

# A Study on the Presence of Post-Miesianism and Its Future

Lee, Sang Jin

(Professor, Soongsil University)

## 1. Introduction

Architecture nowadays is called in a period of pluralism or a period of complexity. Through the periods of Modernism and Post-Modernism we had undergone a process of diverse experiments in form and had a history of disputes being armed with a variety of ideologies and theories. This diversity in modern architecture brings us to rumination on the role of the profession of architectural design in its contribution to society and, at the same time, reflects the dynamics of diverse human thoughts. Architectural types such as neo-Classicism, Deconstructivism, Minimalism, High-Tech, New Moderns, etc, which are frequently encountered in architecture-related books and journals, are languages referring to architectural thoughts rather than architectural styles. After all, as architectural design originates from the creation of the built environment surrounding human beings, architectural thoughts tend to have close relation with the social phenomena of a given period. Social changes, brought about by the digital civilization, since the late twentieth century have bound the world into one channel, mixing areas, people and even religious factors as well, and expecting new ideals for the future without national boundaries.

As Gothic architecture accomplished the desires of classical architecture on structure and space, Modern architecture that had been under way through the twentieth century completed the architectural quests on the form and technology which had been pursued since the fifteenth century Renaissance period. In the middle of this Modernism period, a great master named Mies van der Rohe left a deep footprint creating his own dogma. The idea and value of the spirit of the times left by him is called Miesianism. Miesianism, which is based on practicality and morality, has been criticized as a kind of international style that have brought about a phenomenon of universalization by negating individual expressionism that appeals to the general public and disrespecting contextual approach that emphasizes locality. External simplicity and intensity of Miesianism has influenced the whole world without regard to its own technical rationality and spatial consummativeness. At the same time, it has been confronted with local resistance.

Miesians in Chicago and all over the world, namely, the students of Mies van der Rohe and many architects who have been influenced by him have been confronted with this resistance and criticism and agonized by the demand of the

times for the new thoughts. In Korea, Kimm Jong Soung, a student of Mies van der Rohe, established Seoul Architectural Consultant in 1978 after his return to Seoul from America and began to spread the normative architectural theories of Miesianism. This can be called an introduction of Chicago International style. Disciples of Kimm, Jong Soung, who worked in Seoul Architects and Consultants, endeavored to have their own identity on the basis of their experience in clear and simple architectural solution. It is clear that they are faced with confusion during the time which requires diverse values.

However, it cannot be said that their agony and confusion mean the end of Miesianism, because, as Mies said, the end of an epoch is when the epoch has been completely understood, and the questions of Modernism have not been solved yet. In other words, there is only a distinction drawn between the early and late stage of Modernism, but Modernism itself has not come to an end yet. The progress of human civilization, which was accelerated by the Industrial Revolution in the nineteenth century, inevitably involved globalization, and the cultural criticism and conflicts arising from the discrepancy between the globalization and locality have been still under way. The general idea of globalization is based on the universality of civilization and is unavoidably followed by destruction of traditional cultures. The worldwide exchange of cultures, accelerated by the modern IT revolution, is now in such a stage that a nation is on the verge of having to give up the soil of cultural legacy on which it is rooted. Here, architecture serves as an emblem of the local culture, and whether it is aesthetic, customary, or economical issue, the architect in that local area becomes confronted with the task of having to provide an answer. Therefore, architectural conflicts experienced by the Miesianists can be understood in this point.

Mies van der Rohe's strong and normative

dogma impressed his students as an intense charisma, and exerted an influence which bound them in one frame although this was not what Mies wanted. Whether they belong to the second or third generation, they remain to be Miesian if they blindly follow the belief in technical rationality and the beauty of abstract simplicity. Deviation from it, once, made them treated as non-Miesian or betrayers. However, the demand of the times began to change them, and it became impossible for them to continue to remain as Miesianists taking pride in the moral superiority over the commercialistic frivolity of Post-Modernism. While cultural diversity and dynamics are recognized, a new interpretation of Miesianism, which is suitable to the times, can be expected. Another thought, Post-Miesianism<sup>1)</sup>, is can be found in this expectation.

This paper aims to provide a study on the substance and the future of Post-Miesianism by elucidating the origin of Miesianism and analysing the mistakes and errors made by it and comparing it with many other modern architectural types. It is hoped that a step forward is possible towards the solution to the problem of conflict between universality and locality which the modern architecture inevitably embrace in the age of digital civilization, which is the twenty-first century now.

## 2. The Origin of Miesianism

As K. Frampton rightfully perceives, Mies van der Rohe's basic philosophical tradition can be traced back to Schinkelschule<sup>2)</sup>. "During his three years in Behrens' office, Mies became

1) Richard S. Levine is believed to have first referred to Post-Miesianism in his article "Through the White Hole", *Space & Society*, MIT Press, Cambridge, March, 1984. He predicted the birth of Post-Miesianism through the white hole as a turning point, which appeared when the society was perceived to be unsustainable.

2) Schinkel-school in German.

aware of the Schinkelschuler tradition, which, apart from its neo-classical affiliation, was committed to the idea of 'Baukunst'<sup>3)</sup>, not only as an ideal of technical elegance but also as a philosophical concept."<sup>4)</sup> The 'Baukunst', as Mies explained, means the clear building construction and the refinement of that. Mies, as well as Peter Behrens, saw in Schinkel's buildings a refinement of form which held even greater meaning for a time. Schinkel showed him the possibility of making an architectural style for a technological society.

The most important influence of Schinkel on Miesianism was the spirit of the times. To Mies van der Rohe, the most interesting aspect of Schinkel's neo-classicism was the development of universal solutions, universally applicable to a wide variety of problems in an era. Schinkel attempted to establish some principles valid for his period (early 19c) because every historical style of architecture relied upon specific sets of principles. Mies believed, like Schinkel, that architecture at its most valuable can be nothing more than a reflection of the driving and sustaining forces of an epoch. The Schinkel tradition provided syntactical bases in Miesian spirit.

Frampton remarks, as cited in Fritz Neumeyer's book, *The Artless Word*<sup>5)</sup>, that Mies was also influenced by Romano Guardini who was the Jesuit philosopher and theologian. "We belong to the future. We must put ourselves in it, each one at his station. We must not plant ourselves against the new and attempt to retain a beautiful world, ..... Our time is given to us as a soil on which we stand, as a task that we have to master."<sup>6)</sup> Mies was one of German intellectuals who were traumatized by the

apocalypse of modernization, and felt that the human intellect and spirit had no choice but to accept the radical transformation of the technological millenium as a fate that cannot be escaped.<sup>7)</sup> His will for the spirit of the times put him to the way of thinking: "We must set up new values, fix our ultimate goals so that we may establish standards. For what is right and significant for any era -including the new era- is this: to give the spirit the opportunity for existence."<sup>8)</sup>

Mies understood the substance of his era, modernity as universality. Mies's artist colleague, Theo van Doesburg who collaborated with Mies in the publication of a journal called 'G', had written in the first manifesto of de Stijl in 1918: "There is an old and a new consciousness of the age. The old one is directed toward the individual. The new one is directed toward the universal ..."<sup>9)</sup> Mies came to Chicago in 1938 to direct the Architectural Department of IIT. Mies wanted his students to work with the same principles and the same material disciplines. He believed that the same might be true in a good epoch of architecture and a single language within a context based on the true might help civilization in terms of universality.

Another important architect who inspired Mies was Hendrick Petrus Berlage. When Mies visited Holland in 1912, he was so moved by the articulate construction of Berlage's honest architecture. His learning from Berlage became the base of his famous precept, "Form is not the aim of our work, but only the result." Berlage was one of the followers of Viollet-le-Duc's theory which emphasized honesty in construction and materials. He insisted on

3) Building art in German.

4) Kenneth Frampton, *Modern Architecture: A Critical History*, Oxford University Press, 1980, p.161.

5) Fritz Neumeyer, *The Artless Word: Mies van der Rohe on the Building Art*, trans. Mark Jarzombek, MIT Press, 1991.

6) *Ibid.*, p.199.

7) Kenneth Frampton, *Studies in Tectonic Culture: The Poetics of Construction in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Architecture*, MIT Press, 1995, p.183.

8) *Ibid.*, p.185.

9) Franz Schulze, *Mies van der Rohe: A Critical Biography*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1985, p.91.

rational approach to architecture to the extent that the later historians would like to place his architecture on structural rationalism or functional expressionism. His serious attitude toward architecture, as he stood for truth throughout his life, was analogy to the moralism of A. W. N. Pugin. Pugin believed that, in true architecture, the structure, the materials, and even the smallest details should have spiritual or functional meaning and purpose. Berlage's rationalism, including his morality, served as an intermediary to Miesianism. Mies left some notes regarding the themes of technology and the "building art", through which we could peep at Miesian rationalism within tectonic<sup>10)</sup> culture: "He who wants a building art must decide. He must subordinate himself to the great objective demands of the epoch. Give constructive form to them. (Nothing more and nothing less) Building was always linked to a simple deed but this deed has to hit the nail on the head. Only in this sense can one understand Berlage's saying, building is serving."<sup>11)</sup>

Frampton considers Mies's attitude toward the cryptic expressivity of abstract art as neo-Suprematist.<sup>12)</sup> Suprematism advocates "the primacy of our sensation in the visual art," as oriented by a Russian painter Kazimir Malevich in 1915. Lesnikowski explains Suprematism as follows: "It was an anti-literary sort of art, symbolizing the physical, universal, and neutral, derivative art to anybody, regardless of origin, roots, and beliefs."<sup>13)</sup> Basically its intent is to

motivate abstract tensions and movements so that spectators can promote their feelings and develop their knowledge in order to discover a meaningful insight from anything visually shown. Abstract signals enable the interpreters or spectators to reach supreme imagination.

This Suprematism underlies Miesian aesthetics and we can easily recognize the analogies between Suprematism and Miesianism from some comments on Mies's architecture like: "not so simple as they appear", or "how something so complex can appear to be so simple?", which remind us of Mies's "almost nothing," or "less is more." Frampton insists that Mies's neo-Suprematistic attitude made him have favored the dematerialization of the picture plane and the diffusion into the dynamics of avant-gardist space, so called, universal space. "Mies's version of the Suprematist sensibility comes close at times to the translational mysticism of Malevich's nonobjective world. All in all, Mies's 'almost nothing' seems, in retrospect, to have been a fusion of two equally ineffable visions. . . the ethereal expanse of Malevich's environmental reality stimulating to a Suprematist."<sup>14)</sup>

In order to explain Mies's "almost nothing," Rebecca Comay tries to connect philosopher Martin Heidegger and Mies. He argues in his topic "almost nothing" for the essay collection book 'The Presence of Mies'<sup>15)</sup> that Heidegger spoke of nothing that marks both the opening and the limit of thought as such. "For Heidegger, 'nothing' names the site of Being's withdrawal, abstention, or oblivion . . . 'Being' is equivalent to 'nothing' for Heidegger . . . 'Nothing' marks simultaneously both the limits of representation (in that it exceeds every object) and -indeed for this reason- the opening

10) K. Frampton explains in his book *Studies in Tectonic Culture* that 'tectonic' is a certain expressivity arising from the statical resistance of constructional form and is always consigned to an aesthetic judgement.

11) Firtz Neumeyer, *The Artless Word: Mies van der Rohe on the Building Art*, trans. Mark Jarzombek, MIT Press, 1991, p.327.

12) Kenneth Frampton, *Studies in Tectonic Culture: The Poetics of Construction in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Architecture*, MIT Press, 1995, p.202.

13) Wojciech G. Lesnikowski, *Rationalism and Romanticism*

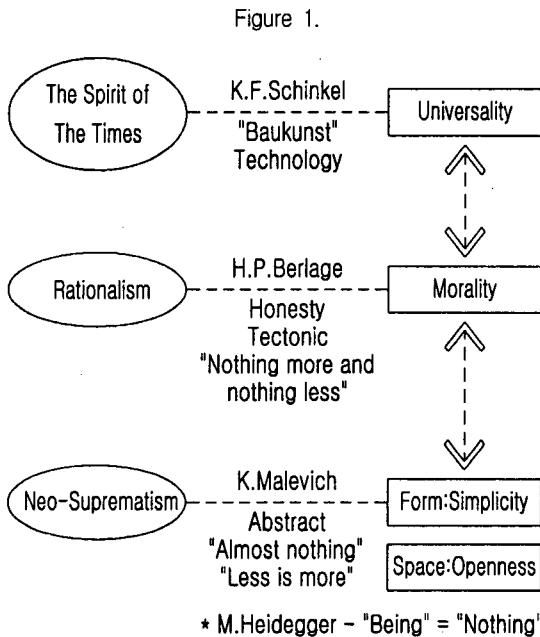
*in Architecture*, McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1982, p.247.

14) Kenneth Frampton, *Studies in Tectonic Culture: The Poetics of Construction in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Architecture*, MIT Press, 1995, p.203.

15) Edited by Detlef Mertins, *The Presence of Mies*, Princeton Architectural Press, New York, 1994.

or 'draw' (or attraction) of thought as such. Thus, Being is defined simultaneously as both loss (retreat or recession) and as excess ('transcendence') -if you like, a 'less' that is 'more.' . . ."16)

In accordance with the above discussion, we can define the paradigm of Miesianism as follows:

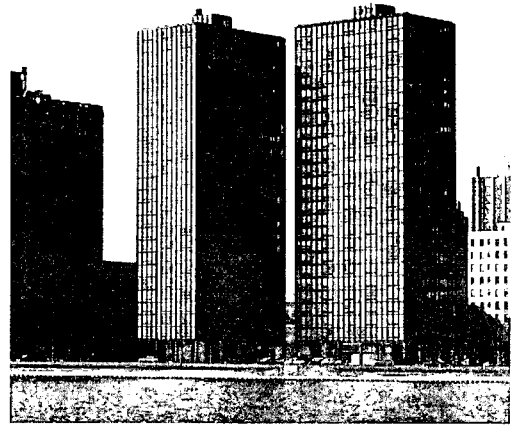


Mies van der Rohe, stonecutter's son, disciple of Schinkel, admirer of Berlage and colleague of Doesburg was never suited to either expressionism or dadaism. Therefore, Miesianism requires the same in its period rather than individualistic and then it wants to be of historical process. The need for clarity, to help understanding its technology, makes Miesianism take the rational way. And, in order to express its rational methodology, it simplifies the plan and elevation with abstract effect, that is the intention of neo-Suprematism.

### 3. The Failure of Miesianism and Its Mistake

Miesianism is often said to be not communicative

with the public and not recognizable in terms of the appearance identity. Charles Jencks points out that the greatest problem is its univalent form -for instance, Mies van der Rohe's Lake Shore Drive Housing (photograph 1) is hardly identified with



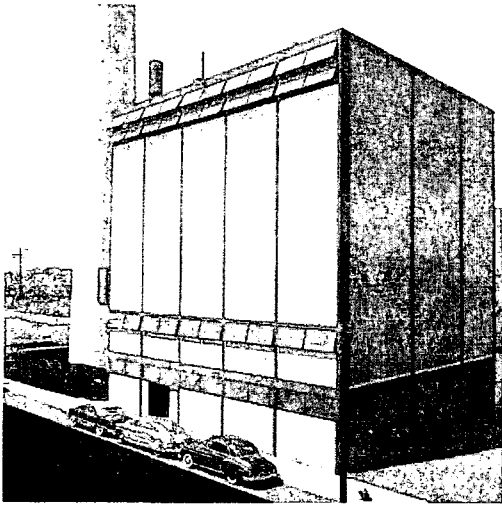
Photograph 1. Lake Shore Drive Housing

adjacent office buildings. Jencks explains the reason as follows: "His first, classical use of the curtain wall was on housing, not for an office- and obviously not for functional or communicational reasons, but because he was obsessed by perfecting certain formal problems."<sup>17)</sup> We can find out other examples at IIT. Those are a boiler house (photograph 2) which looks like a cathedral and a church (photograph 3) which looks like a boiler house. Jencks argues that Mies' universal language drives the public in confusion and his commitment to reductive formal values inadvertently betrays these propositions.

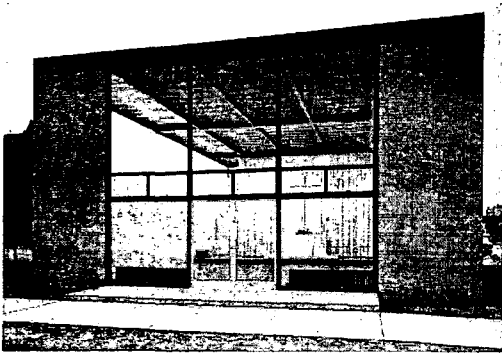
Robert Venturi believes that the reason of uncommunicativeness of Miesianism is oversimplification. ". . . they puritanically advocated the separation and requirements and their juxtapositions. . . . Forced simplicity results in oversimplification."<sup>18)</sup> Venturi invented a series of ad-talks resisting Mies's "less is more" like:

17) Charles A. Jencks, *The Language of Post Modern Architecture*, Rizzoli, New York, 1977.

16) Ibid., p.184.



Photograph 2. Boiler House, IIT.



Photograph 3. Church, IIT.

“less is bore,” or “more is not less.” Post-Modernists including Venturi, insist that the exclusion of elements by oversimplification makes Miesianism unable to communicate with the public and forget another value of architecture for human life.

Another reason why Miesianism has been blamed is a conflict with its contextual surroundings. In accordance with Venturi’s writing, Miesianism allowed nothing to get in the way of the consistency of its order, to the extent that it excluded its circumstance. Actually, Miesianists have never used gabled roofs. Brent Brolin demonstrates in his book *The Failure of Modern Architecture* that Modernists’ decisions about

appearance were based on pseudo-ethical criteria and poetic associations with technology, so he wrote, “Many beautiful traditional cities still exist that need not be sacrificed to modernism. It is mistake to assume automatically that old cities must sacrificed to meet modern requirements.”<sup>19)</sup> Anti-Modernists like Brolin insist that the contribution of old buildings and cities, as valuable repositories of a visual heritage, evoking associations that are significant parts of our lives as individuals and as a society, so that they are too vital to ignore. The mistake of Miesianism, in terms of leading modernity and International Style, is its insistency on the same style, in other words, universality, which is really dogmatic enough to evoke contextual rejection within its circumstance.

#### 4. The Descendant of Miesianism and Its Reconsideration

Criticism on International Style, which became strong in the late twentieth century, naturally resulted in the reconsideration of localism and traditionalism of architecture and gave birth to a word in architectural trend, Post-Modernism.

All of theories and practice in this Post-Modernist period was a search for forms and sensations that had been denied by the modern movement. Miesianists in Chicago and all over the world, namely, the disciples of Mies van der Rohe and many architects influenced by him were confronted with this local resistance and criticism and were agonized by the demand of the times for new thoughts. Many students of Mies van der Rohe, in fact, had been going todifferent ways from Miesianism. This loss of affection for Miesianism convinces us that it was out of date to the extent that some theorists

18) Robert Venturi, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*, Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1966.

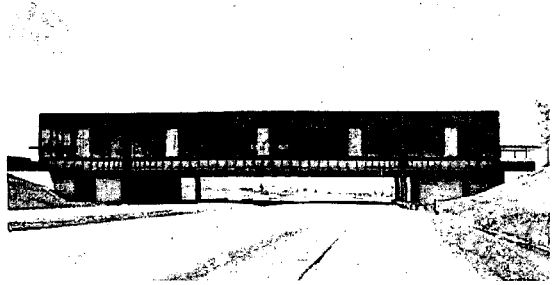
19) Brent Brolin, *The Failure of Modern Architecture*, Van Nostrand Reinhold, New York, 1980, p.112.

and critics announced the end of Miesianism.

Nevertheless, some Miesianists believe that they are not at the end of an epoch and continue to keep the canonical systems of the past disciplines. Stanley Tigerman pointed out their obstinate attitudes in a meeting with Gerald McSheffrey, who was the Dean of the College of Architecture, Planning, and Design at IIT. "Stanely admired many things about the school, but not its seemingly narcissistic preoccupation with preserving its past under the shadow of a dead master."<sup>20</sup> We can list some architects working in Chicago, who persist Miesian principles such as: Dirk Lohan, Mies's grandson, who succeeded to Mies's office, Joe Fugikawa, Bruno Conterato, Jacques c. Brownson, Gene Summers, David Haid, Reginald F. Malcolmson, Peter Carter. Kimm, Jong Soung was one of Mies's latest disciples group and later became the acting dean of IIT. After he came back to his home country Korea, he opened his own office, SAC<sup>21</sup> in 1976 and initiated the young Korean architects in the principles of Miesianism.

However, slight differences and changes can be noticed even in these architects who claimed to be Miesianists, which Stanley Tigerman says is the result of difference in viewpoints arising from different interpretations. "America is a practical place after all, populated by pragmatists who are not always affected by questions of morality. The moral, ethical, or even sacred elements of the architecture of Mies van der Rohe have essentially nothing to do with the ways in which that work was seen by self-appointed disciples as potentially paradigmatic."<sup>22</sup> He

also takes some examples such as: David Haid's Tri-State Tollway Oasis (photograph 4)



Photograph 4. Tri-State Tollway Oasis

which does not confirm to Mies's use of the golden section, and Joseph Fujikawa's Illinois Center (photograph 5) by dividing the short



Photograph 5. Illinois Center

ends of the towers into an even number of bays, dispensed with the Hellenic tradition of an odd number of bays. Some buidings designed by Kimm, Jong Soung also shows subtle changes in form as in the case of Sonje Museum of Contemporary Art and Seoul City Museum (photographs 6 & 7) where the Miesian universal logic of simplicity is not followed any more. While Kimm has adopted the Chicago Miesian principles, he shows discretion in admitting technology as a deter-minant factor.<sup>23</sup>

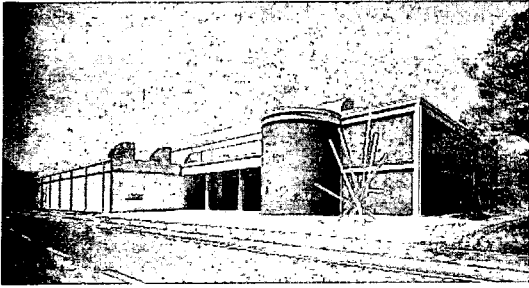
Even though Mies van der Rohe had not

20) Gerald R. McSheffrey, "Architectural education: Mies's greatest bequest", *Architectural Record*, New York, August, 1984, p.47.

21) Seoul Architects-Consultants, International, Ltd.

22) Stanly Tigerman, *Mies van der Rohe and his Disciples on the American Architectural Text and its Reading, an essay for Mies Reconsidered: His Career, Legacy Disciples,*

organized by John Zukowsky, The Art Institute of Chicago in association with Rizzoli International Publicatinos, Inc., New York, 1986, p.103-104



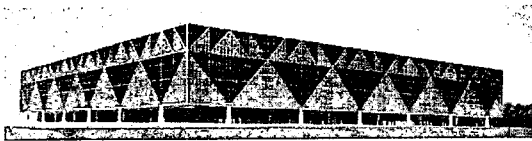
Photograph 6. Sonje Museum of Contemporary Art



Photograph 7. Seoul city Museum

prescribed the consistency of his style, he wanted his students to work within the boundary of the same style for the sole reason that they could understand completely his high-technology and his thinking about the contemporary society.

In his Convention Hall (photograph 8), we can realize another aspect of his style. Mies used circumstantial diagonals that Venturi criticized he had not used since 1940. These diagonals



Photograph 8. Convention Hall

seem to have more metaph- orical language than their structural appearance suggests. This building looks quite different from the rectilinear appearance of his other buildings and its facade contradiction is adapted by accommdating and compromising its ele- ments.

Among the Miesian-trained architects, there were some, like Helmut Jahn and Thomas

Beeby, who contained totally different formal expression in their buildings. Although they were even treated as betrayers, Charles Jencks praises them for their trials to suggest some new alternatives for Miesianism by mixing Mies's technological code with traditional or local code. According to the expression of Charles Jencks, the recent Chicago Post-Modernism seems like an intermixture of Miesian and revivalistic styles, and most of the architects involved have been trained under the Miesian discipline. "More surprising is that this mixture has a refreshingly naive aspect."<sup>24)</sup>

In Korea, the works of Kimm Jong Sung's disciples who have been trained in Kimm's own office SAC and who can be called as the second generation Miesian architects, are shown in a recently-published book of their work collection. Professor Kang, Hyuck remarks, in the closing comments of the book,<sup>25)</sup> on the formal diversity of their works: "One basic element of identity is duration. When an architect has something that works with consistency in the formation of his own architecture and it is not unrelated to the experience he has had in SAC, he will have peculiar inclination or atmosphere in his design as a SAC architect. It does not have to be an extension of the disciplines and methods of Kimm, Jong Soung and SAC. Mechanical repetition is not only undesirable but also impossible for an architect with confidence who wishes to build his own world." Attention is drawn to their efforts to devote themselves to balanced order and tectonic logic in spite of diversity in external appearance

Post-Modernism through 1970's and 1980's is

23) Jung, Inha, Professor, Hanyang University, "A Study on the Idea of the Technology in Jong Soung Kimm's Architecture," *research paper collection of Korean Academy of Architectural History*, June, 2001, p.85-99

24) Charles A. Jencks, *The Language of Post-Modern Architecture*, Rizzoli, New York, 1977.

25) *The Works of Kimm, Jong Soung and SAC Alumni: Architecture for Our Lives*, Hakchon Publishing Co., Korea, 1999.



defined as restoration of popularity, emphasis on localism, and individualistic expressionism. This movement embraced many kinds of theories, that were intended to escape from the disciplines of Modern architecture. To find a new style different from the Modern, it took various approaches towards something more metaphorical, vernacular, or sometimes ambiguous. However, it had been warned of falling into confusion. Ada L. Huxtable gave us a notice: "That the search for these values is enriching current practice is beyond question. But two factors disturb me deeply: the danger of architects increasingly addressing each, with a widening comprehension gap between the professional and the public, and the sharp trend away from sociological to exclusively aesthetic concerns."<sup>26)</sup>

Since architects of Post-Modernism had more interest in the style visually shown than the essence of the present society, they had been in danger of becoming superficial. This commercialistic inclination of Post-Modernism aroused longing for the technology which is the essence of modernity, as a result of which a variety of trials including High-tech, Minimalism, neo-Modernism, etc. have followed and a reconsideration of Miesianism also is being discussed actively.

If the consistency of Miesianists derives from the spirit of the times, as they believe they are not at the end but at the beginning of an epoch, and we are now going to a new period, we can expect new style of Miesianism, as Mies van der Rohe predicted, "The great form cannot be invented by you or me, but we are working on it without knowing it. And when this great form is fully understood, then the epoch is over, then there is something new." Accordingly, many architects and critics believe in the birth of new Miesianism, which is called, Post-Miesianism.

## 5. The Presence of Post-Miesianism as One of The New Moderns

While Post-Modernism grew out in reaction against the universality and simplification of Modernism, Post-Miesianism developed against the commercialistic superficiality of Post-Modernism, especially neo-Classicism.

Post-Miesianists will go through the spirit of Miesian tradition with more complex, social or programmatic needs, but in the direction of correcting Miesian architecture's mistakes. However, this does not mean fusion culture or neo-Eclecticism. It is a manifestation of the spirit of the times trying to realize a new ideal in a new era accompanied with technical rationality of Miesianism and energy from its tectonic form.

Although someone may compare the pluralism of architecture today to various experiments and confusion that western architects have experienced in the process of seeking the new architectural thoughts since the nineteenth century Industrial Revolution, it is attributed to diversity which characterizes modernity. The movement of globalization, which has been rapidly accelerated after the war, along with the internet revolution, entails exchange of civilization and culture among different parts of the world. As people become familiar with the architectural culture of other parts of the world, they demand more diverse architectural interpretations from architects.

Architects as avantgardists are agonized between the dynamics of the culture which is being universalized and the local context to be maintained, and are willing to present their own architecture with individualistic inclination. Charles Jencks collectively refers to all these phenomena as 'the New Moderns', explaining as follows: "Architects, until recently, had to justify their buildings functionally and positively as furthering the goals of society. Now the New Moderns no longer believe in this humanism:

26) Ada Louise Huxtable, "The Troubled State of Modern Architecture", *Architectural Design*, London, Jan.-Feb., 1981, p.17

rather they present their work as a self-justifying play with metaphysical ideas."<sup>27)</sup>

The one of the New Moderns that seems to be related to Post-Miesianism most closely is High-Tech architecture. James Steele explains that it is defined as a new spirit of architecture in which industry can provide new high-precision methods of construction, capable of revolutionizing the way architects build. "Most easily recognizable in the highly visible and frequently publicized work of such proponents as Norman Foster, Richard Rogers and Nicholas Grimshaw, High-Tech has evolved from the Miesian search for 'universal space' . . . In their celebration of engineering excellence-which can be seen as the fulfillment of Mies van der Rohe's mandate to 'express the technology of the times'-High-Tech architects have nonetheless created a recognizable idiom, . . ." <sup>28)</sup> High-Tech architecture has common topic with Post-Miesianism in that it refuses to be one of fashions and pursues to attain the technology of utopianism by sustaining techno-logical perfection and removing equivocalness of meaning.

Minimalism represents an aesthetic and social reaction against the cluttering attitude of architects who are willing to flatter their consumers, as in the early twentieth century, Arts and Crafts movement had raised Mies's reductivism. "Mies van der Rohe's famous dictum 'less is more' is for modernists a defining statement. For minimalists, however, it has become a kind of mantra to be repeated daily as they pursue their quest to strip away unwanted detail."<sup>29)</sup> Ignasi de Sola-Morales Rubio analyses the nexus between the aesthetic experience of Minimalism and the work of Mies,

by remarking on repetition as innovation, as a mechanism, of life and death rather than the monist idea of the same and uniform.<sup>30)</sup>

Deconstructivism can be summarized in two words: Deconstruction and Russian Constructivism. While Deconstruction is a linguistic element to clarify syntactic meaning, Constructivism refers to early twentieth century avant-garde architecture of Russia. The relationship with Constructivism can be considered as a variant of Suprematism of Kazimir Malevich. James Steele explains as follows: "Rather than reacting to a purely formal issues, as Constructivism did, Suprematism made direct analogies between certain colours and social conditions."<sup>31)</sup> Of course, seemingly, there is ethical gap between Deconstructivism and Post-Miesianism. But, both have Suprematistic attitude in common with which they pursue metaphysical elements hidden behind the external appearance of constituent elements.

The possibility of Post-Miesianism can be seen in various styles of experimental architecture currently being built. The next figure (figure 2) shows some keywords of correlative concepts between Post-Miesianism and other architectural types. Whether they are of romantic idea, rational thinking, individualistic expressionism, or technology emphasizing universality, all types of architecture within the frame of modernity cannot avoid relationship with Post-Miesianism, because Post-Miesianism has to make a journey to complete an era, the modern times.

## 6. Conclusion

Post-Miesianism is established by the energy

27) Charles A. Jencks, *The New Moderns: From Late to Neo-Modernism*, Rizzoli, New York, 1990, p.17.

28) James Steele, *Architecture Today*, Phaidon, London, 1997, p.18-19.

29) Ibid., p.110.

30) Ignasi de Sola-Morales Rubio, *The Presence of Mies: Mies van der Rohe and Minimalism*, edited by Detlef Mertins, Princeton Architectural Press, New York, 1994.

31) James Steele, *Architecture Today*, Phaidon, London, 1997, p.212.

Figure 2. Keywords showing correlative concepts between Post-Miesianism and other architectural types

other Architectural types	scale for the correlativity between Post-Miesianism and other architectural types	
	apart	intimate
<b>Post-Modernism</b>	·localism ·commercialism ·consumerism	·popularity ·humanity ·contextual ·individualistic expressionism
<b>High-Tech</b>	·image of machinery	·universality ·high technology ·high precision ·tectonic
<b>Minimalism</b>	·dematerialization ·reductivism	·anti-consumerism ·repetition as innovation
<b>Deconstructivism</b>	·atectonic ·deconstruction ·constructivism(suprematism)	·avant-garde spirit ·metaphysical

released from the canonical systems of the past disciplines. It can be said that the essence of the bequest of Mies is a "truthful attitude" as a professional. According to Fritz Neumeyer, "objective demand"—the universal and eternal—which Mies referred as the ultimate aim of architecture, was related to his proverb "truth relationship" as "identity of thought and thing," leaning on Thomas Aquinas.<sup>32)</sup> Mies believed that only this "truthful attitude" will enable an architect to discover the concept of "building art". The future of Post-Miesianists will start with the teachings of this master, departing from adherence to simplification of form, disregard for local context and rejection of the expression of individualism as a creator.

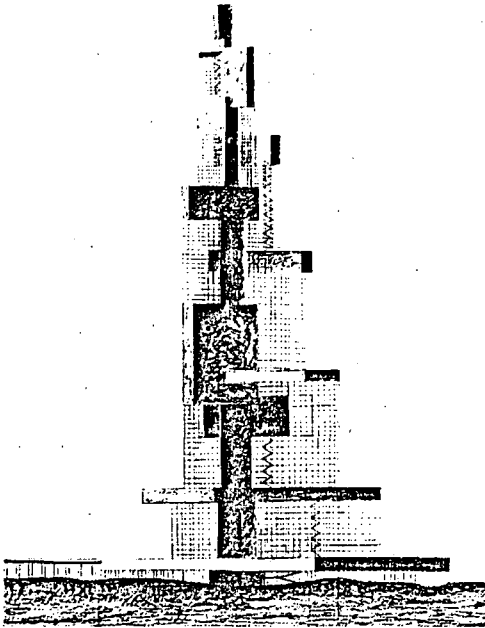
At the same time, we can find that some researches on new style of Miesianism have been in progress. Especially, the work of Reginald Malcolmson, *Visionary Projects for Buildings*

and *Cities*,<sup>33)</sup> appears to be the most impressive. He makes his intention clear in the introduction. "Projects point the way towards future. They are sign-posts indicating the direction towards future possible worlds. Their purpose is to anticipate new ways in which technology may be applied to the condition of man...." His idea of mega-structure in the *Expanding Skyscraper* (photograph 9) demonstrates the possibility to realize our dream of Post-Miesianism. Another example is George Schipporeit's *Lake Point Tower* project (photograph 10) in partnership with John Heinrich, which reminds us of Mies's *Glass Skyscraper* project (photograph 11). This sculpturesque glass building is referentially, technically Miesian but including a kind of spirited individualism.

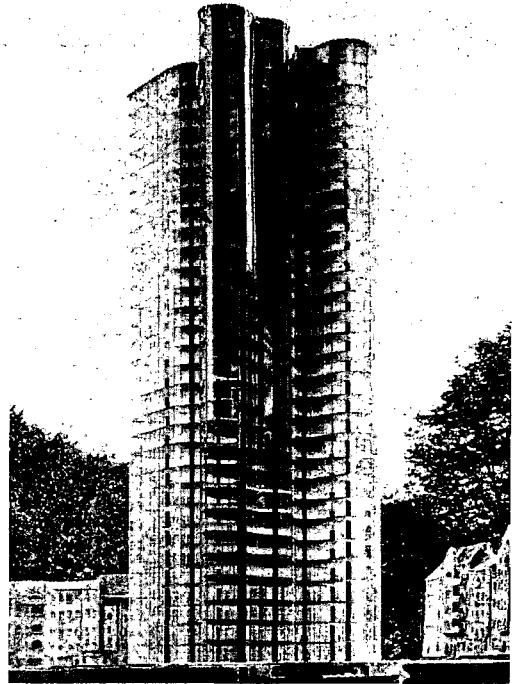
Some examples can be found in the works of those who worked in SAC, the representative of which is Kimm Jong Soung, one of Miesian disciples. Their works show individual differences in form, but, interestingly, have commonness

32) Fritz Neumeyer, *The Artless Word: Mies van der Rohe on the Building Art*, trans. Mark Jarzombek, MIT Press, 1991, p.69-70.

33) Reginald Malcolmson, *Visionary Projects for Building and Cities*, Garamond/Pridemark Press, Baltimore, 1974.



Photograph 9. Expanding Skyscraper



Photograph 11. Glass Skyscraper Project



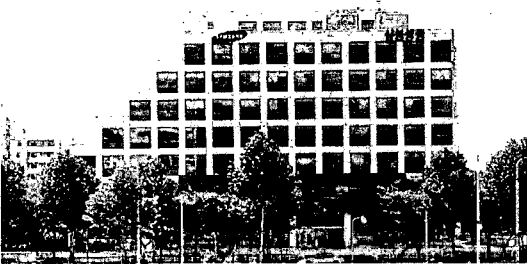
Photograph 10. Lake Point Tower project

which can be discovered in the external appearance showing the spacing of structural bays and the details of structural connection. This can be called a variant expression of structural rationalism. From the image of their external appearance alone, they may seem to be High-Tech style and sometimes Minimalistic, or, in an extreme case, they even appear tortuous with twisted mass connection as Deconstructivists enjoy to use. However, if the inside is looked at, it will be found that there are well-arranged structural modules, composition of forms with its own reason, clear function and space layout, and the introduction, though in part, of universal space for the "openness". (photograph 12-17)

Peter Blake says in his book 'Mies van der Rohe' that reason governed every aspect of Mies van der Rohe's approach to architecture.<sup>34)</sup>

This logical development of his ideas is believed to have originated from his "truthful

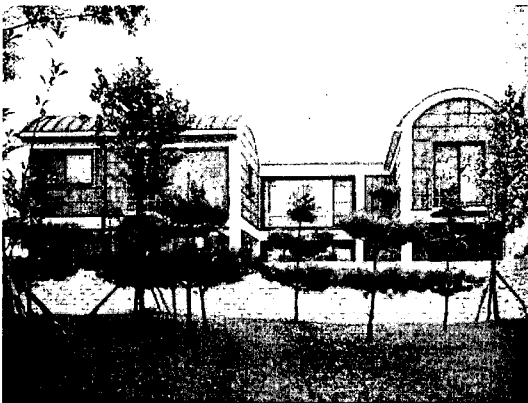
34) Peter Blake, *Mies van der Rohe*, Pelican Books, Baltimore, 1968, p.171.



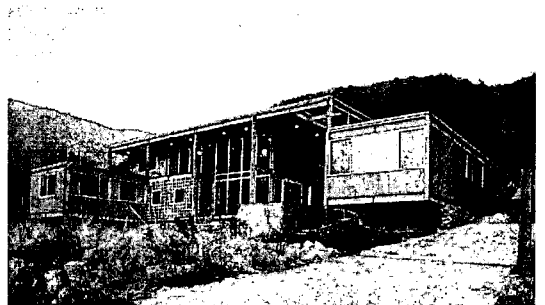
Photograph 12. Kim, Soo Chong, Samsung Insurance Building



Photograph 14. Kim, Won Q & Choe, Myung Chul, Dobong-gu Government Office

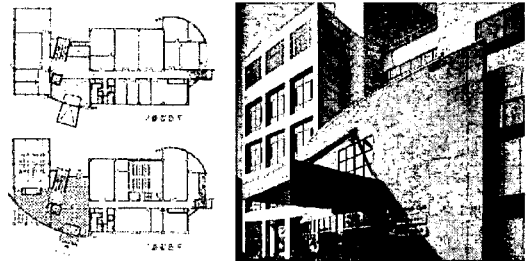


Photograph 13. Kim, Seung Hoy & Kang, Won Phil, Il-San Residence



Photograph 15. Park, Hung Kyun, Mr. Kang's Residence

attitude”, which we can say is a teaching on how a modern architect should perform his duty and role to serve the society as a professional and creator who leads civilization. The future of Post-Miesianism will be initiated on the basis of “the spirit of the times” to open a new era, with the rationality of advanced architectural technology as well as the spirit of challenge as avant-garde, seceding from the obsession of the past. Finally, by quoting a paragraph from Mies’ essay ‘Where do we go from here’, which says: “The building of civilization is not simple, since the past, the present, and the future have a share in it. It is difficult to define and difficult to understand. What belongs to the past cannot be changed any more. The present must be affirmed and mastered. But the future stands open, open for the creative thought and the



Photograph 16. Sohn, Doo Ho, KAIST LG Semicon Hall



Photograph 17. Yoon, Sey Han, Nam, Gi Hong & Kim, Jong Chean, Yong - San Station Complex

creative deed,"<sup>35)</sup> we can be convinced of the fact that the Post-Miesian manifestation is laid on its future.

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35) Firtz Neumeyer, *The Artless Word: Mies van der Rohe on the Building Art*, trans. Mark Jarzombek, MIT Press, 1991, p.332.

# Post-Miesianism의 실체와 미래에 대한 연구

이상진

(숭실대 건축학부 교수)

## 초 록

현대의 건축시기는 다원성의 시기 또는 복합성의 시기라고 불리운다. 모더니즘과 포스트모더니즘의 시기를 거치며 다양한 형태적 실험의 과정을 겪었고 수많은 이데올로기와 이론들로 무장된 논쟁의 역사도 갖게 되었다. 이러한 현대건축의 다양성은 건축디자인이라는 전문직의 사회에 기여하는 역할을 반추(反芻)함과 동시에 다변하는 인간사고의 역동성을 반영하고 있다. 건축관련 책자나 저널 등에서 흔히 발견할 수 있는 Neo-Classicism, Deconstructivism, Minimalism, High-Tech, New Moderns 등등의 건축양식들은 스타일을 지칭하는 언어라기보다는 건축적 사고를 지칭하는 언어라고 할 수 있다. 결국 건축디자인이라는 작업은 인간을 둘러싼 건조환경의 생성에서 출발하는 것이므로 건축적 사고방식은 그 시기의 사회현상과 밀접한 관계를 맺게 된다. 20세기 말부터 불어닥친 디지털 문화의 사회변혁은 전 세계를 하나의 채널로 엮게 되었고, 이러한 영향들은 지역과 민족, 그리고 종교적인 요소들까지도 혼합하여 국경을 초월한 미래의 새로운 이상들을 꿈꾸게 되었다.

19세기 산업혁명과 함께 급속히 빨라진 인류문명의 진보는 필수적으로 세계화를 동반하는 것이고, 세계화와 지역성사이의 괴리를 통해 나타나는 문화적 비판과 충돌은 아직도 진행상태인 것이다. 세계화라는 通念은 문명의 普遍性을 기반으로 하며 전통문화의 파괴가 뒤따를 수밖에 없는데, 현재와 같이 IT혁명을 통해 급속도로 빨라진 세계문화의 교류는 한 국가가 뿌리를 내리고 있는 문화적 유산이라는 토양을 포기하여야 할 단계에 와 있다고 논평할 정도이다. 여기서 건축은 문화적 상징으로 작용하게 되는데, 그것이 審美적이든 慣習적이든 또는, 경제적이든 건축가는 해답의 제시라는 임무에 직면하게 된다.

20세기에 진행된 모더니즘의 건축은 구조와 공간에 대한 고전건축의 숙원을 고딕건축이 이룬 것처럼 15세기 르네상스 시대로부터 진행된 형태와 공간, 기능, 그리고 아름다움과 기술(technology) 또는 경제성 등에 대한 건축적 의문과 탐구를 일단락지었다고 할 수 있다. 이러한 모더니즘의 한복판에 Mies van der Rohe라는 거장이 깊은 발자국을 남기며 한 시대를 이루었고 그가 남긴 시대정신의 이념과 가치를 Miesianism이라고 부른다. 실용성과 도덕성을 근본으로 하는 Miesianism은 대중에 호소하는 미적 표현주의를 부정하고 지역정서를 중시하는 문맥적 접근방식을 경시함으로써 보편화라는 현상을 불러일으킨 국제주의 양식의 한 부류로 비판을 받아왔다. 즉, Miesianism의 단순하고 강렬한 외형적 요소는 그것이 내포하는 기술적 합리성이나 공간적 완결성을 무시한 채 전 세계에 영향을 미쳤고 동시에 지역적 저항을 받게 되었다. 시카고 및 전 세계의 Miesian들, 즉 Mies van der Rohe의 제자들이나 그로부터 영향을 받은 수많은 건축가들은 이러한 저항과 비판에 직면하게 되며 새로운 사고의 시대적 요구 앞에 고뇌하게 된다. 한국에서는 1978년 Mies van der Rohe의 제자인 김종성이 미국에서 서울로 돌아와 '서울건축컨설턴트'를 설립하며 본격적으로 Miesianism의 규범적 건축론을 설파하기 시작하였다. 이른바 시카고 국제주의학파의 건축傳授라고 할 수 있는데 '서울건축컨설턴트'를 통하여 배출된 김종성의 제자들은 명쾌하고도 간결한 건축해법의 경험을 토대름대로의 정체성을 갖고자 노력하였으나 결국 다원적 가치를 요구하는 시대적 흐름 속에 혼란

을 겪고 있는 것 또한 사실이다. 본 연구는 Miesianism의 기원을 밝히고 그것의 실수와 오류를 밝힘과 동시에 현대의 여러 가지 건축유형들과 비교하여 봄으로써 Post-Miesianism의 실체와 그 미래에 대하여 고찰하여 보고자 한다.

미스의 유산이라고 할 수 있는 Miesianism의 要諦는 첫째, Schinkel로부터 이어받은 시대정신의 사명감, 둘째, Berlage가 전해준 전문가로서의 도덕성을 바탕으로 하여 이루어진 기술적 합리성의 실현, 그리고 마지막으로 그 당시의 추상예술에 대한 이해로써 받아들인 neo-Suprematism의 아방가르데적인 자세라고 할 수 있다. 그러나 이것들을 전파하고 수용하는 과정에서 미스적인 단순하고 명쾌한 외관이 더욱 강한 인상을 남기게 되었고 또한 미스가 현대성의 본질이라고 믿는 기술의 전수는 모든 외관을 동일하게 만드는 International Style로서의 보편적 확실성을 초래하였다. Mies van der Rohe의 강력하고 규범적인 dogma는 그의 제자들에게는 강렬한 카리스마로 각인되었고, Mies가 원한 것이 아닐지라도 그들을 하나의 틀 속에 가두는 영향력을 행사하였다. 2세대이든 3세대이든 기술적 합리성과 추상적 단순미라는 믿음을 맹목적으로 추종할 때 그들은 Miesian으로 남아 있게 되며, 거기서 벗어났을 때 non-Miesian, 또는 배신자로 취급하기까지 하였다. 이것은 미스의 제자들에게 강한 족쇄가 되어 형태적 또는 개념적 변화의 시도를 어렵게 하였고 시대적 요구에 부응하지 못한다는 평가에 이르게 되었다.

문화의 다양성과 역동성을 인정함과 동시에 Miesianism에 대한 새로운 시대에 적합한 해석을 기대하게 되는데, 이러한 기대 속에서 우리는 Post-Miesianism이라는 새로운 유형을 엿볼 수 있게 된다. Post-Miesianism의 징후를 현대의 다양한 건축유형에서 발견할 수 있는데, High-Tech의 구축적이고 정밀한 건축 기술적 해법과 Minimalism의 반복성을 통한 추상미의 표현 등에서 뿐만이 아니라 Post-Modernism의 인간성의 추구나 문맥적 고려, 또는 해체주의의 형이상학적이고 아방가르데적인 실험주의 정신까지조차 Post-Miesianism이 공유할 수 있는 부분이 있다고 보여진다. 또한, 미스의 영향이 2세대, 3세대의 건축가들에게 미치면서 여러 방향으로 변질되어 가는 것을 우리는 발견할 수 있으며 그러한 시대성에 적응하는 시도들이야말로 새로운 미래를 향한 Post-Miesianism의 실체인 것이다. Mies가 말하였듯이 한 시대의 끝은 그 시대가 완전히 이해되었을 때이며, 모더니즘의 숙제는 아직 해결되지 않았으므로 Miesianism의 탐구는 Post-Miesianism이라는 새로운 주제로 계속될 것이다. 이를 통하여 21세기 디지털 문명의 시대 속에서 현대건축이 안을 수밖에 없는 보편성과 지역성의 충돌이라는 문제의 해결에 한 발걸음 다가갈 수 있기를 기대하여 본다.