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Assignment number : TMA04

Plan

Introduction

An explanation of Pugin's reasons for reviving Gothic traditions in architecture, and in what ways he dissent from tradition

His finest work and design
What contributes to the society

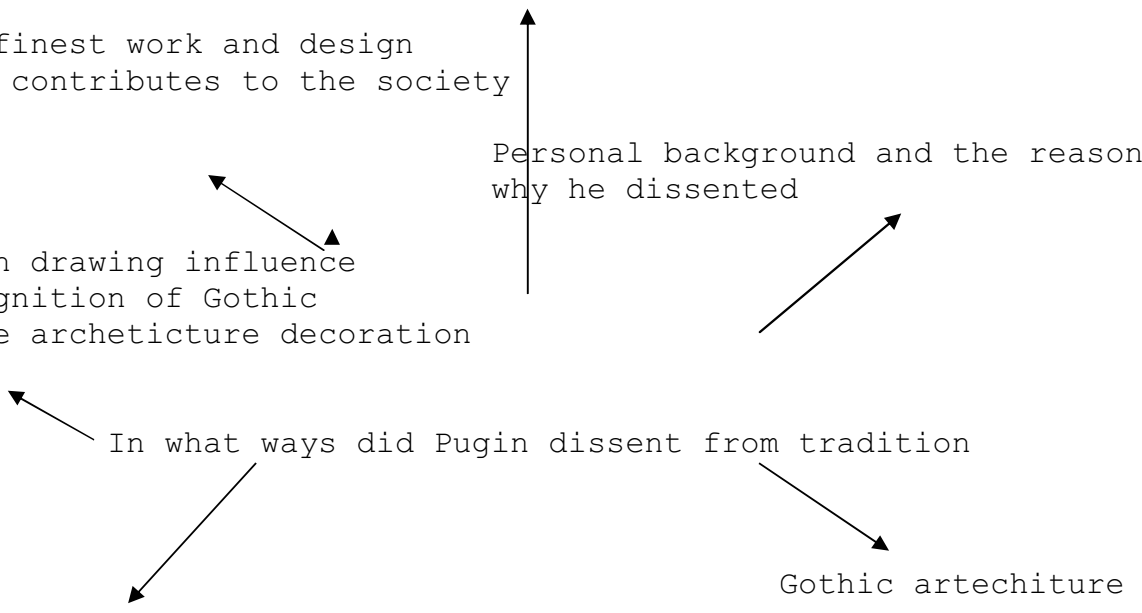
Personal background and the reason
why he dissented

Pugin drawing influence
Recognition of Gothic
Style archeticture decoration

In what ways did Pugin dissent from tradition

Gothic artechiture

Pugin convert to Cathilicisim



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Question: In what ways did Pugin dissent from tradition ?

An explanation of Pugin's reasons for reviving Gothic traditions in architecture.

In the following essay I shall attempt to explain Augustus Pugin's in what ways and reasons for wanting to revive the Gothic tradition in architecture.

In order for us to form a plausible understanding of these reasons we need to understand a little about the circumstances surrounding the architect's personal background and so, in the true style of a moral rationalist, I take you back to March the 1st, 1812, Bloomsbury, London, and the birth of Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin.

Augustus's father, Auguste Pugin was a member of the French aristocracy who had settled in London after (rather wisely, events were beginning to suggest) fleeing France during the Revolution. An artist and draughtsman by trade, he demonstrated a love of traditional medieval Gothic architecture and often travelled abroad while studying architectural style and design. As a young boy Pugin frequently accompanied his father on these trips and it was probably a combination of having the opportunity to tag along on these learning excursions and witnessing, first hand, his father's unending enthusiasm that led the young Pugin to develop his own interests in Gothic design.

As well as a high regard for Gothic architecture Pugin also inherited a fine talent for art and before long he began to assist his father with the creation of several collections of precise and intricate drawings. These drawings provided detailed information on Gothic architecture and

decoration and published volumes such as *Specimens of Gothic Architecture* (1821-3), and *Examples of Gothic Architecture* (1828-31) went on to trigger a renaissance that helped a great many architects of the time to develop a style that we now refer to as Victorian Gothic.

In fact, the Pugin drawings were so influential that at the tender age of just fifteen Augustus Pugin was employed to design furniture for Windsor Castle and the recognition that came from this enabled him to launch his own business carving Gothic style architectural decorations.

Unfortunately, within the space of the next twelve years Pugin was to suffer more than his fair share of bereavement. First he lost both his parents and then his first wife Ann Garnet, who died during childbirth, leaving him with a baby daughter. He had five more children with his second wife Louisa Burton before she too died leaving him a widower for the second time.

Later he would remarried for a third time, to Jane Knill, and father two more children but it was while he was still married to Louisa that Pugin received a substantial legacy from his aunt Stella. It was this windfall that provided him with the means to purchase land and do the one thing he had always dreamed of , build himself a house. For the location he decided upon Salisbury, a city that he had been particularly fond of as a boy and a place where he already had a small group of friends.

The best of these friends were William Osmond (a stone mason) and his family. William and his wife Charity welcomed Pugin into their home and introduced him around the town where he soon formed acquaintances and associations with others in similar lines of work to himself.

Among these acquaintances were the builder and surveyor Frederick Fisher, and the Penistone; a

well respected family of established architects and surveyors who had been working in Wiltshire for three generations. It was through the Penistone family that Pugin first came to meet the small Catholic community of Salisbury. It was the first time that he had found himself in the company of Catholics and he liked them.

Most English people knew nothing, or at least very little, about Catholics or Catholicism, mainly because for centuries now, Catholics had been very much in the minority. There was still an ingrained dislike, or distrust of all things Papal in England at the time but it had been many years since there had been any direct persecution against individual Catholics and both John Penistone and his friend, Edward Wilson, who was also an architect and a Catholic, had been commissioned on more than one occasion to restore Anglican Churches.

Pugin converted to Catholicism in 1835 and this conversion filled him with an overwhelming urge to express his faith through his architectural design work. He had always maintained that the Reformation and Protestantism were responsible for the decline in the quality of architecture and the opportunity to set this to rights seemed to him to be almost a divine calling.

He produced, what he perceived to be his finest work, *Contrasts, A Parallel between the Noble Edifices of the 14th and 15th centuries and Similar Buildings of the Present Day. Showing a Decay of Taste* (1836) and the subsequent success of this and following publications such as *The True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture* (1841), and *The Glossary of Ecclesiastical ornament* (1844) brought many offers of work. In fact it was probably directly due to these books that Pugin was commissioned to design and/or redesign a number of Cathedrals and Churches.

St. Chad's in Birmingham, St. Oswald, Liverpool, St. Marie, Derby and Southwark Cathedral are all attributed to Augustus Pugin in one way or another.

Pugin's contribution to the Gothic revival made an enormous impact not only within his own field of expertise but also within the Arts and Crafts Movement. His emphasis on design and unshakeable belief in the importance of function and purpose over and above that of decoration. The requirement for the integrity of the build; and the reliance upon the natural beauty of materials used in its construction. The massive importance placed on craftsmanship, creativity and the view that all construction should be meaningful in itself and that any decoration should, wherever possible, come from the natural beauty of the materials used thus demonstrating the creative input of the Lord God, were all paramount to the overall concept of what he had set out to achieve.

Pugin believed that faith itself could be expressed through the creative arts. "And for him the revival of Gothic architecture was not just a stylistic matter but a religious and moral one too" (Richardson, Mackellar and Woods 2008). Although Pugin generally regarded himself as being a pure traditionalist he was in fact an innovative and original designer. His separation from the strictly original, traditional Gothic architecture that appealed so much to his father, was, in some ways, fairly accidental as during the nineteenth century, access to the knowledge of genuine medieval architecture was extremely limited. However, his ability to marry the pointed architecture of the middle ages with the impractical hurdles of the nineteenth century, particularly in respect of frugal budgets was deliberate, original and inspiring and his belief that decorative form should compliment practical function rather than merely being art for art's sake

was, although sometimes, as in the case of St. Chad's, a necessity due to financial constraints, was none the less archetypal and obviously prudent.

Bibliography:

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