
Architecture in the Terms of The Philosophy of Humanism

Throughout history, many factors influenced the way western architecture developed. The most powerful movement in classical architecture was humanism during the early renaissance. The philosophy of humanism generally speaking is centered on the values, interests, and potential of the human being. Humanism influenced the western civilization in many ways particularly in the way architecture was formed. Humanism reformed people's beliefs, and traditions and that was a key factor in why architecture began to change. Architecture changed in a way that adapted to the society's needs, interests, and traditions. One of the main characteristics of humanism was that people began to believe that they were of central importance. They started to pay architects for their own benefit. Humanism changed the society's view on what buildings were built for and why they were designed the way they were.

Most ancient Greek buildings were designed to honor the Greek Pantheon. One of the most important ancient Greek buildings is the Parthenon, built between 447 and 438 BC. The Parthenon was built on the Acropolis of Athens and was designed to honor the goddess Athena. In the 5th century AD, the Parthenon was turned into a Christian church. The design of this building was strongly influenced by humanist characteristics, one of them being perfection and symmetry. It was designed to be aesthetically perfect to the human eye. The architect Ictinus was inspired by the golden ratio while designing the building to maintain symmetrical perfection and used this rule in the order of columns, blocks, walls, even in the arrangement of the spaces inside. The idea of the architect trying to achieve perfection is an ideal example of how people were influenced by the humanist movement.

Another example of how humanism influenced western architecture is the Roman Baths, which were part of ancient Roman daily traditions. The Roman Bath was a form of social gathering which functioned as an important day to day task. The Romans would have a social gathering where they would relax, stay clean, and discuss the latest news involving social, political, and economical factors. Although these baths were used to honor the gods, the idea of making these places luxurious and aesthetically pleasing to the eye is one of the main characteristics of the Renaissance Humanism.

Throughout history, humanism has been one of the most important key elements in the development of classical architecture in the western world. The ideology of humanism and its influence it had on the architecture of the western world is the reason why some ancient buildings are still in great shape until this current day.

Neoclassical architecture first appeared in the mid 18th and was influenced by the Rococo (late baroque architecture) which was derived from Palladian architecture. It dates back to ancient Greek and Roman architecture. Unlike other movements that occurred during that age, Neoclassical architecture focused completely on the form of classical art and architecture rather than taking parts of it and changing it in reference to the traditions of cultures back in that age. Neoclassical architecture was characterized by massive scale buildings, and the perfect geometric forms.

The characteristics of humanism in architecture are still commonly used in today's world, where

some architects tend to go back to humanistic architecture as inspiration to their new projects and designs. Modern architects are designing spaces where people can feel the most of themselves, which was one of the main characteristics of the humanist movement. This proves how much of an impact humanism had on the built architecture and the society evolving around it. Architects, artists, musicians, in the modern world still travel to Italy in search for classical inspiration, just as ancient intellectualists and architects did during the age of the Renaissance. Architects still search for inspiration from the organic forms that Italian towns were themed upon, which is what creates for the modern age, a unique urban landscape. Since the very beginning ages where architecture was formed, it has always been about the materiality and the construction of a structure, whether it's from steel or glass, and has always focused on the human scale in perspective to its form, and was always influence by the people's concern, and the people's needs and traditions in the society.

Throughout the past centuries, the modern architectural culture has been influenced by a rapid growth of technological advancements. It has been caught up in the repeated search for new scientific discoveries, which increase human limits. During the past centuries, people have been giving high priority to advanced machinery and equipment which led to the new levels of mastery and technological intelligence. These technological advancements control people's success and human skills. However, the current world is still built upon certain traditions and cultures based on what people need. These elements prove that humanism is still living through cultures and will always evolve around the needs and traditions of people.

The Himalayas Center, known as the humanistic nature and society exhibition is located in Shanghai, China, and is an example of how renaissance architecture and humanism influenced the built architecture in our modern world. The exhibition space is curated by Wong Shun-Kit who wanted to combine the ideas of the past, the present, and the future together to form a whole experience of China's traditions. He wanted to explore how Chinese villages were influenced by social transformation, and how to adapt to them. In the process of designing and curating this award-winning exhibition, architects attempted to visualize and discover a future filled with traditional Chinese nature. The exhibition presents a wide range of images, photography, videos, Chinese ink paintings, installations, and traditional Chinese literature. The elements that the exhibition offers to the public, helps the audience experience both still and active artwork from around a hundred different artists from China and abroad.

The architecture of the Himalayas Center is a story of its own. Japanese architect Arata Isozaki designed soft curves and carved out holes in the walls in a really delicate way to give a sense of experience on what a Chinese forest looks like. Architect Arata Isozaki studied the natural shapes that exist in a forest and mimicked them into his creative design. After observing the forest in detail, elements including curves, holes, symmetrical lines and patters were used to complete the natural sense of the structure. The idea of using inspiration from natural elements by itself is a major characteristic taken from the Renaissance Humanism, as it shows how one can get inspired by nature to help the life of others. Different parts of the exhibition are designed with Chinese writings to highlight the importance of text in Chinese culture. The structure does not only function as an exhibition space, but it is accompanied by a hotel which is carefully designed to highlight the traditional Chinese teahouse, with a modern look. In addition, this teahouse provides books on Chinese history and culture, which shows how the architect used historical tradition in a modern way.