ARCHITECTURAL ENVIRONMENT ORGANIZATION IN THE CONTEXT OF PRACTICAL AESTHETICS

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The author considers the aesthetic-philosophical questions of the architecture theory, associated with the development of the cultural paradigm of architectural creativity, studying the problems of architectural environment in the context of human life activity. Practical aesthetics involves the analysis of the man’s living space as an aesthetic object, identifying the role of beauty, harmony and order in the process of perception and human exploration of the environment.

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In recent years «environment» has been put forward as a key concept in the science of architecture and ideology of architectural creativity. The prevalence of the subdivision processes of the single art flow into independent tendencies in the modern world culture split the idea of the place of architecture, design, applied and fine arts, which resulted in the fact that art has ceased to be the unifying, integrating basis. Understanding harmony as the principle of the system organization allowed us to consider the existence of design and art forms, their synthesis, where the aesthetic sense is revealed not only by the work itself, but also through the environment, behavior and communication. Therefore the sign function of modern monumental and decorative forms and means of forming of the emotional and artistic potential consistently increases. Environment becomes an object of aesthetic perception, the space of the «aesthetic communication». Hence the criteria of artistic quality of the environment are being updated. Among them one can see first of all originality, scale, tectonic organization, harmony, emotional orientation [9].

However, while fruitfulness is undoubted, environmental approach has many limitations. Its concepts are based on the relationships of the subject and object, considered as if from within the system. The content behind the term «environment» is not only comprehensive, but also mobile, ambiguous. It is difficult to use it in the search for those invariants that are necessary as support for building the specific architectural language. Therefore, some researchers, such A. Ikonnikov, consider it to be appropriate to use the key concept of «space», which has played a decisive role in the formation of the concepts of modern architecture in the XX century [6]. Obviously, the qualities of architecture, considered as special education-architectural space, created and producing as a special human space, human world, are related to its main substantive aspect. Therefore, the most important criterion for its assessment is aesthetic criterion.

Architecture refers to the reasonably explored areas of human activity. A lot...
of attention has been paid to the issues related to the study of aesthetic problems of architecture, not only in the theory of architecture. Among the scientists, who adverted to the problems of architecture and its phenomena from the perspective of aesthetic and philosophical perspective, we can highlight the works of L. Vygotsky, A. Losev, F. Florensky and V. Bychkov, O. Genisaretsky, M. Kagan, D. Lihachev, F. Martynov. Understanding of artistic and aesthetic forms of architectonic arts is studied in works of the following scientists: E. Vorobeva, N. Voronov, V. Glazaychev, A. Efimov, A. Yermolaev, E. Zherdev, A. Ikonnikov, K. Kantor, G. Minervin, A. Rappaport and others. Problems related to understanding of artistic creativity in the field of architecture are the most theoretically developed on the aesthetic level. However, despite the large number of studies, there is not enough attention paid to the architectural space on the aesthetic and philosophical level.

The fact is that architecture is not only art, but also a special kind of perception of the world, the main content of which is a person (not only the material and common, but also the social, cultural and spiritual being). Architecture as such, as an object of study, should be seen as reality that has arisen as a result of construction activities and which includes the process, the product and the result of human activity aimed at building facilities of material and real, material and artificial environment. This formation, regarded as some of the architectural integrity in which diverse architectural objects act as a single space of the human existence, is denoted by the term «architectural space».

Aesthetic architectural space is essential to human self-knowledge, as through architectural space and its forms we hear the voice of not only natural, utilitarian, everyday, social face of humanity, but also its spiritual appearance pertaining to the spiritual life. Questions of spiritual self-determination and human existence by means of expressive forms of architectural space are regarded as elements of the aesthetic and philosophical area [3].

Aesthetics is a philosophical discipline, studying the area of expressive forms of any sphere of reality, given as an independent data and sensually perceived value. Scientific views on aesthetics as the embodiment of the search for harmony with the universe of human are basics for the identification of the essence of the aesthetic in the architectural space [4, p. 527].

Noting the presence of the aesthetic phenomenon in architecture, E. Biryukova concludes the existence of a range of issues in the architectural space that enter the field of aesthetic and philosophical problems. These questions are in the topic of the general problem regarding the consideration of the aesthetic qualities (heterogeneous in origin) purpose and extent, of architectural objects within a single architectural space, which has an aesthetic expression. Explorer defines the aesthetic and philosophical study of architectural space as one of forms of the worldview manifestations, spiritual self-determination, social and cultural self-identification by means of architectural forms, which find their expression in the spiritual pleasure from man’s relations with the architectural space as an aesthetic object.

Solving the problem is an object of scientific interest for the theory of architecture and architectural practice. It allows identifying the underlying processes that have led to the birth of a particular architectural form, the appearance of which is important precisely in the aesthetic-expressive existence perspective of an architectural object of the defined architectural space. It allows avoiding the forced external imitation, stylization, staying based on the internal structure and logic of the architectural form. This is especially important nowadays, when the urgent question about saving not individual works of art in the field of architecture, but the entire architectural landscape is raised [3].

Aesthetic environment organization is «a system of human impact on the nature, as well as material and objective environment created by people, which determines the level of development of a society culture, reflects social and aesthetic ideals and tastes of people» [11, p. 351]. Such a system is formed in the process of social and cultural continuum, and includes artistic and applied methods of organization of living space of a single person and the society as a whole. These methods are: architectural buildings, landscaping, decorative and applied arts, industrial design, etc. In considering questions of aesthetic evaluation of the architectural practice, we come to the problems of practical aesthetics – a specific area of knowledge, aimed at establishing a harmonious objective environment of human activity. It is primarily concerned with the organization of the living space of the person based on the principles of beauty, harmony and order, connecting herewith the aesthetic and utilitarian functions of the organized environment.

Some issues of practical aesthetics associated with the space planning, construction of architectural forms, the influence of color, sound, rhythm, and dynamics on the perception of the person, his performance, health and mood, have been the subject for discussions for centuries. However, practical aesthetics has been in a hidden, implicit form for a long time. Philosophers, art historians and architects turned to the development of some of its guidelines related to the applied techniques in the field of architecture, decorative arts, painting, etc. Only today, practical aesthetics and its practical application area are subject to comprehensive understanding.

A distinctive feature of practical aesthetics is its functionality. The practical human activity creates the world of things that are not works of art, but serve to meet the necessities of life, building a world of material culture with its emotional expressiveness. However, the utility, functionality of objects and processes does not prevent them from having artistic and imaginative features. Practical aesthetics involves the analysis of personal living space as an aesthetic object, identifying the role of beauty, harmony and order in the process of perception and mastering of human environment. But just like living space is not limited to characteristics of the environment, so as the practical aesthetics is not self-contained to environmental design, and is a way to include the individual to the world perceived as a space of action. In this context, the practical aesthetics is the organic complement to the theoretical aesthetics, identifying and implementing its principles in real life, offering specific
space organization methods [8].

The living space is built under the influence of certain values that guide a person in choosing between styles and lifestyles, goals and ways of achieving them, as well as the correlation of value-orientations of different individuals, social groups and representatives of different cultural traditions, that can be diametrically opposite. A person builds and improves his or her living space in accordance with the concept and cultural traditions, obtained in the course of education and training. Not only taste (as a selection criterion) serves as the guideline for such a design, but also a value system – material, social, cultural. Values are protecting and aspiring to.

Rules and forms of practical aesthetics are historically inconsistent and follow the typical trends for the culture and society in general. In this case, the scientific position of K. Kantor is determining that the aesthetics, unlike other scientific knowledge, is always being revised again in each new era [7]. Type of the worldview and way of thinking are directly reflected in the perception of beauty, order and harmony, which leads to the emergence of traditional, as well as modern trends in the world of practical aesthetics. Orientational aesthetic senses (a sense of space, time, color, light, rhythm, line and symmetry) are aimed at organization of the material world. Its formed system of images becomes the basis for all human relationships. A sense of proportion combines all of these senses and reveals them to complement each other. Aesthetic senses lead to the cognition of the essential content of a cultural phenomenon, coupled with the world of values [8].

The artistic design of object-spatial environment today cannot be considered outside of the triad of «man – environment – culture» anymore. The culture creative architect’s activity most clearly reflects the essence of architecture and design as kinds of human activity, which result in certain changes in the human environment, and in particular in its objective environment. Introduction to the design of semantic definitions of the «way of life», «value of life», «behavioral situation» brings together the environmental issues with the cultural philosophy. Today it is solved on the level of interdisciplinary communication of theories of architecture and design, cultural studies, sociology and psychology. In turn, the axiological approach to the design theory outputs the understanding of environmental design as a «complete, social and cultural phenomenon that solves global problems with a humanitarian orientation» [1, p. 22].

Direction of the architecture for culture building is determined as the design object of material environment, including the man not as a passive consumer, but considering all personal emotional, aesthetic, cultural activity and value orientations. The result is justified as the «new view angle on the design object, which is considered not as a separate, isolated in space thing or environmental complex, but as an integral piece of reality - of the world» [2, p. 40], taking into account the active role of people in the environment. The response to changes in the environment is reflected in the perception of architectural objects and design components of the environment, in their emotional and artistic assimilation, the impact on the behavioral response, the spiritual orientation and cultural characteristics of the person. Digging deep into social problems of the environmental design requires understanding of the social and cultural basis of the synthesis of certain types of design and art work: architecture, urban planning, design, monumental and decorative art in the urban environment.

Thus, the current stage of understanding the aesthetic and philosophical aspects of the theory of architecture is associated with the development of the cultural paradigm of architectural creativity. It is also connected with the priority of consideration of architectural issues in the context of human life, paying attention to the spiritual and semantic aspects of the architecture space, development of the architecture humanimproving concepts. Aesthetic and philosophical study of architectural space is particularly relevant in the world of today, as new territories are being constantly involved into the field of architectural space in the context of growing urbanization. There is a complex multi-level change in progress, which can be called «humanization» of the area appearance of constantly increasing earth’s surfaces. Hence the study of issues related to the current stage of architecture development focuses attention on the aesthetic phenomenon of one of the most extensive areas of human activity. We believe this requires greater attention to the development of the general cultural level of the professional architects’ creative potential. Therefore, further research complex approach to the acquisition of professional skills and personal qualities of students of architectural specialties in the system of higher education is required.

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