

History of Architecture and Culture – 5

Lecture 20

Works of Deutscher Werkbund

Deutscher Werkbund was the German association of craftsmen which was a German association of artists, architects, designers and industrialists.

The Werkbund would become a very important event in the future of modern architecture. Because it was only after Deutscher Werkbund were the starting point of the Bauhaus school of design emerged. So because of that Deutscher Werkbund is a very important point in the history of modern architecture.

The main initial purpose of Deutscher Werkbund was to establish a certain relationships between the product manufacturers and the design professionals. There has to be the relationship between the product manufacturers and the design professionals because only then the design professionals can get the benefit of design into the product so that the German products the German companies can have global bench marking at that particular point of time. Because they were completing with products from the American and the UK market so that products needs to be cutting edge.

So the established platforms were they can bring design professionals and product manufacturers to the same platform. Unlike the way un as an movement the Deutscher Werkbund was not an artistic movement at all it was a completely state sponsored effort just to integrate the arts traditional crafts with industrial mass production technology. Just so that the country Germany as a country can get a competitive footing on pair with England and the US it was a state sponsored effort and it was very less of an artistic movement. It was more of an industrial effort to push Germany forward in the market.

The motto of Deutscher Werkbund was Vom Sofakissen zum Stadtebau which means from sofa cuisines to city building this is the kind of range or the vision that the Werkbund had for itself.

The history of Deutscher Werkbund goes on like this, it emerged when the architect Joseph Mario Albridge left Vienna and came to Dam stat to form an artist's colony and he came at the invite of Annuls Louis. Annuls Louis was then the grand joke of Hasii. The Werkbund was founded by Albirush and the other members were Peter Behrens, Paul Bruno and Riched Rimishmed and other people. It was started in 1907 in Munish at the instigation of Harmen Mutheshius it existed till 1934 and then it was re- established after the World War II in 1950. Muthesius was the author of exhaustive three volumes the English House of 1905. A survey of practical lessons of the English arts and crafts movement. Muthasius was seen as something of a cultural ambassador or industrial spy between Germany and England. Back then in England was flourishing in terms of arts and crafts movement and the industrial revolution had been huge hidden England and England was former superior in terms of

technology. So Germany wanted to opp the to technology front and that is when Deutscher Werkbund was started.

The organization originally included 12 architects and 12 business fonts. The architects include Peter Behrens, Kiodra fisher, Joseph Hosmin and others. The other architects who were officially affiliated with the projects were Henry Wandwel was very important at this point of time because he was the sphere head of Belgium Art Nova architecture. The Werkbund commission Wandwel to design a theatre for its 1914 cologne exhibition. The exhibition was closed in the buildings dismantle higher of the schedule because the World War I had started in 1914.

Eliel Saarinen who was the father of Eero Saarinen he was made corresponding member of the Deutscher Werkbund in 1914. And he was invited to participate in the 1914 cologne exhibition. After the Werkbunds more nodded members such Mies Van der Rohe who served as an architectural director of the Werkbund he took a different plan itself.

In this slide if you see the Deutscher Werkbund did not really care about architecture or art in any sense all they wanted to do was mass produce things and all they need to do was to design one product which was 200 percent perfect in every manner and it can be manufactured in so many number of times and the same profit can be attained in so many different periods. So all they added design was one product in a perfect manner. So if you take a particular knife or a fork or a spoon all they had to design was only just one or few variance and then you can take the exact measurements and then reproduced in industry mass manufactured so many different times but it still look so artistry as if it was a designer creative product. Similarly with the lamps, furniture and every other thing you all beggs had to do was design one or a few primary products and they have to mass manufacture everything else.

They were two people in Deutscher werkbund who were like the intellectual leaders of the group. One person was Harmen Muthesius and the other person was someone whom we already we have met in the previous lecture he is Hanry Van de Velde.

Both of these gentlemen were inference by the English arts and craft movement headed by William Morris. So both Van de velde and Muthesius expanded William Morris idea to include into arts arena the machine- made goods in production.

These people also they thought that it everything as to be done according to function all the products and all the design has to based on only functions and that unnecessary ornamentation needs to be eliminated from the product of the building. Van de velde if we remember correctly he was one of the people who was spear heading a earlier movement which had a lot of decoration and ornamentation in his works but we also studied in the same lecture that during this later years he found the transformation and his career, so after

the werkbund was founded it clearly got divided into two factions. Was one faction which was championed by Muthesius.

He was someone who was in the idea that you have to use as much as mechanical mass production and design standardization possible inside out production, but on the other hand there was another group of people headed by van de Velde, they taught that individual artistic expression and the value of individual artists is also integral in preserving any arts movement.

So, but for obvious reasons, the werkbund adopted Muthesius ideas because basically, it was a state sponsored event and they wanted as much mass production and as such profit possible from the movement, if the movement is not producing profit or if the movement is not producing standard goods impair with the global market then the whole reason behind the establishing the werkbund becomes absolute. So they adopted the Muthesius ideas in 1914 just before the World War I.

Expressionism

Now we will look at the another important and very interesting style of art movement and architecture movement in there are up which is called expressionism, strictly speaking expressionism was a modernist movement. Which started in poetry, art originated somewhere in Germany in the beginning of 20th century? Then it moved on to other forms of art also.

The picture that you see in the screen is a painting by an artist Edward Munch is called the Scream.

Ok, now you ask me what expressionism if look at the origin of the term expressionism itself. They were two theories of that while the word expressionist is used in the modern sense as early as 1850? Its origin is sometime traced paintings exhibited in 1901 in Paris by an obscure artist Julien Auguste Herve which he call expressionisms. Though an alternative view that the term was coined by the Czech or historian Antonin Matějček in 1910 as the opposite of impressionism an expressionist wishes above all to express himself. He rejects immediate perception and builds on more complex psychic structures. Impressions and mental images that pass through mental people's soul as through a filter which raids them all of substantial accretions to produce their clear essence, assimilated and condensed into more general forms into types which he transcribes through simple short hand formula and symbols. They were lot of people who were percussives to expressionism they were German philosopher Friedrich Schopenhauer who were famous on these and especially his philosophical novel were does spoke *zara tustra*. The later place of a speediest dramatist August Strindberg and the other players like Walt Whitman, Frank Wedekind, Sigmund Freud a lot of other people who were philosophers who were the precursors to expressionism.

It remained popular during the entire Weimar Republic particularly in Berlin. It started with poetry and painting and then on it went on to a lot of fields such as literature, theatre, dance, film, music even architecture.

While the very word expressionist was used in a modern sense as early as 1850. It is not something which was coined in 20th centuries; it was coined as early as 1850. Its origins sometime trace also to some of the paintings which got exhibited in Paris by some obscure artists.

So what is an expressionist do, an expressionist what he does is he tries to express himself, what he things and what he feels and what he emotes. He rejects the immediate perception, immediate perception means I see something and I depicted as it is. So an expressionist rejects the immediate perception of particular object or certain scenario, but what he does is he takes the perception builds' on complex psychic structures on his perception adds his own ideological to it. Wants to express what he thinks about that particular projections and then comes out with a product. To him Impressions and mental images that pass through the minds and soul of the peoples like passing through a filter getting rid of all substantial.