Philosophy of Architecture

Lecture 3. Ritual subtext of architecture. Myth and other esoteric issues of architecture. Reception of cultural archetypes in the field of architectural activity

3.1. Introductory remarks
3.2. Relationship between ritual and architecture
3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model
3.4. Mythological narratives of architectural features

Vytautas Petrušonis, 2018

2

PHILOSOPHY OF ARCHITECTURE

1.1. Introductory remarks

Rituals are really framed and defined by architecture and vice versa - rituals are shaping the architecture too.

In order to adequately explain the interaction between architecture and ritual, it is important to properly understand the socio-cultural context and the symbolic potential of the place where the ritual is taking place.

It is important to familiarize yourself with the techniques of mythological cognition, also with the measures of esoteric grasping of the peculiarities of the environment in order to reveal the specific connections between architecture and ritual.

All the above-mentioned aspects have a deep philosophical foundation

3.2. Relationship between ritual and architecture

Rituals are really framed and defined by architecture and vice versa - rituals are shaping the architecture too. Namely Peter B. Jones analyses the relationship of architecture and ritual.

According him architecture includes all buildings and even landscapes. He concentrates on the meaningful, spiritual, social and cultural aspects of buildings and the thinking behind them. His definition for ritual includes both the grand and mundane, and considers anything from handshakes and tea breaks, 'rites of hospitality', obsessive-compulsive behaviour, to religious practices.

Jones highlights a continued emphasis on the need for context. Ritual provides a rich focus through which to provide a perspective of context. Jones provided an alternative view of modernism rather than that generally presented, that of 'form follows function', and instead revealed how buildings expressed social institutions.

4

3.2. Relationship between ritual and architecture

To understand architecture one must realize that it envelopes life.

Any single position which argues that architecture is purely physical shelter or that architecture exists for the sake of the architect alone merely begs the question.

The late American architect Louis I. Kahn often told his students that when they were faced with a difficult architectural question, they should search out the beginning of the question and there they might see it in its essence, unadulterated by the burdens of history and tradition. There they might discover First Principles.

To better understand the relationship between ritual and architecture we ought to begin by placing ourselves outside of ourselves in order to see ourselves more clearly.

3.2. Relationship between ritual and architecture

Deep in the central highlands of New Guinea in the Grand Valley of the Balim River live a group of people known as the Dani. In Dani culture one discovers the importance of ritual and ceremony as an affirmation of Dani life and as the main structuring element of Dani belief.

The two most important rituals, waging war and the pig feast, are inseparable parts of their culture and serve as important determinants in the structuring of their physical environment.

The lives of the Dani are ruled by a great variety of ghosts, but especially the ghosts of a villages' own dead friends and relatives. Most Dani ritual is an attempt to influence these ghosts to cease and desist and to induce them to remain in specially constructed shelters.

3.2. Relationship between ritual and architecture

Along the whole frontier between warring tribes are high watch towers put up by each side to command a better view of the No-Man's-Land between their territories and to guard against enemy raids.

These 30' high watchtowers are manned by warriors who also guard the nearby garden plots and the villages beyond. From time to time the watchtowers need repair and, because of their functional as well as symbolic importance, any work connected with the repair is a ritualized ceremony.

A small toy bow and arrow are put in the tower and roasted grass leaves are placed around it to induce the ghosts to guard against enemy attack. Each tower has a little field around it where the warriors who man the tower can celebrate the death of an enemy.

3.2. Relationship between ritual and architecture

The structure of the "neighborhood" where various allied villages or compounds are located, where the valley floor gardens are tilled for their staple sweet potato crop, and where the watchtowers exist perched precariously on the edge of No-Man's-Land, is strongly determined by the ritual phase of war. Although this ritual sounds irrational from our point of view, to the Dani it is a significant social act which links their supernatural beliefs to their day-to-day activities.

Most of the Dani ritual is designed to avert ghostly danger. Paths are often barred to protect a wounded man from ghosts and within each village compound a little fenced enclosure, a ghost house complete with a path leading to the doorway is put up as a resting place for wandering ghosts and as an inducement to keep ghosts away from peoples' houses.

8

3.2. Relationship between ritual and architecture

The war ritual maintains a social pattern that has existed for centuries and as such sustains a social order. More importantly this ritual transmits those patterns to the villages' youth since two groups of boys – each the enemy to the other – will often play a game of throwing grass spears. The game is the grown-up ritual in miniature.

Their ritual is a concretization of those ideas and it forms for us a clearer understanding of the meaning of ritual as a coherent and important act within any society. Furthermore, the artifacts that they make, the objects that they construct, and the spaces that they define, all serve their ritual. For the Dani, as for all people, architecture is the stage upon which this ritual, both formal and informal, is enacted.

3.2. Relationship between ritual and architecture

Ritual is the symbolic transformation of beliefs, ideas, myths, ethics and experiences. Susanne Langer has pointed out that ritual acts are a natural activity to human beings and satisfy the basic human need for expressive acts which carry and transmit value. Langer concludes by stressing that "some more or less organized system of beliefs and sentiments is an absolute necessity for the carrying on of social life."

There are two ways that we can discuss ritual and ceremony: formal and informal. The traditional anthropological usage is formal when it fixes a collection of human sentiments into a form which clearly transmits cultural patterns from one person or group of people to another, or from one generation to the next.

Ritual is a form of communication which relies on objects which carry a high symbolic content and messages in language which clearly spell out the significance of the act.

3.2. Relationship between ritual and architecture

Religion is a classic example of formal ritual when it fixes the connection between the action, its meaning and a supernatural power. Ritual is also composed of a series of parts (sub-rituals or ceremonies) which must occur in a fixed order and have a direct relationship to each other.

Informal ritual is more open and flexible. Although it is still a collective expression of human sentiments, its form is more loosely connected. Games, festivals, fashion and fad, shopping excursions, vacations and many different life style activities are examples of informal ritualistic behavior. While formal ritual apprises us about our roots, our ethics and mores, and our permanent beliefs, informal ritual, or social drama to use Hugh Dalziel Duncans' terms, is a window into the future. Informal ritual is the realm of change. It captures and gives form to emerging beliefs, if only for a moment. It drags us out of the rut of habit and routine.

3.2. Relationship between ritual and architecture

Hugh Dalziel Duncan makes a key distinction between formal and informal ritual which shall provide an important point of departure for this paper. Duncan suggests that religious ritual, for instance, can be understood as formal ritual since it is used "as a means to fix collective sentiments through communication with some great supernatural power believed to sustain the principles of social order on which the society is based." As Duncan shows, religious ritual is beyond question; its goal is to uphold authority.

Art, on the other hand, can be understood more as informal ritual because it changes. Again, according to Duncan, "Art is a socially sanctioned realm of change, ambiguity and doubt." Little is fixed; there are no absolute truths. Duncan concludes this distinction by saying that "Art institutionalizes change in society, just as religion institutionalizes 'eternal' and 'fixed' principles of social action."

3.2. Relationship between ritual and architecture

When Religion is used metaphorically it can stand for all of the institutions of society which provide canons by which we can guide our lives.

References

Jones, P. B. *Architecture and ritual: How buildings shape society*, London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016, 392 p.

Mann, D. A. Ritual in architecture: the celebration of life. In: *Rituals and Ceremonies in Popular Culture*, Brown Ray (ed.). Bowling Green Popular Press, 1980, p. 61-80.

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

Important data about the symbolic potential of the place and the way in which they are presented are important for a better understanding of cultural memory of *Place*.

At the same time, such data are significant for the development of culture of poetic thinking, which is now recognized as an important factor in the activities related with reconstruction and renovation of the historically formed cities.

According to M. Heidegger, in the context of European rationalism, the ideal of truth seeking was replaced by the *scientistic* ideal of analytic vivisection and rigor of logic: where technology becomes the means of "removing curtains from the secrets of existence," there, appears the individ who is not the „listener" of immanent and "secret" sound of Existence, but who is trying to set the norms, formulate detailed final definitions.

14

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

Assuming that truth can be understood through language, Heidegger distinguishes another - a poetic language with which he is opposing to a language that is deformed by the logic.

Poetic thinking implies the abandonment of rigorous rationalism, and thus not only allows, but also leads to irrational (intuitive) thinking processes, where symbols take an important place. Symbolic-poetic vision of the world is a specific way of knowing the world, which is also associated with mythological thinking.

Architecture has the utilitarian side, but is also witnessing certain ideas, that are embodying a certain common ideology, for which the architect, according to Umberto Eco, belonged even before the starting of the project. He explains, that in the life of society, the symbolic meaning of architecture is not less utilitarian than its original purpose.

15

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

The urban environment embodying communication between subjectivities, at the same time also has a certain creative potential, because the true artwork necessarily brings something new to society, expresses itself as an aesthetic and symbolic message. It provides an interpretive reading that expands the informational possibilities.

Architecture opens a new one to the degree to which it is able to use the secondary (symbolic) functions to promote new environmental organization variants, different expressions of the environment. In other words architectural complex can fulfil the function of ritual space.

Of course, architecture is based on its own code, but at the same time it uses others that are not related to architecture directly. Namely they largely help to understand the meaning of the message.

16

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

Information from the architectural text is perceived on such levels 1) the senses, 2) associations and images. The latter group includes emotional aesthetic and socio-symbolic aspects of human-architectural interaction.

Symbolic and aesthetic content encourages the creation of new items based on past experiences and real-life situations.

It helps for people in the new light to see not only the perceived environment, but also the many aspects of their own being. An attempt to understand the meaning of the symbol, what Mamardashvili and Piatigorsky call "the field of symbol force", is often an excitation of a certain impulsive is often an excitation of a certain spontaneous impulse. We can see here an analogy with the game.

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

The competency of seeing, recognizing and understanding symbols only occurs when an individual has a high enough level of culture.

The instinctive "sensation" of the symbol and conscious interpretation of the symbol are totally different things. The first thing, apparently, is get from nature, and the second is the result of conscious culture and long work. In order to grasp what is symbolic, within the consciousness a defined "depth of the quality" is required.

Primitive consciousness has a narrow spectrum of perception, it understands the world superficially. And the higher the qualitative level is achieved in the development of individual consciousness, the more it becomes sensitive to the symbol.

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

The symbol can not be deciphered by mental effort as it is in the case of an allegory.

Semantic structure of symbol is multi-layered and predetermined for active internal work of perceptor.

Through the immanent content of the symbol, the transcendental object is getting a new and later still newer direction. The only condition "transparency" of the "immanent" content through which you can see the transcendental object. For the symbol to maintain this transparency, it does not need to be understood literally.

According to Victor Frankl, only when the light of the intentional act is directed to the symbol, transcendence is manifested in it.

19

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

With every new intentional act, the symbol is acquired and understood in a different new means. So the symbol always remains in uncertain state: it is always something less than an object that it symbolizes, but more than just its image.

The meaning of the symbol objectively does not exist in static way, but as a dynamic trend; he is not given, but is predetermined.

Karl Jung wrote that denying the enormous importance of symbols can only be the one for whom the beginning of the history of the world, is this day. If we recognize the importance of symbols, we give them the status of a conscious motive. It allows us to concentrate on helping the subconscious, looking for her connections with conscious mental work.

20

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

Symbols can be understood from the qualitative point of view, as images or signs of different types of psychological realities, as transformers of mental energy.

Based on the fact that the main function of the symbol is the indirect representation of things that can not be communicated to people directly, R. Assagioli on lower-level distinguishes three functions of symbols: accumulation of mental energy, its transformation and transmission (symbols act as conductors or channels).

Unfortunately, in our time, symbols are usually understood as logical or pseudo-logical notions. The problem of signification is associated with the slogan of creating a "human environment" that embraces values and meanings satisfying human perceptive qualities and opportunities.

21

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

Understanding symbolic meanings allows a person not only to find new meanings, but also to unite and systematize his fragmented life experience.

Knowledge of symbols encourages the formation of a personal relationship of individuum with symbols of perceived architectural environment and enriches his consciousness with new meanings.

According the P. Ricoeur, the work of interpretation itself is to overcome the "cultural remoteness", the distance separating the individual from the text, which helps to turn the meaning of that text into the understanding of the present moment.

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

Therefore, the knowledge of symbols and the active focus on the symbol of a particular architectural environment are the basic conditions for the symbolism to be embodied in the individual's inner experience and to acquire the status of a personal property of the individual.

The operation with the symbol implies not the reconstruction of the denotation, but the understanding of the situation.

Often, an individual does not realize that he is "in the field of the symbolic force" (in the sense of M. Mamardashvili and A. Piatigorsky), and for this reason, the symbol does not become a conscious impulse to his activity. In this case, the whole character of the symbol is limited to the subconscious level.

23

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

Human activity requires objective mediation using signs, symbols. It is supported by technical systems, objects of material culture, language, text systems, behind which there are various socio-cultural meanings.

The multifaceted world of myths and human cultural symbols, which exists independently from the will and psychological characteristics of an individual, is precisely the "power" that determines and structures the activities of human thought.

The symbol lies more than what he directly communicates to us, it posess the inherent inexhaustible multiplicity of content. Due to the fact that we have difficulty implying meaning of symbol, in most of us we interpret them too straightforwardly. By learning symbols, we at the same time capture part of his potential. This gives us the benefits of expanding the path to positive change.

24

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

The expansion of consciousness takes place at the expense of the awakened and developed intuition resources, through the deliberate desire to master the skills of creative activity.

By creating an analogical, symbolic view of everything that happens in a city, mythical thought makes this a more easily comprehensible for us. That is why the cultural symbols and their configuration as certain myth of the city remains in the mass consciousness, along with the scientific elements of knowledge, influencing the behavior of the local community and the individual.

The ability to recognize and understand the mythological symbolic meaning of architecture should become another way to better understand the world in which we live.

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

In order to ensure consensus among all relevant actors, data of this type, expressed in codes with more complex cohesive symbolic structures, must be presented in an expanded form (explicitly).

Such information would be helpful in the field of local design solutions, also and for justification of solutions. One way would be to supplement the current value descriptors with the connotations of the objects.

Code units consists from 1) names of identified easy recognizable objects forming a place and 2) cultural ideas, connotational characteristics of those objects.

26

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

High-level professionals are usually able to operate with this kind of knowledge intuitively, but their communication with other persons, who are involved into the process of management of that territory due to their job functions but have lower level of competency, may be complicated.

To ensure consensus among all relevant actors, data about place (city square, etc) expressed in codes with more complex connotational structures must be presented in explicit form (as some kind of semantic „reference book") together with the arguments of their significance.

Codes of this kind need to be defined in advance by making the appropriate research activities before and included in the legal documents regulating place management.

27

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

Descriptions combining denotative and connotative semantics (the latter is especially important for promoting creative thinking) might contribute to the existential experience actualisation of an architect for solving creative tasks as well as might play the role of a solution catalyst; information support organised as mentioned above is the only way enabling the development of new original architectural pieces taking into account the social cultural memory.

Now lets talk about Symbolic potential of Vytautas Magnus Museum Complex in Kaunas Unity Square (Fig 1). This compex can be treated as specific ritual place. Originally Vytautas Magnus Museum was established in 1921 but later it was decided to move to a larger location. A part of the new museum was opened in 1930, at the 500th anniversary of Vytautas the Great, Grand Duke of Lithuania, the namesake of the museum.

28

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

Fig 1. General view of west side of Unity square – Main palace of Vytautas Magnus museum and bell tover. Photo by V. Petrušonis, 2003. 29

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

As the basis for creating of the network of symbols, connotations let's use the metaphor 'Kauno Naujamiestis – Katedra' (Kaunas New Town – Cathedral). Once, being in Laisvės alėja (Freedom Avenue), I felt that I solved of Kaunas's New Town's riddle: I recognized that Laisvės alėja, as well as Kęstutis and Donelaitis streets, are three naves of Cathedral basilica.

Daukanto street embodies transept. A Sobor (St. Michael the Archangel Garrison Church, built in 19th century) serves as altar. It seems that Unity Square in this vision positioned in the northern end of "transept" can be identified as chapel of heroes.

This my accidental experience really was esoteric phenomenological insight. Schematic representation of symbol groups related with cultural idea „The Cathedral" we can see in Figure 2.

30

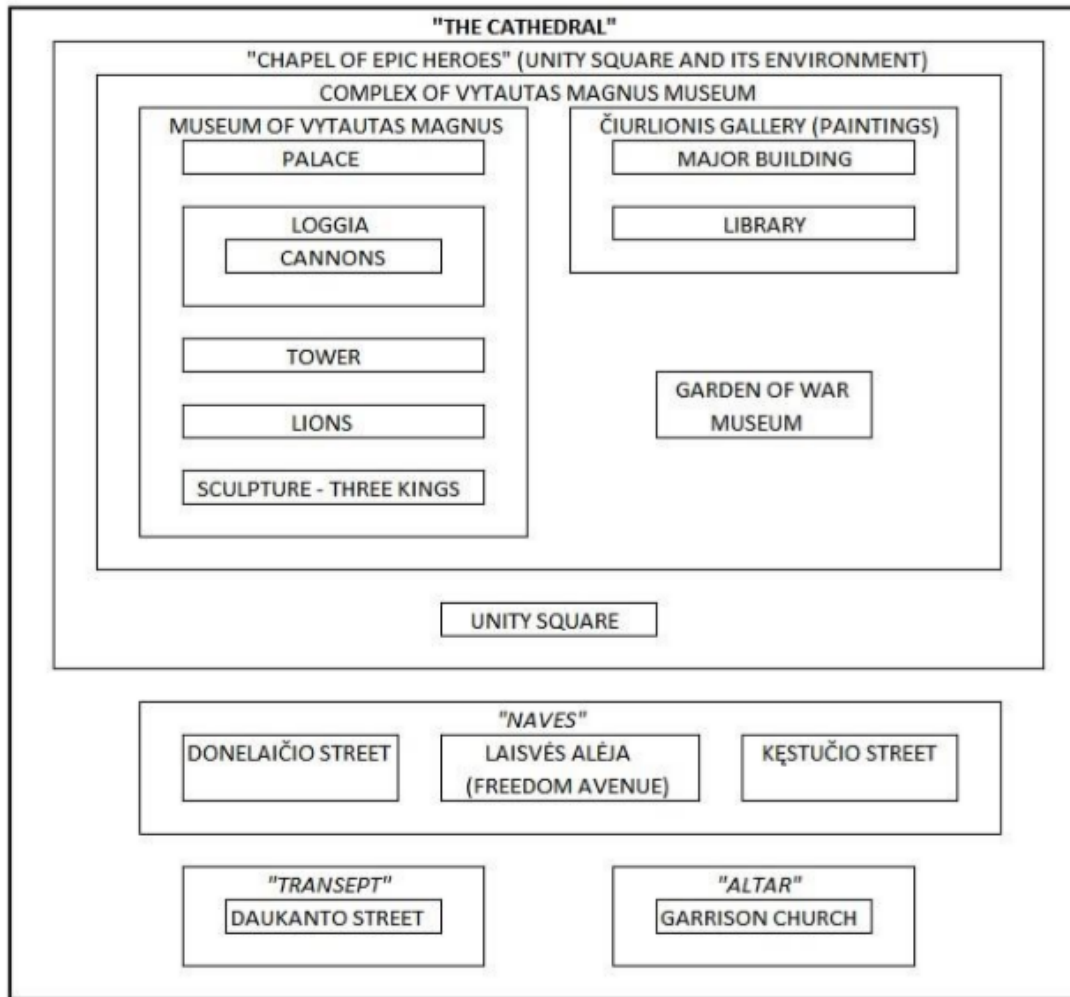## 3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

Fig 2. Schematic representation of symbol groups

31

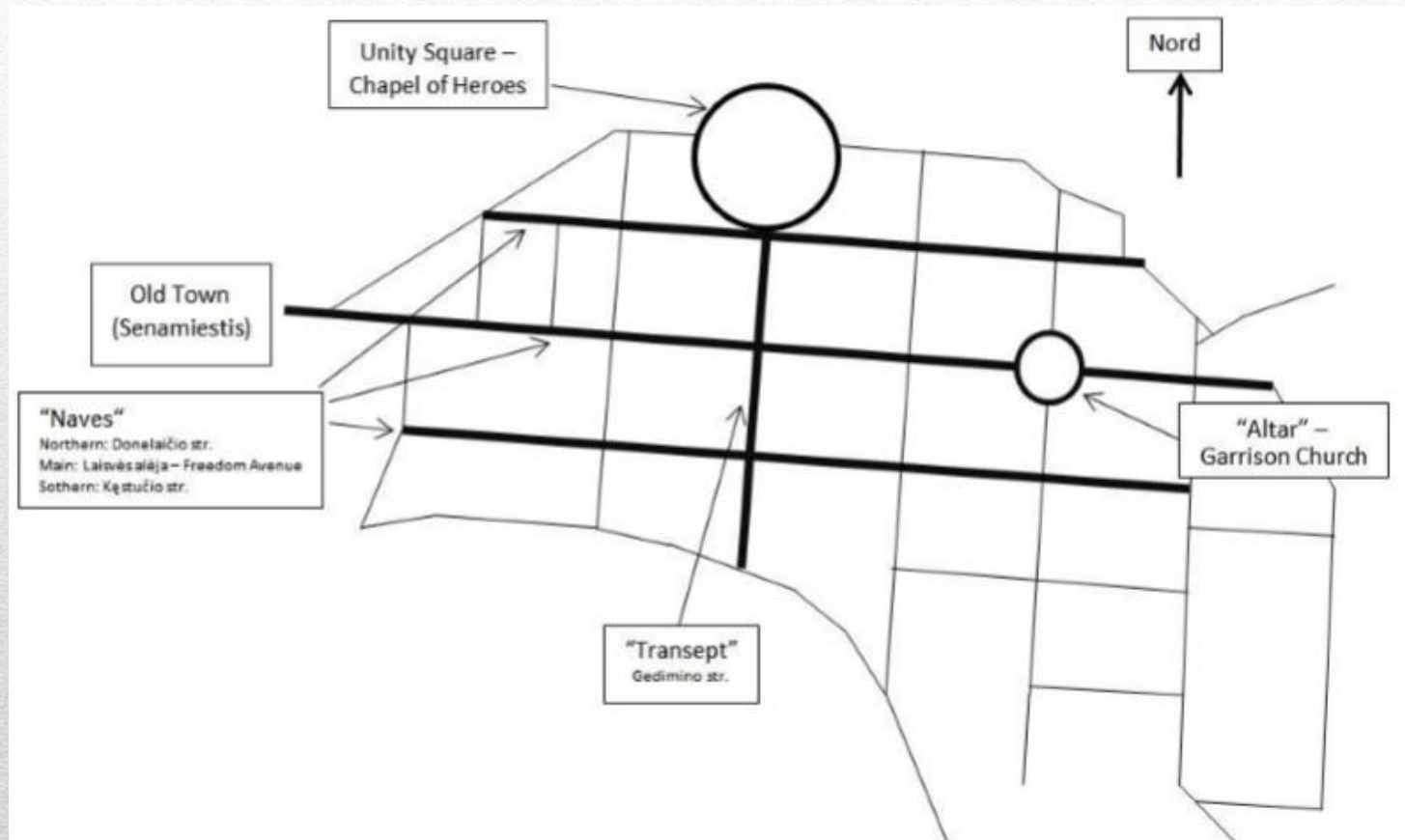## 3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

Fig 3. The more general symbolic context: Kaunas' Naujamiestis - "The Cathedral"

32

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

For the more general symbolic context: Kaunas' Naujamiestis - "The Cathedral" look Fig 3. In the following, we will examine in more detail the - a Vytautas Magnus Museum garden with memorial and symbolic monuments as important part of "Chapel of Heroes".

I wrote earlier that in the environment of Unity Square, which includes the territory of the complex of Kaunas Vytautas Magnus Museum, significant societal cultural ideas are manifested.

Among them - Idea of Unity and the abstract idea of symbolic totemic being – Precursor. Various objects in the territory of the complex of the museum and easily recognizable cultural connotations determine the expression of ideas of Unity and Precursor's. The Precursor is a totemic figure of a definite community, a collective cultural hero.

33

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

Such person - collective hero who is formed from many manifestations: semi-historical, semi-divine persons: priests, kings, soldiers, emperors, in general political and cultural figures. The location of the Precursor usually is in special sacred centers - mostly in the main squares of the capitals. The Precursor is inseparable from the certain *genius loci*.

His figure appears unwittingly in our consciousness by observing various signs that act as keys to hinting. The environment of the Vytautas Magnus Museum complex is very suitable for the recognizing, feeling of National Precursor person (here we are faced with a certain *numinous* effect).

34

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

This place includes hints, symptoms resembling significant episodes of history related to collective cultural heritage. When we contemplate them, the presence of Precursor in our conscious is guaranteed "here and now".

An observer, even a casual visitor to Unity's Square, takes the position of an ancient priest entering into a polemic with chaos. Solving the „riddles", experiencing the presence of Precursor manifested in different shapes (Precursor is both Maironis, Kudirka, Vytautas the Great and Kęstutis, and cannons taken from the enemies and testifying the heroism of volunteers; he also is and illegal book spreders, and the „Sower", and historical the coats of arms on the tower), the visitor of the square is creating synthetic image of the Precursor, identifies himself with him.

35

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

Observing the Unity Square Ensemble, other city objects associated with Collective Precursor, the unexpected feeling of unity is emerging. It's like remembering.

At such a moment, as if the spirit of the general Precursor resides in person. In Kaunas architecture, in its cultural topography, the theme of unity is expressed or encoded in various ways and degrees.

In parts of the city's environment, it is expressed indirectly, while others are encoded in figurative. The theme of Unity is directly expressed in the name of Unity's Square.

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

The Garden of Vytautas Magnus Museum, located next to the Unity Square, can be considered as influenced by ideas of the Romanticism cemetery dedicated to meditation and having symbolic significance.

There are all the signs of such cemetery: public figures, monuments to dead heroes, the Unknown Soldier monument, and the eternal fire (such interpretation of meditation cemeteries is encouraged by J. Bialostock's ideas).

In addition to the heroes' cemetery, in the Garden of Museum there are also signs that can be found in the folk village cemetery. They are embodied in wooden crosses, columns with statuettes of saints. The researchers point out that in the 19th century and in the beginning of 20th century rendering the images of village cemeteries in paintings was typical of the nations that fought for independence.

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

In Garden the theme of unity is most prominently expressed by the eternal fire. It is known, that fire is as the paraphrase of the unity, the code (Agni in Sanskrit means both Fire and Unity).

The symbol of the Light (as other manifestation of eternal fire) on the square is activated by towers-„obelisks": the Freedom Monument and the bell tower of the museum. M. Jampolsky, referring to A. Kircher and L. Bernini, argue that the obelisk "is the divine light falling on chaos".

So the Freedom Monument, the Tower of the Museum in this way is "burning down" previously in Tsarist Russia times created territory of the Kaunas Center, which can be equated with "chaos".

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

The data presented in article discloses only part of the symbolic potential of Kaunas Vienybės (Unity) Square and its closest environment. The Unity square was formed in period after regaining independence in 1918.

The square in temporal capital of Lithuania in between war period was the place where the symbols of Lithuanian statehood have been erected (later demolished by soviets and finally re-erected after collapse of Soviet Union).

In order to protect ourselves from possible unscrupulous modernizations of square, we always have to take into account the symbolic potential of this place when planning even the smallest changes of square.

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

The representation, description, presentment of symbolic potential on the base of semantic analysis can be equated to model of symbolic potential.

Models of semantic complexes „Unity" and „Precursor" presented here are overlapping. They both are working together. At the same time they embodying an explicit form of semantic 'reference book'. The elements of model – names of places, objects and connotations related with them are explained in article and justified theoretically.

The main need is to use model of such kind because namely it can help to guarantee continuity of locus cultural identity in the territory management process, the continuation of symbolic potential of place as whole system.

40

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

Expressions of architectural forms, codes, primary (denotational) and secondary (connotational) meanings create a certain meaningful universe. Recognition of such universe is important for the interpretation of architectural objects.

Acquainted with the publications we can see that an esoteric moment, which is very important for creative solving the problems of urban renovation on instrumental level and closely related with cognition of local symbols factually is absent in reflections of specialists. The ignorance of esoteric research methods, impede the adequate use them in field of inquiry, as well as the proper organization education of specialists.

41

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

Human activity requires objective mediation using signs, symbols. It is supported by technical systems, objects of material culture, language, text systems, behind which there are various socio-cultural meanings.

The multifaceted world of myths and human cultural symbols, which exists independently from the will and psychological characteristics of an individual, is precisely the "power" that determines and structures the activities of human thought.

To the understanding of the mythical-symbolic essence of the architectural environment is still not given the necessary attention. This plane of inquiry helps to join together different levels of reality - mental and spatial.

42

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

Most architectural elements do not require conscious identification - they appeal directly to the subconscious. Others act by activating symbols that control and direct our behavior and at the same time make sense to our lives. Due to the fact that we have difficulty implying meaning of symbol, in most of us we interpret them too straightforwardly.

By learning symbols, we at the same time capture part of his potential. This gives us the benefits of expanding the path to positive change. The expansion of consciousness takes place at the expense of the awakened and developed intuition resources, through the deliberate desire to master the skills of creative activity.

By creating an analogical, symbolic view of everything that happens in a city, mythical thought makes this a more easily comprehensible for us.

43

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

That is why the cultural symbols and their configuration as certain myth of the city remains in the mass consciousness, along with the scientific elements of knowledge, influencing the behavior of the local community and the individual. The ability to recognize and understand the mythological symbolic meaning of architecture should become another way to better understand the world in which we live.

To ensure consensus among all relevant actors, data about place (city square, etc) expressed in codes with more complex connotational structures must be presented in explicit form (as some kind of semantic „reference book") together with the arguments of their significance. Such codes would help align the positions of all actors involved in the management of certain place. Codes of this kind need to be defined in advance by making the appropriate research activities before and included in the legal documents regulating place management.

44

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

The denotation and connotation characteristics must be combined in the knowledge presented in an explicit form. Delivering knowledge in an accessible form to all interested parties can guarantee the availability of information on the conditions for the implementation of the public interest.

Unity Square and its environments (including Vytautas Magnus Museum, and its garden) in the center of Kaunas is a creature of an exceptional composition. Its authors are not just specific people. The author can also be attributed to those who in the third and fourth decades of 20th century, decided conceptually how the square should look, and those who created buildings, sculptures, planted the garden. Also we can name as authors also those who even earlier and not even in no Lithuania, but influenced solutions in conceptual way.

45

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

The Unity square is not a copyrighted work, it is rather a specific "folklore" text, transmitted from generation to generation, which plays an important role in upbringing of community.

Addressing the characteristics of the city, presented here, opens new opportunities for better understanding of the monumental features of the objects of historically formed places. If accidental natural objects that correspond to the cosmological environment are protected, why do not protect complex of cultural objects that testify to the beginning of community.

Even if they were formed maybe by chance, for example as the article mentions the idea of Kaunas Naujamiestis as a „Cathedral." When evaluating past monuments, we must take into account the role they play in capturing the specific "spirit" of the place, as they in their presence establish the world of ethically defined social harmony.

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

The ethically defined condition of unity is possible only if the relations representing the unity of the square composition (or other sacred space, the same is true of the temples) are based not on the dominance of some subjectivities, but on the cooperation of subjectivities expressed in composition.

This cooperation is the best gift for the ancient Precursor that symbolizes that unity.

Unfortunately, the description of Kaunas Vytautas Magnus Museum complex in the Register of Cultural Property is only a listing of objects. No cultural ideas, no cultural connotations. In order to protect ourselves from possible unscrupulous modernizations of square, when we always have to take into account the symbolic potential of this place when planning even the smallest changes of square.

47

3.3. City main square as constant ritual situation presented using symbolic potential model

We can state, that ignorance of cultural ideas, cultural connotations in representation of heritage objects is common place also and in other countries.

The analysis of Walter Gropius house and Antonio Gaudi works collection description is witnessing that sad tendency.

References

Petrušonis Vytautas. Symbolic potential of place and its modelling for management needs. *Landscape architecture and art*. Jelgava: Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies. Vol. 13, Iss. 13, 2018, p. 39-48.

3.4. Mythological narratives of architectural features

We will talk now about abductive considerations that play a very important role in the solution of creative tasks. Of course, this kind of reflection is more related to mythological knowledge than to scientific one.

Although the use of these two types of cognition itself is relative, because scientific knowledge has a rather short history, only three hundred years, while mythological cognition has been around for several thousand years. By the way, mythological cognition is included into scientific knowledge in latent way.

More specifically, mythological cognition can be called mythological knowledge. Julia Robinson split the entire field of architectural research paradigms into two groups. She used the terms *science* and *myth* to define these two groups.

49

3.4. Mythological narratives of architectural features

The scientific examination is related to the mathematical description, it is atomic, reductionary, and has a convergent character (operates in generalizations).

On the other hand, the mythical or poetic description presents the subject of the study holistically as a unit; such a description is characterized by a divergent nature (that is, the image of the object is examined in various aspects), the dynamism is important characteristic of such research. Robinson emphasises that the origins of this kind of paradigms are connected with the methods of art and the humanities.

The Robinson model resembles a schematic diagram of a famous mathematician, egyptologist R. Schwaller de Lubicz, in which he groups the field of exploration techniques and interprets tools into exoteric (scientific) and esoteric (symbolic) and indicates the necessity of combining both paths.

3.4. Mythological narratives of architectural features

Exoteric refers to knowledge that is outside, and independent from, a person's experience and can be ascertained by anyone.

Esoteric refers to individual knowledge of person wich have high level of competency in certain field of activity.

Schwaller de Lubicz explains that science, for the sake of rational explanation, firstly exoterically determined the mechanistic regularities of the micro-world, and then, having them in mind, the physical regularities of the micro-world, the regularity of theoretical relativity and the revealing of the regularities of the mega-world physics were brought closer to the mathematical forms and in the end defined by interpreting in the symbolic (esoteric) way.

3.4. Mythological narratives of architectural features

The imperative of the interaction between mythological and logic descriptive measures is emphasized by J. Lotman and B. Uspensky. What they call a "descriptive way" can be related to the way in which the "scientific" (J. Robinson) and "exoteric" (Schwaller de Lubicz) features are portrayed and interpreted. A. Rappaport, focusing on architectural thinking, also differentiates scientific and mythological approaches, emphasizing their complementarity.

According to the Martin Heidegger, abductive considerations are very important when we are solving creative problems on the base of our existential experience.

The whole process of consideration can be split into analysis, creative abduction and validation. The essence of creative abduction is to rely on several situations and to formulate a hypothesis about their relationship. An example: Heliocentric copernic theory was formulated abductively.

3.4. Mythological narratives of architectural features

Charles Sanders Peirce explains that the abduction is a formulating of premise from the conclusion. For example, if grass is wet, it can be decided (hypothesis) that it maybe have rained. Peirce explains that namely this kind of solution is typical for people, on the base of it they shape their experience in recognizing hypotheses, conjectures that can better explain the certain situation.

By looking at a certain place, locality as a cultural dynamic system, it can be treated as an analogue of a biological system. To maintain the identity of system, it is necessary to take into account the system history (memory). In other words, we have to respect historical determinants of genius loci. We are sure, that these determinants representing the "interests" of genius loci (interests to survive, to continue) can be written down using a special code.

3.4. Mythological narratives of architectural features

Such code may consist of ecologically motivated symptoms that at the same time are consensual units important for carrying out the dialogue. Such informational units are non-private, common for all subjectivities.

They belong to the domain of cultural memory and have a resemblance to specific semantic structures (myth, canon), which on cultural level are relatively "eternal". It is important to emphasize, that mythological statements with the help of which we are describing genius loci have asemiotic character. It is natural, because they are working not as text elements but as elements of code. According to H. Maturana and F. Varela, living organisms are characterized by an "autopoeia organization".

3.4. Mythological narratives of architectural features

"Autopoietic" systems are systems that, as a whole, are determined by the component production network. The components recursively (evaluating the return link) through interactions are generating and implementing a network that creates themselves.

Synergy, by applying a recursive model (forming a structural relation between autopoietic entities), determines that what cannot be observed and cannot be identified on the base of static ontology, becomes observable and recognizable. The phenomenon of autopoiesis can be related with the notion of autocommunication, elaborated by J. Lotman.
Mythological narratives are playing great role in presenting the actual information about sociocultural memory of places.

3.4. Mythological narratives of architectural features

It should be noted that the mythological narratives figuring in the socio-cultural dimension can be easily perceived by different groups of society (thanks to appropriate public education) and so it can help to reach a consensus among the wide range of agents – planners, community members also the built environment as a subjectivity of specific kind.

References

Petrušonis V. Kultūrinių archetipų recepcija planuojant urbanistinę renovaciją = Reception of cultural archetypes in the planning of urban renovation. In: *Urbanistika ir architektūra = Town planning and architecture,* Vol 35(4), Vilnius, 2011), p. 260-266. [In Lithuanian]

Petrušonis V. Harmoningos architektūrinės aplinkos kūrimo teisinės prielaidos = Legal preconditions for creating harmonious architectural environment. In: *Architektūros kokybės kriterijai = Architectural quality criteria.* Vilnius: Technika, 2015, p. 78-96 .[In Lithuanian]

Project "SURE - Sustainable Urban Rehabilitation in Europe" implemented in frames of Erasmus+ Programme
Key Action 2: Strategic Partnership Projects
Agreement n° 2016-1-PL01-KA203-026232

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union