Weimar-era Bauhaus through Duesberg and was crucial in establishing the Bauhaus system of composition education.

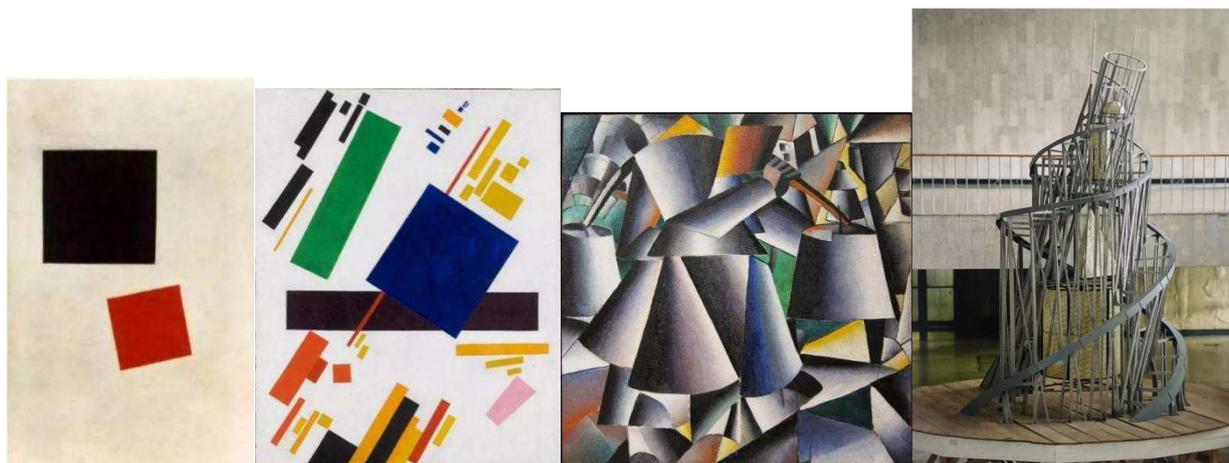


Fig.2 Reflecting a sense of space through the placement of the geometry.

4. Conclusion

Art Nouveau established a link between the interior and exterior of buildings, offering the possibility of works of art for interior design, and in the same period Wagner expressed his affirmation of new materials in his book *Modern Architecture*. Subsequently, the German Manufacturing Union incorporated new materials into spaces that also reflected a modern aesthetic. The Stylistic theory uses pure colour and simple geometric forms with a form of pairing three-dimensional compositions. Modernist design, which promoted simple and pure geometric forms without decoration, was also influenced by Cubism. Therefore, as time changes, modernist design is still exploring the balance of

space, dynamics and order in a new conceptual and temporal context, and is further expressed in design.

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